

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

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

Ymateb gan ER Outdoors, | Evidence from ER Outdoors,

Are you (your organisation) currently a provider of outdoor education?: Yes

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) They learn about themselves, their team, and the environment in a sustained and experimental way without the interruptions of everyday school and home life.
- 2) They find out more about who they really are and what their strengths and weaknesses are. The residential element is particularly important in this process because they're given a clean slate; not trapped in outgrown roles that have come to define them over time. A class clown may show their responsible side or a 'trouble maker' may provide unexpected solutions to team problems.
- 3) A residential outdoor experience will provide them with a wealth of memories to draw on when things get rough and to help them find solutions to problems they encounter later.

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;Disabilities;Paternal anxiety / uncertainty;Child anxiety / uncertainty;Additional Learning Needs;

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

In my experience young people who benefit most are those who have disengaged from formal school-based education. Especially those who are about to leave school. Residential outdoor learning means they

come face to face with the consequences of disruptive behaviour quickly e.g. if you Don pack your waterproof and it rains, you get wet. If you don't pull your weight in a team, the team will tell you so.

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?

The answer to this question depends on the skills and attitudes of the people delivering courses.

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?

Older (please state below)

I agree that 10 to 11 year old benefit, but so do 14 to 16 year old.

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).

Generally 5 days is the best length, but younger children who lack confidence may find the thought of being away from home for that length of time daunting.

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?

Strongly agree

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

1) The social return on this sort of investment has been calculated to be worth £4.32 per £1 invested in England. I suspect it will be even higher in deprived areas.

2) It needs to apply to every child, not just those whose parents can afford to pay. In fact the benefits will be higher for those whose parents cannot afford to pay.

To this end the wording of the bill should change from enrichment to entitlement.

3) Maybe training of deliverers could be looked at. Those who have invested in ongoing training to improve the standard of their work may be more expensive but quality of delivery really counts in maximising the benefit young people get from residential outdoor learning.