

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

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

Ymateb gan Borrás Park Primary School, | Evidence from Borrás Park Primary School,

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?

Independence - the experience of being away from home in a different, unfamiliar location.

Challenge / Risk - expose children to the benefits of taking safe, calculated, well-managed risks.

Life skills - some children excel in this kind of environment (out of s classroom) and discover essential life skills that they perhaps would not have the chance to expose elsewhere.

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;Paternal 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?

ALL children would have the capacity to attend at least one residential experience without any financial barriers. For example, a family in my current Year 6 cannot afford for their child to attend a 4-day residential this May as they have two other siblings in other year groups that would expect the same. The family cannot pay for one to go and not the others.

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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Some children do not have an interest in outdoor education and find it a source of great anxiety. Experience tells me that it is the emotional thought of being away from home and sleeping over somewhere. If it becomes an expectation for all children to attend at least one residential experience, it may be a large stress factor. Also, the additional cost for supply teachers IF some children refuse to go to the residential. For schools offering a wider range of residential experiences, it becomes more challenging for them to source a range of different provisions other than adventurous activities. We need more centres that offer alternative experiences such as the arts.

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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Younger (please state below)

I aim to enhance the range of residential experiences for my children from Year 2 (1 over night stay), Year 3 (1 or 2 night stay), Year 4 & 5 (2 or 3 night stay) and Year 6 (4 or 5 night stay)

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

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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).

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Yes for older children in Year 6. However, schools need to be mindful of the need to build up to this duration of stay as it can be a bit of a shock in Year 6. We need more support to offer shorter residential visits in younger year groups.

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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Long over due! The largest barrier for families allowing their children to attend a residential is finance. Schools are often expected to use their Pupil Deprivation Grant to fund residential visits for their children - but this links to Free School Meals only. There are many families NOT on FSM that struggle to pay for school trips in general. Schools use their PDG in far more ways than to have left overs to help support residential visits.