

## POE138 Outdoor Learning Centre at Cardiff Metropolitan University

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Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

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

Ymateb gan Outdoor Learning Centre at Cardiff Metropolitan University | Evidence from Outdoor Learning Centre at Cardiff Metropolitan University

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

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### 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?

1. Connection to nature and the environment which helps them become more ethical and informed future citizens.
2. Confidence and cooperation gained through teamwork and communication in situations outside of their comfort zone.
3. Social and emotional development – improved mental health and wellbeing.

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; Health reasons; Additional Learning Needs; Disabilities; Parental anxiety / uncertainty; Child anxiety / uncertainty; High levels of staffing are needed particularly when accompanying children with additional needs which can be a barrier for those who need it most. An overly full curriculum can leave little time for extracurricular activities, so it is important the outdoor education is seen as a right not an enrichment activity in order for children to access it. ;

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

It is important that inclusivity is embedded into the bill to ensure children with additional learning needs (ALNs) have equal access to the proposed week of outdoor education. Outdoor education stimulates and

encourages children with sensory sensitivities to explore their senses and can also contribute to improved mobility. Some children with ALNs may feel distressed when away from their home environment and regular access to outdoor education can aid this through expenditure of energy to help them settle and focus. Outdoor education can develop self-esteem and contribute towards relationship building with other children, both of these are particularly important for children with ALNs.

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?

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If inclusivity is not embedded into the bill, then children with ALNs will feel excluded.

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?

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Year 6 (age 10-11)

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

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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).

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Children with ALNs may require less nights due to specific medical needs so it is important to consider this when planning outdoor education experiences.

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?

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Strongly agree

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

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Access to Outdoor Learning should become an entitlement rather than be seen as enrichment. Only then will it be accessible to all children no matter what their circumstances or background are.