

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

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

Ymateb gan The Outward Bound Trust, | Evidence from The Outward Bound Trust,

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?

- Outdoor residential significantly improve, and in some cases transform, the lives of children and young people. The Outward Bound Trust has a ongoing programme of research into our work that corroborates this statement, details of which can be found at <https://www.outwardbound.org.uk/our-impact-outward-bound>. In particular I would draw your attention to the latest Social Impact Report: <https://www.outwardbound.org.uk/social-impact-reports>.
- Mental health and wellbeing of children and young people is lowest on record, and lower than many comparable counties. The Good Childhood Report¹, published by The Children's Society, has tracked young people's wellbeing over a period of 12 years, and has reported a significant fall in their overall wellbeing since the survey began. The OECD's PISA report² sets the UK within an international context and highlights worryingly low levels of wellbeing amongst young people in the UK. Comparing the wellbeing of students in the UK with students in 23 other European countries, students in the UK report some of the lowest levels of wellbeing: by age 15, they are the least satisfied with their lives, they rank the lowest for having a sense of purpose in their lives and have the second highest level of sadness.
- Outdoor residential enable young people to feel good and function well. The Outward Bound Trust recently published a white paper on Wellbeing and how residential outdoor education supports positive wellbeing, see: <https://www.outwardbound.org.uk/assets/pdf/uploads/Impact/Feeling-good-and-functioning-well-Wellbeing-at-The-Outward-Bound-Trust.pdf>. Good wellbeing is at the heart of citizens living healthy lives and thriving throughout life, being active members of their community, and contributing to economic development. Good wellbeing is the foundation of young people succeeding in education and fulfilling their potential.
- Outdoor Residential enable young people to connect with the natural environment and develop pro-environmental behaviours in an immersive way, something that is ever more essential for society to tackle the climate challenges.
- Outdoor Residential increase confidence and resilience giving young people the tools to navigate the challenges of everyday life.

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; Parental 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?

The proposed Bill will particularly support disadvantaged young people that may not be able to afford these events. Moving the opportunity for a 5 day residential to one of entitlement rather than enrichment will have a hugely positive impact on the young people of Wales.

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?

none

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)

The Outward Bound Trust work with young people via their school aged 10-18 years old. Whilst outdoor residential experiences are beneficial for all ages of young people we often find older young people are a more formative time in their development and therefore can contextualise the experience more powerfully.

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

Yes

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

In The Outward Bound Trust's experience five day residential outdoor experience is a good and practical length of course. This length fits within a standard school week, and society's norms. Our experience is that shorter courses achieve less outcomes, have a less significant impact and there is less likelihood of a transformational experience. Five days allows young people to take increasing levels of autonomy over their learning, and build trust in their instructor enabling increasing levels of adventure during the course. The more ownership the young person has of their learning the more significant the learning outcomes.

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?

no

12:00:00 AM