

Education, Children and Young People Committee

Wednesday 18 December 2024  
34th Meeting, 2024 (Session 6)

## Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill

### Introduction

1. Liz Smith MSP introduced the [Schools \(Residential Outdoor Education\) \(Scotland\) Bill](#) on 20 June 2024. The Education, Children and Young People's Committee has been designated as the lead committee for this Members' Bill at Stage 1.
2. The Bill establishes that all pupils in state and grant-aided schools will have the chance to experience at least four nights and five days of residential outdoor education during their school career.
3. This is the final evidence session on the Bill and the Committee will take evidence from the following panel of witnesses—
  - Liz Smith, Member in Charge
  - Neil Stewart, Senior Clerk, Non-Government Bills Unit
  - Claudia Bennett, Senior Solicitor, Legal Services

### Background

4. SPICe has produced a background briefing on the Bill which is [published on the website](#). SPICe has also produced a briefing paper for this session which is attached at **Annexe A**.

### Evidence

#### Oral evidence

5. At its meeting on 6 November, the Committee took evidence from the following witnesses—
  - Emeritus Professor Chris Loynes, Professor in Human Nature Relations, Institute of Science and Environment, Centre for National Parks and Protected Areas (CNPPA) & Outdoor Studies, University of Cumbria
  - Professor Greg Mannion, Senior Lecturer in Education, University of Stirling, Scotland
  - Dr Roger Scrutton (FRSE, FHEA) Honorary Research Fellow in Outdoor Education, University of Edinburgh

6. At its meeting on 13 November, the Committee then heard from the following witnesses—

**Panel 1**

- Andrew Bradshaw, Wider Achievement Manager (Outdoor Learning and Adventure Education), City of Edinburgh Council and Secretary of the Scottish Advisory Panel for Outdoor Education
- Matthew Sweeney, Policy Manager, Children and Young People, COSLA
- Tara Lillis, Policy Official, Scotland NASUWT
- Brenda Leask, Executive Manager, Schools, Shetland Islands Council

**Panel 2**

- Phil Thomson Development Manager, Ardroy Outdoor Education Centre
- Nick March, National Chair, Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres Scotland
- Freda Fallon, Development Manager Scotland, Outward Bound Trust
- Jamie Miller, Chief Executive, Scottish Outdoor Education Centres

7. At its meeting on 27 November 2024, the Committee took evidence from the following witnesses—

- Natalie Don-Innes MSP, Minister for Children, Young People and The Promise
- Saskia Kearns, Team Leader, Curriculum Development, Scottish Government
- Nico McKenzie-Juetten, Lawyer, Scottish Government Legal Directorate

8. Meeting papers and transcripts from those meetings, including written evidence provided by witnesses, are published on the [website](#).
9. The Committee also held an informal discussion with teachers on Monday 9 December 2024. An anonymised note of the discussion, agreed by participants, will be published on the website and is reproduced at **Annexe B**.

**Call for views**

10. The Committee issued a call for views on the provisions of the Bill which ran from 3 July until 4 September 2024 and 271 responses were received.
11. The [responses to the call for views have now been published](#). A [SPICe summary of the responses](#) received has also been published on the website.

## Scottish Government position

12. The Scottish Government [wrote to the Committee on 3 September 2024 attaching its memorandum on the Bill](#). It states—

“The Scottish Government is committed to improving outdoor learning provision in Scotland, ensuring that all learners are experiencing regular, enjoyable, and challenging outdoor learning experiences that are embedded across the 3-18 curriculum. However, we do have reservations concerning certain elements of the proposed approach set out in the Bill that require further and full consideration and assurance, in order that all of the potential implications of the Bill are fully understood. These relate to:

- Legislating in the curriculum;
- A narrow focus on only one type of outdoor learning; and
- Resource implications (feasibility and affordability).

Taking these considerations into account, and given the positive intents of the Bill, the Scottish Government remains neutral at this time concerning passage of the Bill.”

## Correspondence

13. Following the evidence session on 13 November 2024, the Committee [wrote to the following local authorities](#) who own their own residential outdoor education centres—

- Aberdeenshire Council;
- City Edinburgh Council;
- Glasgow City Council;
- North Ayrshire Council; and
- South Ayrshire Council.

14. Responses from Aberdeen City Council, City Edinburgh Council and Glasgow City Council attached at **Annexe C**.

15. On 28 November 2024, Liz Smith [wrote to the Committee regarding alternative funding models](#). This letter is attached at **Annexe D**.

## Other Committee consideration

### Delegated Powers

16. The Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee considered the delegated powers in the Bill at its meeting on 29 October 2024 and [reported to the lead Committee](#) on 1 November 2024 under Rule 9.6.2 of Standing Orders.

## Financial Memorandum

17. The Finance and Public Administration (FPA) Committee issued a call for views on the Financial Memorandum (FM) and received 8 responses which have been [published on the website](#). The FPA Committee took evidence on the FM at its [meeting on 19 November 2024](#), and the [Member in Charge wrote to the FPA Committee on 2 December 2024](#). The FPA Committee wrote to the Committee on its findings on 13 December 2024 and is attached at **Annexe E**.

## Next steps

18. The Committee will consider a draft Stage 1 report at a future meeting.

**Committee Clerks  
December 2024**

## Annexe A

**SPICe**

**The Information Centre**  
An t-Ionad Fiosrachaidh

### Introduction

This paper is to support the Committee at its fourth and final evidence session on the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill.

This week the Committee will take evidence from the Liz Smith MSP, the Member in Charge of the Bill. Ms Smith [also gave evidence to the Finance and Public Administration Committee on 19 November 2024](#).

### Benefits of residential outdoor education

The Policy Memorandum referenced a number of studies which highlighted benefits of outdoor education. The PM stated—

“The case for the benefits of residential outdoor education for young people is based on a wide and strong evidence base.” (Para 35)

The Committee has also heard that residential outdoor education is beneficial to children and young people.

Professor Chris Loynes said that the benefits of residential outdoor educational experience accrue because the experience changes the relationships between pupils and between pupils and teachers.

Dr Roger Scrutton agreed and said that these relationships, which lead to greater collaboration underpin the cognitive benefits of residential outdoor education. Freda Fallon from the Outward Bound Trust said that the role of the teacher in residential is “essential” in the development of the pupils attending. She continued, “the teachers are there to support the development of young people and transfer that development back to school for the benefit of the wider community”. (13 November 2024, col 37) This reflected the findings of the 2015 [Learning Away evaluation](#), which also found—

“The development of resilience, confidence and wellbeing through residential experiences transformed into optimism and constructive attitudes to learning in the classroom. Students often reported increased persistence when they found tasks difficult and more belief in their ability to cope. On occasions groups of students independently planned approaches to support each other’s progress.”

Professor Loynes, again reflecting the findings in Learning Away, noted that there was evidence that the involvement of students in the co-design of residential programmes improved outcomes. He also said residential can support transitions between primary and secondary education.

The Education Endowment Foundation has developed a toolkit to support schools in England to decide on different programmes which are aimed to improve academic outcomes. The [Education Endowment Foundation has commented on the impact of “Outdoor adventure learning”](#) said in its Toolkit—

“The current evidence base on outdoor adventure and academic outcomes is very weak. While the studies that do exist show positive impacts, the limited evidence base means that an impact [relative to other interventions] is not communicated.

“The evidence in the [EEF’s] Toolkit is primarily focused on academic outcomes. There is a wider evidence base indicating that outdoor adventure learning may have positive impacts on other outcomes such as self-efficacy, motivation and teamwork. Outdoor adventure learning may play an important part of the wider school experience, regardless of any impact on academic outcomes.”

In 2020 the EEF undertook a trial looking at two Adventure Activities programmes: the Outward Bound Trust (OBT) and Commando Joe’s Education Services (CJ). One of the key differences between the two programmes was that the OBT was a residential and CJ’s programme was delivered in schools, utilising classrooms, halls and playing fields. The trial was affected by the pandemic and suffered from high levels of attrition, therefore some caution should be applied to interpreting the results. [Some of the findings of this trial](#) were:

- Pupils in the OBT intervention group showed moderate improvements in their behaviour 12–18 months after the intervention, compared to pupils in other schools. Immediately after the intervention students showed small positive changes in self-regulation and small positive improvements in school engagement compared to students in control schools.
- Pupils in the CJ’s intervention group showed large improvements in their behaviour 12–18 months after the intervention, compared to pupils in other schools. Immediately after the intervention students showed moderate positive changes in self-regulation and moderate positive improvements in school engagement compared to students in control schools.
- Pupils reported both programmes as an opportunity to engage in challenging activities beyond their peer group that allowed them to demonstrate greater confidence, self-regulation, teamwork and deepened relationships with staff and peers.

The Minister told the Committee last week that she agrees that residential outdoor education provides benefits to pupils, particularly in relation to “behaviour, the different skills being learned, the experiences that the children and young people have, and relationships with teachers”. She continued—

“Those kinds of positive impacts can be found across a number of outdoor learning experiences; I would not say that they are necessarily exclusive to the outdoor learning centres.” (27 November 2024, Col 17)

## Current policy

Professor Mannion placed a residential outdoor education within the wider concepts of Outdoor Learning and Learning for Sustainability. Outdoor Learning can be considered as any learning that takes place outside. A number of submissions reference a 2010 publication, [Curriculum for Excellence Through Outdoor Learning](#). This stated—

“Outdoor learning experiences are often remembered for a lifetime. Integrating learning and outdoor experiences, whether through play in the immediate grounds or adventures further afield, provides relevance and depth to the curriculum in ways that are difficult to achieve indoors.”

Outdoor Learning policy does include the kind of adventurous activities that the Bill is concerned with. It also includes learning in the school grounds or short trips to local outdoor sites – in short outdoor learning is learning undertaken outside.

Professor Mannion said that the large majority of outdoor learning that takes place in the local contexts or school grounds. He also said that the key to expanding outdoor learning in the broader sense is to support the continuing professional development of teachers in this practice. Scottish Advisory Panel for Outdoor Education’s submission said, “the residential outdoor education experience occupies a unique and profound space within the outdoor learning journey as described in Curriculum for Excellence through Outdoor Learning.”

Sitting alongside CfE, is Learning for Sustainability (LfS). This [is described as bringing together](#) “sustainable development, outdoor learning and global citizenship.” Last year the Government published [Scotland's learning for sustainability action plan 2023 to 2030 “Target 2030”](#). This “aims to build an inspiring movement for change so every 3 to 18 place of education becomes a sustainable learning setting by 2030.” Nick March from AHOEC said that “the key part to a residential is about access to the environment enabling the Learning for Sustainability policy”. (13 November 2024, Col 35)

The Scottish Government’s memorandum said that it shares the aim to “improve the provision of outdoor learning in Scotland and acknowledges that provision for our primary and secondary learners needs to improve”. The memo set out a number of recent policy developments, including that—

- The Scottish Government has convened a new Scottish Outdoor Learning Strategic Working Group to support the delivery of inclusive and impactful outdoor learning in all its forms, which met for the first time in May 2024 and is expected to report in May 2025.

The Government has said that it is open to exploring non-legislative options with the Member in charge to improve the access to residential outdoor education.

## *Legislating in the curriculum*

Gaelic and religious instruction and observance are specifically set out in legislation, but generally very little of the curriculum is the subject of a specific statutory duty. Local authorities must make provision for adequate and efficient education in their area (s1 of the [Education \(Scotland\) Act 1980](#)) and in doing so must “secure that the

education is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential.” (s2 of the Standards in Scotland’s Schools etc. Act 2000).

Curriculum for Excellence is intended to provide schools and individual teachers with the autonomy and flexibility to develop the teaching and learning in their classrooms. The school education system is intended to empower local leaders.

While supporting the Bill, Andrew Bradshaw from the City of Edinburgh Council and SAPOE said—

“I want to stress the importance of flexibility and autonomy for local authorities and schools. The City of Edinburgh Council and SAPOE believe that that approach will allow different local authorities, and schools within local authorities, to consider context and needs.” (13 November 2024, Col 4)

Later Mr Bradshaw elaborated on the need for flexibility. He said, that for some of the membership of SAPOE, “particularly those in the Hebrides, Shetland and other remote places, a contrasting residential needs to focus on other things [than visits to outdoor education centres].” (13 November 2024, 2024)

The Bill would provide for a reasonable amount of flexibility. The proposed 4 nights of residential outdoor education would not necessarily have to be consecutive. Ms Smith told the Finance and Public Administration Committee—

“It is important to recognise that the style and manner of the residential outdoor education that is undertaken will depend entirely on the school’s context. I am keen to ensure that there is as much flexibility as possible. For example, some schools’ residential outdoor education might involve camping in or near the school grounds, while that of others will involve travelling to a more remote outdoor education centre.” (19 November 2024, Col 3)

## **Current provision**

In the policy memorandum, the Member in charge of the Bill set out why she considers that the current provision needs to be improved. She said—

- many young children do not get the same opportunities as their peers for financial reasons
- as the provision of residential outdoor education is not mandatory for schools to undertake, it can be a postcode lottery as to whether a child is offered it during their school career or not
- in the absence of legislative provision for these experiences, it is likely that the level of provision will continue to decline, threatening the existence of such experiences for future generations.  
(PM Para 97)

There are around 40-50 residential outdoor education centres in Scotland. The number of number of pupils undertaking residential outdoor education is not collected centrally. It has therefore been difficult to ascertain the volume of current position, either in terms of the number of schools and pupils accessing residential outdoor education, or how these experiences are delivered, funded and their outcomes.



Andrew Bradshaw, speaking about work undertaken by SAPOE, said that around 60% of primary schools in Scotland undertake residential. In relation the provision in Edinburgh where P7 residential are common, Mr Bradshaw said that around 85-90% of pupils attend residential. (13 November 2024, Cols 14-15)

A Government Official told the Committee that—

“With regard to data more generally and understanding the levels of provision, we have been working with organisations such as the Scottish Advisory Panel for Outdoor Education and the Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres. Those Government analysts have brought together initial figures and estimates on provision. However, the figures come with a heavy caveat, given the lack of a national data picture. As a result of that work, we understand that, with regard to the provision of outdoor residential trips, around 42,000 residential centre visits were undertaken by P5 to P7 pupils in 2022- 23, and we estimate that outdoor residential trips are provided to around 11,700 secondary school pupils. Therefore, we have been doing some preliminary work on that, but we do not have a national data picture.”

How the Government has come to these figures is unclear and the official did not set whether these data included independent schools or to what extent pupils may have had more than one visit. The average number of pupils in P5-P7 in mainstream publicly funded schools in 2022-23 was 57,400 per year. Assuming that the Government’s estimate is reasonably accurate, that there are very few repeat visits, and that this reflects the provision that is normally provided year-on-year, this would suggest that a little over two thirds of pupils have access to residential outdoor experiences in Primary school.

Some local authorities that responded to the Committee’s call for views described how schools in their organisation arrange and provide outdoor learning including residential outdoor education. ADES’ submission said—

“Schools in local authorities already offer a wide range of outdoor education and residential experiences for young people. This is decided at school level as part of the rationale for its curriculum and its approach to learning outdoors.

“Residential experiences are not always linked to outdoor education and can be linked to other subjects such as History, the arts and geography. Schools currently identify the types of experience offered, how this will be staffed and how it will be funded.”

A key argument of the Member in charge is that some children are prevented from experiencing residential outdoor education because of financial constraints. NASUWT’s submission said—

“The proposals contained in Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill shine a welcome light on the inequality which currently exists in accessing this provision for all pupils in Scotland. There is no dispute that a disparity of access to outdoor education residential experiences currently exists and, further, that our most vulnerable children and young people are often unlikely to be able to participate.”

Tara Lillis from NASUWT set out some of the barriers to participation under the current provision, including: costs to both schools and families; particular barriers for

specialist settings to access appropriate facilities; and other “systemic barriers to participation that align with equality duties” in relation to sex, disabilities and race. (13 November 2024, col 5)

CPAG’s submission argued, “when parents are required to pay all or some of the cost of a trip, it is children and young people on lower incomes who are most likely to miss out on these opportunities.” EIS’ submission noted that the costs of attending a residential outdoor education trip can include accessing equipment; it stated, “EIS members who have led residential outdoor learning activities, such as Duke of Edinburgh awards trips, report that commonly, children and young people – even those not experiencing acute disadvantage – lack the specialist footwear and waterproof clothing that are essential to participate in such trips.” The Committee explored what kit is required for attendance at outdoor education centres with representatives from that sector on 13 November. Freda Fallon from the Outward Bound Trust said—

“As an educational charity, we have to provide for the needs of all young people. When they arrive, they get £2,000-worth of kit in a kit cage, including boots, waterproofs, camping kit and everything else that they will need. If they are going to jump in the loch, we will give them a second old pair of trainers. They need to bring nothing apart from the clothes that they stand up in; we support them with the rest.” (13 November 2024, Col 45)

Nick March later said that not all centres provide kit. (Col 48)

### *Capital support for centres*

Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres highlighted issues in relation to capital funding for outdoor education centres. It said that current market prices for school residential do not include contribution to capital costs for the centres. Nick March said—

“As soon as a centre is presented with a significant challenge— such as needing a fire escape or whatever—that centre unfortunately becomes unsustainable. At the heart of it is the building. The decline of the centre comes back to affordability and how the third sector can fund it. In a recent meeting of the AHOECS members, we discussed how they are funding their capital costs. Those costs all have to come through a separate funding mechanism in order to supply and look after their buildings.” (13 November 2024, col 38)

Phil Thompson said—

“Capital is our nemesis. We can service the need and we can have children coming through. However, for example, the main building in the Ardroy centre was built in 1880. We had to get a loan to put a new roof on it. One of our blocks—heron block—is 55 years old now, which was referenced in the email that I read out [about the facilities being dated]. Capital is the biggest problem that we face.” (13 November 2024, Cols 58-59)

Supporting outdoor centres with capital funding was one of the non-statutory support that the Minister explored with the Committee on 27 November. She said—

“In discussions with Ms Smith, I alluded to potential non-legislative options such as securing private investment to aid with reinvestment and capital

building works, in order to bring some of the centres back into a better state. Regardless of whether the bill is accepted or it falls, I have already made a clear commitment to continuing to work with outdoor centres.” (Col 31)

## Scottish Government’s memorandum on the Bill

The [Scottish Government wrote to the committee setting out its views on the Bill](#). The Government is broadly supportive of the intention of the Bill to improve access to residential outdoor education. The Government said in its Memorandum and repeated by the Minister on 27 November was that the Government is ‘neutral’ on the Bill.

The Government expressed reservations around:

- legislating in the curriculum
- a narrow focus on only one type of outdoor learning
- resource implications.

In relation to legislating in the curriculum, the Scottish Government said:

“The further introduction of statutory provisions relating to the curriculum risks setting an unhelpful precedent which contradicts Scotland’s existing approach to education and the respective roles and responsibilities, and agency, of education authorities/schools/teachers to shape the curriculum to suit their learners.”

The Minister was asked why legislating in this area would be inappropriate when it has been more directive in other areas. She said that the Government “tries to give as much autonomy and independence as it can to local authorities and schools”. (Col 42) The Minister was asked how the Bill could ensure flexibility. She said—

“The issue of how that would be addressed by the bill is something that has come up in my discussions with Ms Smith. I know that she recognised in her evidence that residential is not necessarily for everyone. If there were ways to work with Ms Smith on that or, depending on the outcome of the current stage, amend the bill in those ways, it would be important to do so.” (Col 24)

Residential outdoor education is only one form of outdoor learning within the Scottish policy landscape. The Government said that there is a risk that the Bill’s focus on this one aspect risks “undermining other types of outdoor learning and does not align with Scottish Government’s policy aim for outdoor learning to be regular, day-to-day, and experienced across the whole 3-18 curriculum.” The Committee explored this issue with the Government on 27 November. A Government official said—

“We do not have any specific evidence, but we could look into it further. We are aware from Education Scotland colleagues that diversity of delivery of outdoor learning is important, and we feel that there is a potential risk that practitioners might feel the need to prioritise this form of outdoor learning over others.” (Col 18)

The Government argues that the costs modelled in the FM are an underestimate because “staff costs in secondary schools are not modelled, inflation has not been

accounted for and there is no modelling of additional costs to accommodate ASN pupils." The Government continued:

"If the Bill is passed, costs would likely be incurred from financial year 2025/26. This would present an additional significant financial risk to public finances that are already under intense pressure to meet existing Ministerial priorities and commitments. No central funding exists to fund the financial impact of the Bill and its statutory funding obligation on Scottish Ministers – the Bill's provisions, as currently drafted, are unaffordable."

The Government's Memo concluded—

"Ministers also remain willing to work with Ms Smith MSP to improve outdoor learning provision through non-legislative routes (including through the government's Scottish Outdoor Learning Strategic Working Group and Learning for Sustainability Action Plan), to ensure all forms of outdoor learning can be supported and value for money can be achieved."

The Minister was not able to identify any work it had undertaken to prepare for the Bill passing. (27 November, Col 21). A Government official noted however that "bill's provisions, would come into force on 7 July, following royal assent of the bill. It could be next year" and questioned whether there would be sufficient capacity to support this. (Col 44)

## **How the Bill would work in practice**

The Bill seeks to improve the opportunities for pupils to participate in residential outdoor education. It has three substantial provisions:

- placing a duty on education authorities and managers of grant-aided schools to secure the provision of at least one period of residential outdoor education for each pupil
- placing a duty on Scottish Ministers to prepare and publish guidance on the duty to secure the provision of residential outdoor education
- providing that the Scottish Government provide funding to local authorities and the managers of grant-aided schools to carry out the duty to secure the provision of residential outdoor education.

Pupils would be able to opt-out of residential outdoor education.

The drafting of the duty on local authorities is:

"An education authority must provide or secure the provision of one course of residential outdoor education to each pupil attending a public school under the education authority's management."

The framing here places the duty on each local authority, not all local authorities. And the duty is to secure or provide residential outdoor education to "each pupil", ie every individual pupil. A number of responses questioned how this duty would apply where a pupil moved school or local authority, or if a pupil was unable to attend a scheduled trip perhaps due to ill health. The duty in the Bill is not qualified by considerations of practicability nor whether the pupil had previously received or been offered 'one course of residential outdoor education' by another local authority. The

drafting of bill could be read that the local authority must provide a course of residential outdoor education for every pupil regardless of how long that individual is a pupil at one of their schools, which could pose considerable challenges in some circumstances. E.g. should the duty apply if a pupil arrived in Scotland at aged 15 when the local authority provides outdoor residential education for all pupils in Primary schools.

These issues would be relatively easily clarified by amendment, there may be a need to be some way to track individual pupils and determine whether they had had the opportunity to attend residential outdoor education. The Committee heard that some local authorities use a different system [EVOLVEvisits](#) to support arranging trips.

Section 1 of the Bill sets out that residential outdoor education would be:

“a course of education that:

- has outdoor learning as its main focus,
- includes at least 4 overnight stays and 5 days, which may be non-consecutive, in facilities such as (without limitation) outdoor centres, youth hostels, camps or sailing boats, and
- is suitable to the relevant pupil’s age, ability, aptitude and any additional support needs.”

Outdoor learning is not defined in the Bill. The Bill provides that the Government would prepare guidance on the provision of residential outdoor education.

The Bill is silent as to when the residential outdoor education would take place. The PM stated—

“It is the Member’s view that one course of residential outdoor education should be provided between P6 and S4. However, she wishes to allow flexibility for Education Scotland, local authorities and school leaders in making decisions on the age at which the opportunity should be afforded, so is leaving this to the guidance that is required under section 1 of the Bill.”(Para 10)

Universal provision would need to ensure that pupils with complex additional support needs or disabilities can be catered for. Glasgow City Council said the Bill needs to “take into account children with ASN, who have complex needs and would require significant support, adaptations to centres, specialist equipment and adapted beds, as well as the additional costs associated with both the health and safety requirements and risk assessments required for each visit.” On 13 November the Committee heard that there is limited capacity in outdoor education centres in Scotland to support disabled pupils with significant support needs.

The capacity of centres more broadly has been raised as a possible barrier to implementation of the Bill. Matthew Sweeney from COSLA told the Committee---

“If we have the capacity in general, do we have the capacity available at the right times of year? Obviously, going to an outdoor centre in May, August or September will be quite different from going in January or February. If we do not address some of those capacity points, how will decisions be made about which people get to go when?” (13 November 2024, Col 12)

Nick March drew a distinction between outdoor education and outdoor recreation. He said that as an outdoor education centre is a learning environment it can be utilised all year round. (13 November 2024, Col 39) Phil Thompson from Ardroy said that his centre offers visits more cheaply in winter. (Col 52) Mr March also said that private providers are in a position to invest in more beds if there was going to be an increase in demand. (Col 52)

Dr Scrutton suggested that there is a mixed picture in terms of current demand for places. He said—

“I think that the residential centres can cope with the current uptake, although some of them have been closing, because they have not had the business, so they have not had the money to support maintenance and so on. On the other hand, Aberdeenshire Council has just opened a new residential centre, which I think has 40 places, and it has immediately been filled for about a year. City of Edinburgh Council’s two remote outdoor centres, Lagganlia and Benmore, are booked for three years in advance.” (6 November 2024, cols 9-10)

Matthew Sweeney from COSLA said that COSLA supports the principle of outdoor learning and that local authorities have invested in schools and ELC settings to support greater use of the outdoors. However, he said COSLA has concerns about how the Bill could be implemented:

“At the moment, we have a number of concerns about the new duties that are to be placed on local authorities and whether they will be able, practically, to meet them in the short term. In particular, there are questions around staffing, capacity and how we create the right offers for children and young people. ... We are very concerned about funding being available. With a lot of this, there is a quite significant financial cost for staffing, transport and the centres themselves.” (13 November 2024, Col 3)

Nick March said that there would need to be an implementation plan should the Bill be passed. He said—

“We would need a staged approach to implementation of the bill, to allow us to build capacity. The biggest capacity that we would need to build is in qualified staff.” (13 November 2024, col 53)

## ***Costs in FM***

The Bill would create a duty on the Scottish Government to “pay education authorities and the managers of grant-aided schools such amounts as are sufficient to enable them to carry out their duties [to provide residential outdoor education]”.

The Member estimates that the costs of the Bill after two years of operation would be between £20.4 million and £33.9 million in 2024-25 prices (i.e. not accounting for inflation). Speaking to the Finance and Public Administration Committee, Ms Smith said—

“I recognise that implementing the provisions of the bill will come at a cost, and that the bill will require a financial resolution in order to proceed from stage 1. However, I strongly believe that the benefits of such an investment will be significant to young people—in particular, those with support needs, those who lack confidence, those for whom academic work in a classroom environment is a challenge, and those who struggle with mental health issues.

There should also be significant societal benefits, such as better resilience, better leadership skills and an increased awareness of and care for the natural environment. There should also be long-term savings for the health and criminal justice systems. In short, not only are the provisions of the bill positive from an education perspective; they represent preventative spend.” (19 November 2024, Col 5)

The Presiding Officer has decided that a Financial Resolution is required for this Bill. Unless Parliament agrees a Financial Resolution, the Bill will not be able to proceed to Stage 2 and the Bill would fall. Under the Standing Orders of the Scottish Parliament, "only a member of the Scottish Government or a junior Scottish Minister may give notice of a motion for a Financial Resolution". At Committee, the Minister would not be drawn as to whether the Government is minded to lodge a financial resolution.

The Financial Memorandum modelled three areas of additional spend that would arise from the Bill:

- cost of pupils attending residential outdoor education
- transport costs
- costs on the Scottish Government of producing guidance.

The Financial Memorandum does not consider the costs of any additional remuneration of teachers to support residential outdoor education. It does consider the costs of providing supply to those schools that do not currently undertake residential outdoor education, but does not model these costs. The FM stated—

“Given this significant level of uncertainty and variation, this Memorandum does not therefore explicitly project figures or costings for overall staff provision.” (Para 43)

The Scottish Government modelled the costs in the FM taking account of staff costs in secondary schools and inflation. This produced a “central estimate of £32.2m, and a potential cost range of £24.3m – £40.6m for rollout in 2025/26” although the Government continued that this estimate was “based on the Financial Memorandum methodology for centre and transport costs, this is a potential underestimate as stated above. It also does not account for additional costs associated with ASN pupils.” The Government has said “the Bill’s provisions, as currently drafted, are unaffordable.”

The Association of Headteachers and Deputies in Scotland said that while it considers “the opportunity to attend such course is of huge benefit to a great many pupils” it does not support the Bill. It said—

“In a time of significant financial constraint, when schools are losing staff and school leadership time, there are priorities which are far higher up the list than this proposal. Currently, if £34m became available to school education, AHDS would argue for every penny to be spent on better supporting pupils with additional support needs.”

The Member in charge has put forward ideas of alternative models of funding to support the Bill. Ms Smith has highlighted schemes where Government is partnering

with philanthropy and the third sector, she specifically mentioned [Inspiring Scotland](#) and [Rethink Ireland](#) which takes a “venture philanthropy” model.

Generally, the third sector may work with Government to fund outcomes or projects to create additionality above what the state must provide. Another model is where the state funds the third sector to deliver a statutory service. The Minister told the Committee—

“With a statutory duty, funding has to be guaranteed year on year via the budget process. With a public trust model, there could be years when private investment was not forthcoming, which would mean that the Government would be responsible for paying a higher share, however the proportions were originally worked out. Public trust funding is not reliable. Although it works in other areas and could be used to improve the estate, it is not viable to include it in the statutory duties that would be introduced by the bill.” (27 November 2024, Col 36)

## *Transport*

The FM said that the Member in charge “assumed that the majority of the school parties will be transported by coaches, which would require to be hired with a driver.” (Para 29). The FM also noted that “the cost of transporting pupils and staff to and from centres will vary considerably” (para 28).

The submission from Brusntane Primary School reported that the “cost of bus travel has also increased significantly” recently. Island local authorities also expressed concern around the particular costs schools in accessing outdoor centres on the mainland. Shetland Islands Council said—

“It is worth highlighting that children from the northern and western Isles of Scotland would have significantly longer travel requirements, including overnight ferry travel to attend mainland outdoor centres, which would increase the length and cost of these trips.”

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar also highlighted that additional costs that could be faced by its schools which it argued was not properly considered in the Financial Memorandum. It said—

“The prime concern we have is the large additional cost we incur for ferries, buses and additional nights of accommodation due to the extra travel required. Costing for a trip for a class in our largest primary school calculated in August 2024 quoted £24,000. This is just one example and there is real concern that funding will not be sufficient.”

The Member in charge told the Finance Committee—

“I agree that, in cases in which groups from islands attend residential outdoor education, costs will definitely be higher. I think that those costs are offset by lower costs for school groups on the mainland that have a shorter distance to travel.” (19 November 2024, col 4)



## Staffing

The support for school trips, from the perspective of the school, is largely supported by teachers, other staff and parents/carers. Staff accompany pupils on a voluntary basis.

Members of the Committee undertook a session with EIS members on 9 December where issues around staffing were discussed.

The Committee's call for views included responses from individual teachers who had experience of supporting residential outdoor education, many of whom were very positive about the experiences offered to pupils.

A headteacher told the Committee that it is "increasingly difficult to enlist the huge amount of goodwill and sacrifice needed from staff to accompany these visits [due to] family commitments or huge responsibilities being placed on them to manage increasingly challenging behaviour or pupil support needs." He continued, "if staff are unable to support then it falls on already overstretched school leadership to make the sacrifices required". Another teacher said—

"Annually in my school a growing % of learners opt out of the residential trip. Although heavily encouraged, funding sources identified, parents consulted with etc, this number is growing. We are now ending up providing a dual service so that those not going don't feel 'left out'. We appreciate that this is a construct of our own making. In some cases, it would not bother the families if we were not providing day trips, however, in other cases, there is a growing expectation that we do. Again, staffing this is an issue. And there are costs and administration involved."

Some respondents to the Committee's call for views said that the current reliance on volunteers to support trips may not be sustainable if residential outdoor education became a duty on local authorities. It has been argued that requiring teachers to attend would require a change in teachers' terms and conditions, which would need to be agreed nationally through the [SNCT](#). COSLA's submission said—

"At the moment teaching staff support residential trips on a voluntary basis, this approach would not be sustainable should the Bill be passed and duties are placed on local authorities to support trips for all children and young people.

"This would require work through the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) to discuss teachers' terms and conditions, which could be a challenging process to agree."

EIS' submission stressed that "any such change to the contractual position of teachers requires to be negotiated through the" SNCT. EIS submission noted that any agreement to such a change would require additional remuneration to be provided and that "any effort to impose such changes through legislation rather than via the established negotiating forum would certainly be damaging to those industrial relations and the principles of fair work." Tara Lillis from NASUWT said that "having an additional contractual requirement for overnight stays is unlikely to garner support from the trade unions" (13 November 2024, Col 10).

Because teachers' terms and conditions are agreed nationally. If a change to terms and conditions were required, or a financial inducement for teachers to volunteer to

go on trips, this is likely to apply nationwide, including for those who are currently undertaking this work for no additional reward.

Employees have a duty to follow lawful and reasonable instructions from their employers. Employment contracts often contain a clause stating they must follow all reasonable requests from their employers or words with similar effect. However, even if the duty does not appear as a term in a contract of employment, it will be implied by the courts (in other words, the contract will be read as if it contained such a term). What constitutes a reasonable instruction is very dependent on the specific circumstances of the case. Relevant considerations include:

- lawfulness – an instruction must be lawful for an employee to have a duty to follow it (including working time – breaks etc.)
- risks – an employer should have adequately considered any risks (such as safety risks) to the employee
- whether the instruction is consistent with the nature of the contract – this will usually be less about the specific terms and more about the overall nature of the contract (for example, it may be unreasonable to ask a joiner to do the work of a plasterer).

The Committee explored whether central teams could support the types of residential outdoor education. Dr Scrutton said—

“Just as we have specialist music teachers and PE teachers who are peripatetic, we could have teachers who are trained as specialists in outdoor learning. They could go away with one school at one time and another school at another time. Certainly, the personnel who would be involved in this is an issue that will have to be sorted out.” (6 November 2024, Col 17)

Andrew Bradshaw from SAPOE said—

“We are seeing schools thinking creatively about the use of not only volunteers and partners but people like trainee teachers who find going on a residential to be a beneficial experience for them. That is an important aspect. Going on a residential can provide high-quality, career-long professional learning not only for them but for other teachers in the school. I absolutely acknowledge the challenge of volunteering and contracts, but mixed solutions are evident across Scotland, where schools are being creative while maintaining safety and quality all the time. Often, that is enhanced.” (13 November 2024, Col 18)

As noted above one of the key benefits of residential outdoor experiences is the improved relationships between staff and pupils.

## **Responses from local authorities**

As noted earlier in Members’ papers, the Committee agreed to write to five local authorities seeking information on how residential outdoor education is delivered. The Committee asked:

1. The number of pupils currently receiving residential outdoor education provision each year over the last 5 years in your area, including a) the age

range of participants and b) the number of participants with additional support needs

2. The number of staff attending residential outdoor education trips.
3. The number of staff that had refused to take part in residential outdoor education trips.
4. Whether your local authority has any local agreement with teachers on whether they must be willing to attend these residential outdoor education trips and if this is covered in the LCNT.
5. The costs associated with residential outdoor education provision and how these costs have changed over the last 5 years.

At the time of writing the Committee has received three responses – from Aberdeenshire, City of Edinburgh and Glasgow City Both Aberdeenshire and Glasgow were able to provide only partial information. For example, Glasgow supplied data and costs relating to visits to its own centre at Blairvadach. Glasgow City’s submission noted, “the centre is always fully booked which means that those who cannot attend Blairvadach use ROE centres across Scotland.” Aberdeenshire also stated that not all the information requested is collated.

Aberdeenshire reported that 3076 pupils experienced ROE in 2024. This is around 8.5% of the total roll and higher than the average year in Primary in that local authority. Edinburgh reported that 7943 pupils experienced ROE in 2023/24 – which was around 14.7% of the total roll. Edinburgh included pupils who had experienced Duke of Edinburgh expeditions in its data. It reported that 4142 primary pupils experienced ROE in 2023-24; last year the P7 roll in Edinburgh mainstream primary schools was 4467.

Data on staff refusing to undertake ROE visits was not collected. The City of Edinburgh Council commented—

“CEC school staff may say ‘no’ for several reasons. For example, personal circumstances at a specific time may make someone who normally attends outdoor education residential temporarily unavailable. This is completely different to a single member of staff who refuses to attend any outdoor education residential visits. Our experiences are that CEC schools are very proactive and skilled in managing suitable and sufficient supervision. Caution is therefore required when collecting this information.”

None the local authorities that responded have a local agreement in relation to ROE.

Edinburgh council reported that the transport costs were around “between £1100 and £1500 for the drop-off and pick-up”. The City of Edinburgh Council provided data which seems to show that transport costs are significantly higher in recent years compared to 2019. It said, “the Council would welcome a coordinated national discussion about the potential for using the existing [U22s free bus pass scheme](#) to support transport costs.” It also provided data that showed increases in Outdoor Centres’ charges.

**Ned Sharratt, Senior Researcher (Education, Culture), SPICe Research  
12 December 2024**

Note: Committee briefing papers are provided by SPICe for the use of Scottish Parliament committees and clerking staff. They provide focused information or respond to specific questions or areas of interest to committees and are not intended to offer comprehensive coverage of a subject area.

## Annexe B

# Education, Children and Young People Committee

## Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill - informal session with teachers

Monday 9 December 2024

Note of discussion

### Committee member attendees

Douglas Ross MSP (Convener)  
Jackie Dunbar MSP (Deputy Convener)  
Pam Duncan-Glancy MSP  
Ross Greer MSP  
John Mason MSP

### Discussion on Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bil with teachers.

The Committee spoke with teachers from a range of primary, secondary and special schools on the Bill. The session was organised by EIS at the request of the Committee. The following summary is intended to provide an overview of the main themes that emerged from those discussions.

### **General views on the Bill and the suggestion that local authorities and schools would have to offer residential outdoor education to every pupil?**

- Teachers said that having an obligation on them to attend residential trips would be a significant change to their terms and conditions which would need proposed amendments to the SNCT Handbook to go to the SCNT tripartite body for agreement.
- One teacher said they had a 'heavy heart' in relation to the Bill as it has good intentions however there were too many unknowns on how it would work in practice and it is not clear how teachers would cope with increased demands.
- Concerns were raised that teacher/pupil ratio numbers for out-of-school activities are currently 1 to 10 for mainstream classes and if the Bill became law, greater numbers of staff would be required to support additional support needs and behaviour of concern.
- Teachers said residential trips tended to be staffed by younger staff members with no parental or caring responsibilities or temporary staff who felt they

would be more likely to gain a permanent contract, as well as those looking for career advancement - which raised equality issues.

- One teacher said the majority of primary school teachers are female, many with primary caring/parental responsibilities, and expressed concern regarding making it a requirement to attend a week-long residential trip.
- Teachers talked about increased violence against staff - which would have an impact on any requirement to offer residential trips to every pupil. This was challenging in a school setting where support is on-hand, but outwith school less support would be available.
- Teachers highlighted the difficulties in getting cover for a Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher when they are needed to attend a residential trip.
- One teacher highlighted the closure of many local authority outdoor centres and said the costs would be prohibitive if private centres would have to be used in order to fulfil the obligations of the Bill.
- One teacher raised the practicalities of composite classes where one half of the class attends a residential and the impact on teachers' workload planning for both classes (i.e. those attending as well as those not attending the trip). This created additional cover implications for primary schools in terms of teaching staff and pupil support assistants who worked with more than one child.
- One teacher gave the example of where teachers willingly volunteer to support extra-curricular sports and music activities however said that if they were mandated to participate in residential outdoor learning, that this would change the nature of the relationship and potentially impact wider extra-curricular activities.
- One teacher said the Bill needed to be considered as part of the wider outdoor learning policy as set out in the Curriculum for Excellence and spoke of the cluttered curriculum where often well-intentioned national priorities are added and nothing else removed which created overload in schools.
- Teachers said that other forms of outdoor learning other than residential trips can be useful however they too have implications for staffing levels and it was felt that they were not as beneficial as residential trips. Some, but not all, schools had opportunities for outdoor learning on their doorstep.
- It was highlighted that, if the Bill were to become law, the timescale for renegotiating terms and conditions at SNCT could be lengthy. One teacher said any attempts to circumvent SNCT negotiations via legislation would be viewed seriously by EIS.

### **Sustainability of the current model for residential trips**

- Teachers said the current model is reliant on volunteers and would continue to work so long as there are teachers volunteering to attend residential trips.
- One teacher said that there is no involvement from the SNCT in relation to residential trips because there is no contractual requirement for teachers to attend and they therefore have a choice whether or not to attend.
- Teachers raised the cost of the school day and said it is becoming increasingly more difficult to organise residential trips for pupils living in high deprivation areas. There were numerous hidden costs attached for families.

### **Why teachers volunteer to support residential outdoor education and the impacts pupils and teachers**

- Teachers said the benefits from residential trips are long lasting and often result in improved pupil behaviour in the long term.
- Teachers said that residential trips help build trust between teachers and pupils which is extremely useful when returning to the classroom.
- One teacher explained that teachers generally want to be with their class on a residential trip and it was important in building relationships.
- Teachers said residential trips can be liberating for pupils particularly when they see themselves succeed.
- Teachers found residential trips a useful and enjoyable learning experience for teachers, as well as for pupils.
- One teacher said it was great for teachers to see their pupils outwith the school setting and to witness pupils achieving in various activities.
- Teachers said that on returning from a residential trip, pupils were often more resilient and able to persevere in difficult situations.
- Residential trips provided areas of reference for teachers to go back to when dealing with difficult situations with pupils.
- One teacher said GIRFEC is a big driver for going on residential trips.

### **Pupils with Additional Support Needs**

- Teachers highlighted the need for additional staff numbers to support the increasing number of pupils with ASN on residential trips.

- It was highlighted that pupil support assistants are also used in addition to classroom teachers to help support pupils with ASN on residential trips.
- Teachers spoke of the different approaches to residential trips for pupils with ASN. Some specialist centre staff took the lead on organising the trip and providing support, particularly in relation to pupils with complex needs. There were other occasions where teachers provided much of the support and sometimes felt unqualified to do this.
- Concern was raised regarding staffing levels and being unable to support pupils with specific ASN and one teacher spoke of occasions where pupils with ASN came to the trip but could not stay overnight as there was insufficient support available to allow them to stay.
- One teacher highlighted that extra staff are also required for planning purposes where some pupils with ASN who are not coping may have to be taken back to school.
- Teachers said consideration has to be given to the mental health and wellbeing of some pupils with ASN and how to best support those pupils on residential trips.
- One teacher raised the issue of staff training in relation to supporting pupils with ASN on residential trips.

### **Main barriers to schools arranging residential outdoor education trips**

- Teachers spoke of financial concerns as being the main barrier to schools organising and supporting residential trips.
- One teacher said the cost per residential trip has doubled and now the school organises a trip once every 2 years as opposed to annually.
- Teachers spoke of many pupils being unable to attend residential trips due to financial constraints and that currently the provision of residential trips is not universal.
- One teacher mentioned that organising trips in January and February, which is close to exams, are the only options at the moment as this time of year is the only time which is affordable.
- Teachers highlighted that schools often take a different approach to residential trips depending on the local needs.
- Teachers said that, although parents are encouraged to help pay for residential trips, not all parents can afford to.
- Teachers highlighted that the cost to parents does not just include the cost of the trip but also includes travel costs, clothes, shoes, bags etc. It was



explained that schools can provide additional costs through fundraising or through private funding in areas of deprivation where fundraising is not effective as the school community is often economically disadvantaged,

- One teacher commented that some schools have additional PEF funding which is used to help with residential trips.
- Teachers explained that it was important not to stigmatise those who cannot afford to go on residential trips but the reality remained that many pupils are unable to attend as their parents cannot afford the costs associated with the trip and the limited funds available to schools to subsidise some of the costs of the trips.
- Teachers acknowledged that outdoor centres now supply clothes and specialist kits on residential trips however made the point that other costs are incurred, such as the costs of pyjamas and clothes for the week, which some parents cannot afford.
- One teacher said that residential trips created cover issues in schools. In secondary schools, it was difficult to get subject-specific supply teachers so classes could miss out on at least a week of learning time which was already pressurised in National Qualifications courses,
- One teacher said that sometimes levels of fitness among pupils can become a challenge on residential trips.

## Annexe C

### Response from Aberdeenshire Council

Unfortunately, not all information requested is collated, however we have answered as fully as able to.

Q1 – Number of pupils attending Outdoor residentials from 2019-2024 (ytd) listed below. Age range 9-16. ASN not identified within Evolve.

Q2 – Number of staff attending residentials from 2019-2024 listed below.

Start (Year)	Start (Quarter )	Start (Month)	Values	
			Sum of Attendees (Total)	Sum of Staff (Total)
2019			2994	428
2020			399	51
2021			144	39
2022			1539	219
2023			2802	447
2024			3076	452
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>10954</b>	<b>1636</b>

- Q 3 Number of staff refused to take part – **data not stored.**
- Q4 - No agreement – we operate entirely on good will of teachers and staff being willing to give up their time / their week for this.
- Q5 – Cost – Current cost for a full week residential, 5 days activity at the Residential Centre in Aberdeenshire, including transport is £440 for a 34 sleeper, this includes 2 free teachers. Opened in July 2024. Aberdeenshire do not hold all the information for costs of trips on Evolve.
- Q6 – Feedback – Not collated, however will be in 2025.

## **Response from City of Edinburgh Council**

### **Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill**

The City of Edinburgh Council's (CEC) response to a request for information from The Scottish Parliament Education, Children and Young People Committee (15 November 2024).

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The following information has been compiled by the Council' Outdoor Learning and Adventure Education Team.

The Council continues to offer broad support for the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill based on the information presented so far. It recognises there are important questions to resolve, however this can be achieved through consultation, guidance, plus flexibility and autonomy for local authorities. This would support each local authority to develop a strategic approach and local guidance to reflect specific contexts, needs and priorities. A national funding solution is imperative to ensure equity of access.

The Council is committed to planned, progressive and creative outdoor learning experiences, integral to the curriculum. This includes relevant, accessible and impactful 'outdoor education' residential visits. Overnights, along with frequent onsite and local experiences, are complementary i.e. one should not replace another. This is because there are distinct benefits from high quality, well planned 'outdoor education' residential visits, as evident throughout this response.

The Bill is ensuring that 'outdoor education' residential visits are prominent within national outdoor learning discussions and debates. The Council is keen for this to be translated into any updated national Learning for Sustainability / outdoor learning guidance.

The City of Edinburgh Council owns and operates 3 outdoor centres:

- Bangholm Outdoor Centre (Edinburgh / residential visits: DofE expeditions across Scotland and Epic Adventures at the Bonaly Scouts Centre).
- Benmore Outdoor Centre (Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park).
- Lagganlia Outdoor Centre (Cairngorms National Park).

The OL&AE Team delivers 'outdoor education' residential experiences to about 6500 children and young people annually. CEC schools, mainly secondary schools, also use third-party providers and CEC staff self-led residential visits to ensure there is sufficient capacity and a range of aims are met. The information below therefore includes provision delivered via the Council's own centres; Council staff (self-led residential visits); and partners.

The Council welcomes visits by the Committee to our outdoor centres.

## Contents

Section 1: Questions from Committee.....	29
Question 1: .....	29
Question 2: .....	31
Question 3: .....	31
Question 4: .....	32
Question 5: .....	32
Question 6: .....	34
Section 2 Additional Information.....	35
2.1 Additional information .....	35
2.2 Council Committee Extracts .....	37

## Section 1: Questions from Committee

**Question 1:** *The number of pupils currently receiving residential outdoor education provision each year over the last 5 years in your area, including a) the age range of participants and b) the number of participants with additional support needs.*

Nearly all City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) outdoor education residential visits are undertaken by P6 – S6 pupils.

2018/19 data has been included throughout the document where appropriate. This shows a full year prior to the March 2020 Covid-19 outbreak.

**Table 1.1** Pupil numbers and change

Number of pupils attending CEC school outdoor education residential visits <sup>1</sup>	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21 <sup>2</sup>	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 <sup>3</sup>
Primary age	4996	4996	N/A	3753	4173	4142	2004
Secondary age <sup>4</sup>	3992	3992	N/A	1731	3272	3801	967
Total	8988	8988	N/A	5484	7445	7943	2971

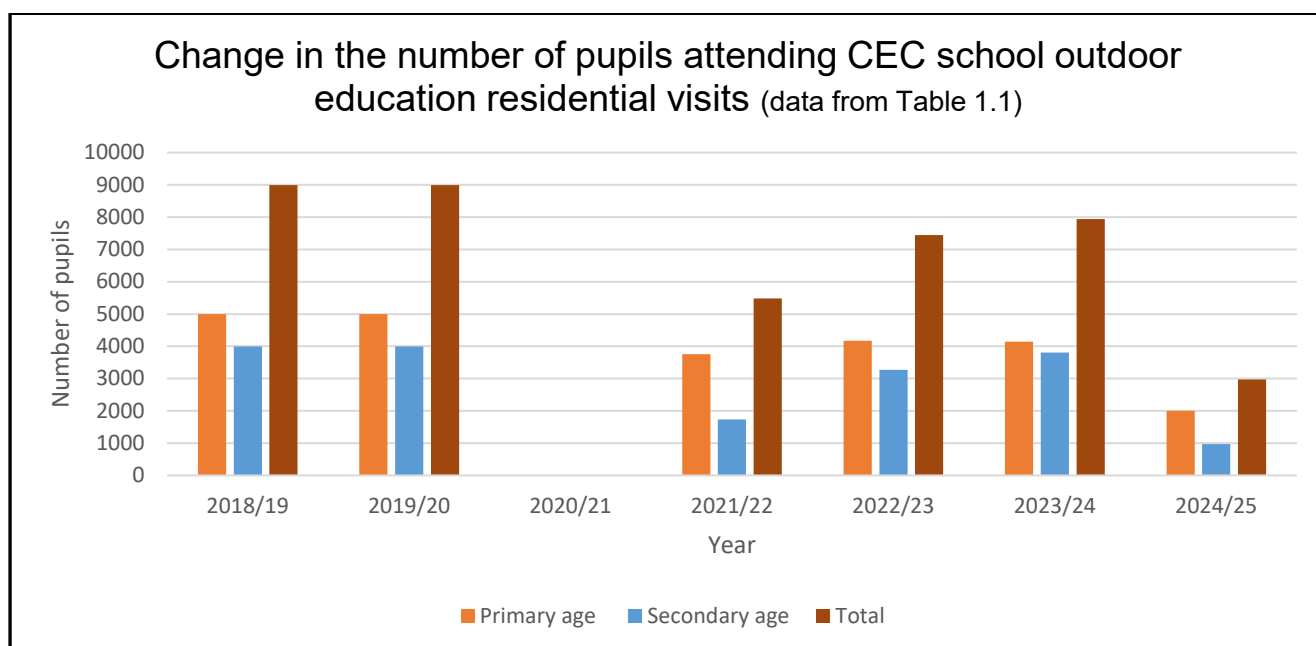
<sup>1</sup> Estimate based on central figures submitted with excursion proposals.

<sup>2</sup> No school residential visits permitted for nearly all the 2020/21 academic year.

<sup>3</sup> To date.

<sup>4</sup> Best fit; small number of mixed-age residential visits included as secondary.

### Graph 1.1



All CEC primary schools (P7 pupils on-roll) organised an outdoor education residential in 2023/24.

Nearly every CEC primary overnight experience in 2023/24 was an outdoor education residential; 99.9% of CEC primary-aged pupils attending an overnight experience did so via an outdoor education residential. For secondary, around 81.2% of CEC pupils attending an overnight experience did so via an outdoor education residential (2023/24). This lower figure reflects CEC secondary-aged pupils attending different types of residentials to meet specific curriculum needs.

Most CEC primary-aged pupils undertake an outdoor education residential visit for 5 continuous days (4 nights) – Table 2.1. The figure is lower for CEC secondary-aged pupils, which reflects specialist residential outdoor education visits of a shorter duration, including Duke of Edinburgh’s Award expeditions.

**Table 1.2** Average duration

Average duration for outdoor education residential visits (days)	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 to date
Primary age	4.3	4.7	N/A	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.6
Secondary age	3.4	3.8	N/A	4.3	4.4	3.7	3.6

In September 2023, CEC schools recorded 46% of pupils as having an additional support need. The number of pupils with additional support needs attending residential visits is not collated centrally.

The Council is committed to ensuring that every child can participate in school experiences. This includes a range of progressive and creative onsite, local and residential outdoor learning and other education beyond the classroom experiences. Council staff work collaboratively to support attendance on residential visits (see Section 2.2 for case studies).

## Question 2: *The number of staff attending residential outdoor education trips.*

Table 1.2 Supervisory adults

Number of supervisory adults attending school residential outdoor education visits <sup>1</sup>	2018/19	2019/20 <sup>2</sup>	2020/21 <sup>3</sup>	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 to date
Number of adults	893	727	N/A	546	824	1000	357

<sup>1</sup> Supervisory adults include a range of school and wider Council staff, approved volunteers and partners. The vast majority are school staff.

<sup>2</sup> Covid-19 outbreak / school closure in March 2020. No visits for the remainder of the year. Will include some 'planned post-March' visits data that did not happen.

<sup>3</sup> No school residential visits permitted for nearly all the 2020/21 academic year.

## Question 3: *The number of staff that had refused to take part in residential outdoor education trips.*

The Council does not collect this information centrally. Suitable and sufficient supervision of residential outdoor education provision is the responsibility of each school.

Our general observations include the following:

- CEC school staff who attend are generally very supportive of outdoor education residential visits and continue to support them.
- We are not aware of any CEC outdoor education school residential visit to our Benmore or Lagganlia centres that has been cancelled over the last 5 years due to insufficient staff.
- CEC school staff want to attend for a variety of reasons, including:
  - knowing the impact residential visits have on pupils;
  - developing relationships with pupils;
  - understanding pupils' needs / how they learn;
  - career-long professional learning;
  - developing relationships with colleagues; and
  - an opportunity to work in a different location / environment.
- CEC school staff may say 'no' for several reasons. For example, personal circumstances at a specific time may make someone who normally attends outdoor education residential visits temporarily unavailable. This is completely different to a single member of staff who refuses to attend any outdoor education residential visits. Our experiences are that CEC schools are very proactive and skilled in managing suitable and sufficient supervision. Caution is therefore required when collecting this information.

Our central excursions review and approval data also indicates:

- Nearly all CEC school outdoor education residential provision relies on school staff. Group leaders are generally teachers.
- CEC schools utilise a range of supervisory adult solutions, including Pupil Support Assistants; Pupils Support Officers; other school staff; wider Council staff; approved volunteers, including parents and carers; and partners. This diverse mix is highly valued and often provides specialist support. This allows the Council to deliver a significant number of appropriate, accessible and impactful outdoor education residential visits.

**Question 4:** *Whether your local authority has any local agreement with teachers on whether they must be willing to attend these residential outdoor education trips and if this is covered in the LCNT.*

There is no local agreement for The City of Edinburgh Council.

**Question 5:** *The costs associated with residential outdoor education provision and how these costs have changed over the last 5 years.*

The table below shows a range of current residential costs based on various evidence linked to internal and external supplies and services.

**Table 5.1** Some illustrative costs

A 5-day 4-night school outdoor education residential to a residential outdoor education centre.

Element	Cost range	Comments
Provider cost (non-CEC and CEC):	£300 - £650 per pupil.	Variance depends on provider (internal or external), time of year, location and type of adventurous activity.
Transport cost:	Between £1100 and £1500 for the drop-off and pick-up (provider is 123 miles away).	Varies depending on distance and time of year.
Teacher supply rate:	£334 per day.	Daily rate can vary. Supply teacher/s may be required if the attendance on a residential is not high and a cover teacher is required at school. CEC attendance rates tend to be high, city-wide average of 85% - 90% for visits to Benmore and Lagganlia.  Additional staff may also be required for visits requiring a higher staff : pupil ratio.



Specialist additional support needs kit hire:	Varies depending on needs and reasonable adjustments required.	Can be significantly higher for special school visits.
-----------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------

The Scottish Advisory Panel for Outdoor Education produced a visit calculator in 2023 to assist its membership in costing out different residential scenarios. This is attached and includes specific unit costs.

There are significant hidden costs too, including the planning and preparation time to organise a visit.

The cost of operating outdoor centres has risen significantly over the last 5 years. Our information and membership of national organisations indicates all outdoor education centres have and continue to experience significant increases in operational costs, including staffing, utilities, food and equipment. This results in higher charges to schools (see Table 5.2 below as an example). Centres have tried to minimise increases where reasonably practicable. There has also been a significant increase in transport costs as illustrated in Table 5.3, although this has stabilised somewhat.

**Table 5.2** Example changes to provider charges (outdoor education school residential).

Context: month of May per pupil visit.			
	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3
Context	4-night Outdoor Education residential centre	2-night Outdoor Education residential centre	2-night Silver Duke of Edinburgh Expedition (camping)
2019 May	£295	Not available	£105
2020 May <sup>1</sup>	£305 Planned but not open (Covid-19)	Planned but not open (Covid-19)	Planned but not open (Covid-19)
2021 May <sup>1</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A
2022 May	£325	£138	£120
2023 May	£335	£165	£135
2024 May	£372	£190	£135
2025 May <sup>2</sup>	£395	£200	£145

<sup>1</sup> No school residential visits permitted by Scottish Government in May 2020 and 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Indicative charges.

**Table 5.3** Example changes to coach charges

Context: 53-seater coach.		
	Benmore (not via the ferry) – average (c. 4 x 123 miles)	Lagganlia – average (c. 4 x 123 miles)
2019 May	£1080	£900
2020 May <sup>1</sup>	N/A: Covid-19	N/A: Covid-19
2021 May <sup>1</sup>	N/A: Covid-19	N/A: Covid-19
2022 May	£1400	£1595
2023 May	£1595	£1248
2024 May	£1480	£1175

<sup>1</sup> No school outdoor education residential centre visits permitted by Scottish Government in May 2020 and May 2021.

The Council would welcome a coordinated national discussion about the potential for using the existing [U22s free bus pass scheme](#) to support transport costs.

### **Question 6:** *Any feedback information gathered from pupils who received residential outdoor education provision*

The Council’s Outdoor Learning and Adventure Education (OL&AE) Team consults pupils and discusses their feedback from visits to its Benmore and Lagganlia Centres. Table 6.1 includes specific feedback from the latest residential pupil focus groups in October / November 2024 (two schools visiting Lagganlia – P7 pupils). This involves the OL&AE Manager talking to a group of young people whilst on the residential. It allows for a more in-depth discussion and the opportunity to explore ideas.

**Table 6.1** Example pupil feedback (Lagganlia Outdoor Centre)

	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
<b>Why a residential visit (why not day visits)?</b>	<p>You share a dorm, living away with my friends. We have the time to talk and reflect, especially early in the morning and in the evening. I really value this.</p> <p>Once we're here it's good for the environment. We are not travelling long distances each day. Plus, this saves time and we can get on with learning.</p> <p>I like getting further away, being more remote and going on a proper adventure. We couldn't do that on single days.</p> <p>Places can be crowded in and around Edinburgh. Here is more remote. I went up Arthur's Seat; it was great with a good view but getting into the Cairngorms was so much better. A proper adventure.</p> <p>It's not rushed. We have the time to try things, talk and reflect.</p> <p>We got out in the dark. That's quite tricky for a day visit. We used the telescopes to explore the stars. I would never have experienced that.</p>	<p>Sharing a bedroom and space with people who aren't your family.</p> <p>Some kids don't get the opportunity to go away with their friends.</p> <p>Going somewhere new, not been there before.</p> <p>Away from my family; hard but valuable and I have grown because of it.</p> <p>Learning about new environments in Scotland we could not easily access in one day. That means more of us can see and experience Scotland.</p> <p>Great to explore new places. If you go into town or around Edinburgh, most people are familiar with that place. At Lagganlia you learn new things or apply things I know or can do but in different places.</p> <p>You would not get the experience of packing your bag, staying in dorms, having time to talk and reflect.</p> <p>I spent time with my dad getting ready for the visit. That was great.</p>
<b>How may this experience support you back in the classroom?</b>	<p>To be more independent. Improve my communication. I have grown in confidence.</p> <p>Helped me to be a leader.</p> <p>Being more mature, helping others.</p>	<p>Don't judge a book by its cover. It may look like I won't enjoy it but you can if you persevere.</p>

	<p>Understand my friends more. Learn how they react doing activities I have not seen them do at school.</p> <p>At school we learn about nature and the environment. We talk about it a lot at school, but this week I have done it.</p> <p>Helping me to prepare for secondary school; more independent, getting ready for activities and being in places with more people.</p>	
<p>How may this experience support you outside of school?</p>	<p>To become more responsible.</p> <p>To recognise we all have different strengths.</p> <p>To be more independent.</p> <p>Has helped to me to know what I want and need.</p>	<p>Taught me to live the moment. I was cold and freezing but once I had done it – I got a sense of real achievement.</p> <p>I have learnt we can always get better at something. Trying new things and practising are key.</p> <p>Don't boast about what you have done. Think about what you say and how it may impact on people. I have learnt this week to work with different people I don't normally work with.</p>

Section 2.2 includes additional information gathered from pupils, and other stakeholders for a November 2023 Council committee report.

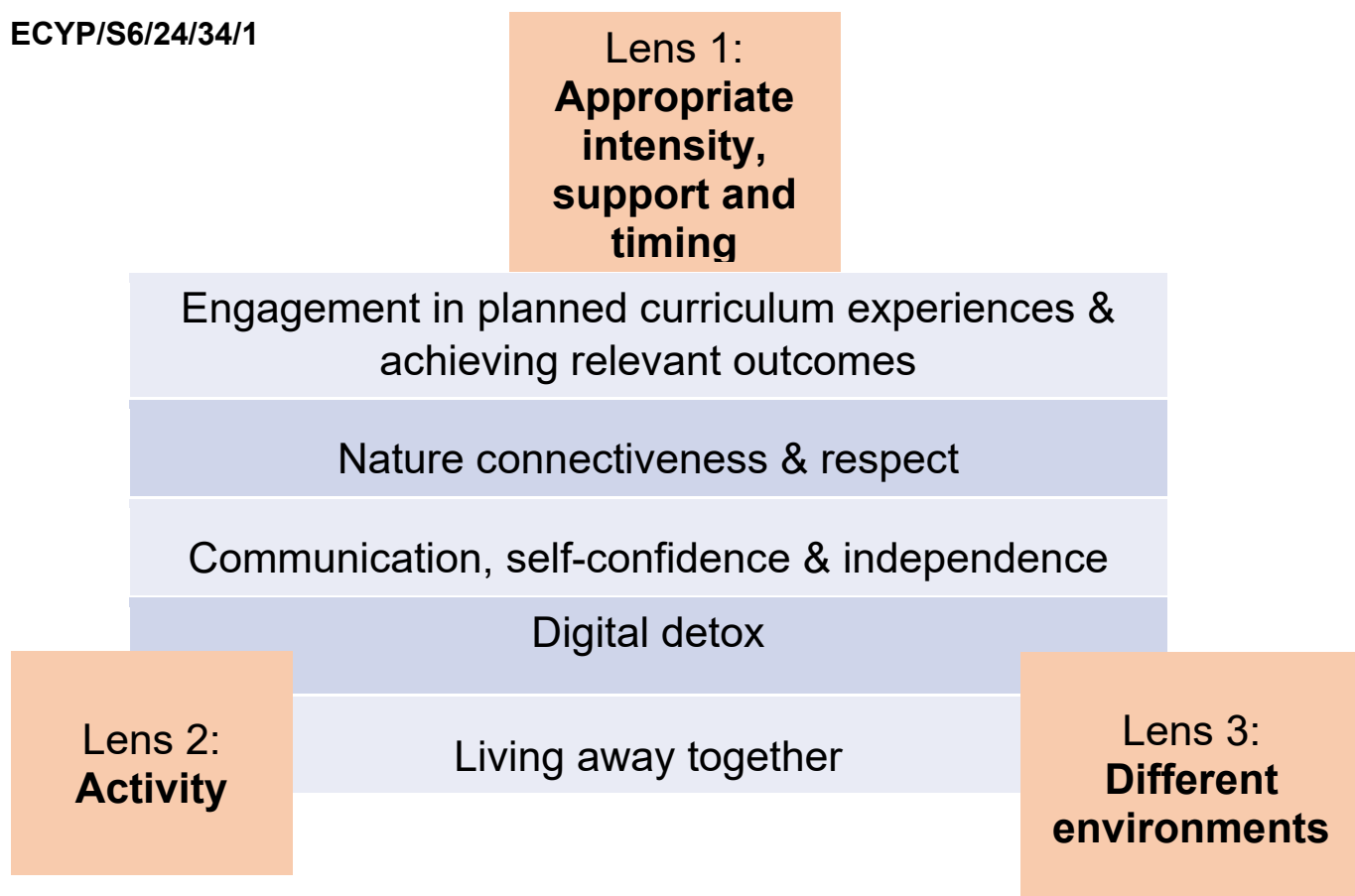
## Section 2 Additional Information

### 2.1 Additional information

The City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) continues to recognise and value the importance of appropriate, accessible and impactful outdoor education residential visits. This is based on:

- feedback from staff (see Table 2.1.1 and Section 2.2 for examples);
- feedback from our pupils, parents and carers (see Sections 1 and 2.2 for examples);
- external research (for example, but not limited to: [Learning Away 2015](#); [Holland et al 2023](#), and [Prince \(2020\)](#))
- direct observations of pupils on residential visits.

Based on the above, the Council recognises and values the following unique benefits of impactful outdoor education residential visits via 3 lenses. Research indicates that high quality pre and post work maximises more sustained outcomes. Recent national work developing a residential improvement framework will support this further.



Securing a high attendance rate on outdoor educational residential visits is critical. CEC schools and centres undertake significant work to address financial and non-financial barriers. Data for visits to Benmore and Lagganlia is collated to understand how pupils are funded and why some do not attend. This informs guidance and support. The Bill in its proposed form will make a significant contribution to removing financial barriers across Scotland.

The Council’s Benmore and Lagganlia outdoor centres collect feedback from visiting schools. This continues to be extremely positive and is used to support improvement work.

**Table 2.1.1** Benmore and Lagganlia Outdoor Centres evaluation feedback

Questions (based on the Learning Away research)	Ongoing cumulative % <sup>1</sup>	Notes
Impact on enjoyable learning: nearly all our children/young people/vulnerable adults enjoyed their visit.	91% strongly agree (100% agree)	-
Impact on relationships: overall, our visit had a very positive impact on developing peer relationships (participant to participant) e.g. child to child.	77% strongly agree (100% agree)	-
Impact on relationships: overall, our visit had a very positive impact on participant to visiting staff relationships.	80% strongly agree (99% agree)	-

Impact on a 'sense of community': our visit provided a very positive opportunity for nearly all participants to live away with others successfully (including facing common challenges and overcoming problems together as a team).	81% strongly agree (98% agree)	-
Impact on confidence: staff have noted significant and appropriate changes in many participants' confidence (within themselves, their learning and/or relationships).	53% strongly agree (88% agree)	Impact on confidence can vary e.g. significant proportion may already be confident.
Impact on attainment, health, wellbeing and engagement: Overall, staff have noted significant general improvements in: <b>Engagement and resilience by priority learners who most require to develop these qualities.</b>	60% strongly agree (96% agree)	-
Impact on attainment, health, wellbeing and engagement: Overall, staff have noted significant general improvements in: <b>Environmental awareness (age-appropriate understanding of the physical environment, threats and solutions).</b>	40% strongly agree (90% agree)	Developing environmental awareness is part of our 2025 improvement work.
Overall, our visit has been a success.	95% strongly agree (100% agree)	-

<sup>1</sup>164 responses.

## 2.2 Council Committee Extracts

From The City of Edinburgh Council Education, Children and Families Committee. Outdoor Learning – Benmore and Lagganlia Outdoor Centres. November 2023.

[Item 7.1 - Outdoor Learning - Benmore and Lagganlia Outdoor Centres.pdf](#)

## 2.2.1 Residential MATTER – Canal View Primary School



EXPERIENCE OUTDOORS

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The City of Edinburgh Council Outdoor Learning

## Residential MATTER!

Canal View  
Primary School

Cross-Party Group on Outdoor Education

28 March 2023

Extract from minutes

**Ann Moore, Former Head Teacher at Canal View Primary School**

We have developed a strong relationship with Lagganlia and the instructors there. The primary school is in a built-up area, and our young people have little access to outdoor pursuits such as canoeing or skiing. The experience goes way beyond the Residential. Young people have a voice in the planning. They find Lagganlia on the map, they share what they think the experience could be like – with teachers and peers – then they meet the instructors and they have questions they want to ask.

The buzz starts from P4, they meet cool, young instructors and see them out in the playground making dens etc. Staff were much more confident as a result of observing, chatting to and getting feedback from instructors. Two-way process, learning from each other, including the children. Very powerful as there are lots of challenges in going away for the first time, the worry of being safe and secure. Prepares them for transition into high school, they start to think – change is good, a necessary part of life, a bit scary but that's how it goes. Young people knew what they wanted to achieve, and they learned about adaptability. Sometimes it was necessary to be flexible, if the weather changed and an activity wasn't available, but they'd carry on and try a new activity and make it happen.

The relationships were improved between staff and children. It had a huge impact for both. Through this experience over more than 9 years, we felt it was crucial that every child had experience of high-quality learning outdoors. We have been lucky; Lagganlia is the gold standard, something the kids will never forget for their whole lives. Former pupils get in touch, remembering the experience. That's also the case for staff who talk warmly about the experience. For young people its development of independence, for us all its sharing and learning together. We do lots of that at school, but going to a wilderness was powerful and we then brought it back to school where children and staff worked together to develop and extend those learning experiences.

*Canal View continues to ensure high attendance at Lagganlia. Lagganlia instructors continue to visit the school. The journey continues...*

2.2.2 Residentials MATTER - a statement from the Edinburgh Primary Head Teachers' Association (EPHTA) – November 2023.



EXPERIENCE OUTDOORS

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The City of Edinburgh Council Outdoor Learning

Residentials MATTER!

The Edinburgh Primary Head Teachers' Association (EPHTA) Committee

*Benmore and Lagganlia Outdoor Centres are vital partners for schools to deliver the curriculum and offer a range of wider achievement opportunities.*

*Residentials at both centres are noted as one of the main Primary School highlights by our learners and for some of our young people this is a once in a lifetime experience. The teams at the centres provide rich and high-quality learning experiences. These build on previous learning in our schools and provide depth to the curriculum.*

*From our experience in schools of delivering residentials opportunities, it is extremely important that the centres are owned by the Council. The centres and the experiences they provide are safe and the staff teams implement and follow Council policies and procedures.*

*Staff align with values of CEC schools, working through the resilience programme to match what happens in school. The positive relationships and partnerships between the Outdoor Learning Team and schools ensure that we can provide residential experiences that meet the needs of all our young people, including bespoke programmes for individual learners. These relationships provide valuable support to school staff planning and accompanying learners, as well as reassurance to families, to enable young people's participation.*

*Schools work hard and effectively to achieve high attendance rates in partnership with the Outdoor Learning Team. The commitment to relationships, inclusion and ethos provided at the CEC centres goes above and beyond and has enabled children who would not have been able to access the experience at other settings to take an active part in residentials.*



EXPERIENCE OUTDOORS

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The City of Edinburgh Council Outdoor Learning

Residential for EVERYONE - inclusion

Bonaly Primary School

**Inclusive Benmore (Autumn 2023)**

Benmore Outdoor Centre is a truly magical place that has brought generations of children the most wonderful memories. We are always delighted with the efforts that the centre put into making this residential accessible to all of our learners in P7 at Bonaly Primary. This is done through lots of forward planning, information sharing and great team work.

**This was particularly this year for one really amazing pupil at our school, who has a visual impairment. This child was very excited at the prospect of visiting the centre, spending time with her classmates, enjoying the sensory stimulation of the wide variety of flora, and accessing as many activities as possible.**



As a school, we had a good idea of how the week would look for this child, through regular communication and planning before our departure. However, what was put in place exceeded expectations. The team's flexibility around her medical and physical needs ensured she was always safe and everything she required was accessible at the centre. The instructors (one in particular, Neil) put a considerable amount of thought into how activities could be adapted, in order to make them inclusive and enjoyable for this child. This involved using a tandem bike to take her on group bike rides and careful guidance and support on the climbing wall. The feeling of pride for all Bonaly staff on seeing this child involved at this level was really wonderful!

**Doug Short Bonaly Primary School Group Leader**

*'My instructor was kind and helpful and I thank him for helping me to ride a tandem for the first time. It felt wobbly at first, but I soon got used to it and I felt really proud of myself for doing it. Another activity I really enjoyed was climbing. Although it was an unusual feeling being off the ground, I enjoyed the challenge of trying to get to the top, and when I did... I felt really proud of myself for doing it!'*  
 P7 Pupil, Bonaly Primary School.



## Residentials for EVERYONE - inclusion

### Leith Walk Primary School

#### School, Outdoor Learning and other Council staff work collegiately to maximise attendance.

Leith Walk Primary School's 2022/23 visit to Lagganlia is a fine example. The School worked closely with Lagganlia to create a fabulous week for a P7 pupil with additional support needs. This included liaising with ASLS and Fleet to ensure onsite and offsite access and support. Juniper Green PS kindly swapped a member of staff so there was sufficient 2:1 support.

*'Lagganlia was an epic win! I loved it, and want to go straight back. I did climbing and abseiling. Kris was my instructor he was funny and he helped me do things I thought I could never do like kayaking and abseiling.'*

#### Leith Walk P7 pupil

*'The trip would not have happened without the hard work of Amy Barr and the School in arranging the correct support and ensuring everything was in place for our son to enjoy this experience with his class.*

*Huge thanks to Blanca and Stuart, who accompanied him. It was crucial in allowing him to experience a taste of independence, much like his peers.*

*The staff at Lagganlia were amazing! Our son absolutely loved it! He was able to try so many activities and have so many adventures that he would never have had access to without all the help from the Lagganlia team.'*

**Pupil's parents**



## The City of Edinburgh Council Outdoor Learning Team

# GIRFEC and Child Planning Meetings (CPMs)

School, Centre and other Council staff work effectively to ensure pupils can attend residential visits. This often involves Centre staff attending MS Teams meetings, including CPMs and hosting pre-residential visits by families. This demonstrates the benefits of the Council operating its own centres.

**Katharine Mackintosh**

Depute Head Teacher, Liberton Primary School

I am responsible at Liberton Primary for planning and leading the P7 residential to Benmore. Increasingly over the years we have seen the hugely positive impact this experience has for our children with additional support needs.

Although there is often a lot of apprehension on the part of learners and their parents/carers beforehand, we have found many pupils in the CPM system have benefitted hugely and the experience is regularly referred to in CPMs as having been a great success. The impact we see is around engagement and participation as well as children developing socially and emotionally. It often leads to adults raising their expectations around what is possible for the child to achieve having seen what is possible in a different context.

In order to make the experience a success we ensure we have individual plans and meet regularly with parents in the run up to the week away. Sometimes these plans include supports and strategies we find are not needed, partly due to the environment and experience supporting inclusion. The Benmore experience often raises the confidence of children with additional support needs. It contributes positively to preparing them for the changes ahead with transition to high school, through developing strategies to manage new environments and challenge their own and others' perceptions of what they are able to achieve.

## Residential MATTTER - don't just take our word for it!

Best memory of primary school, learned to be without my phone, learned lots and related this to stuff I'd learned at school like maths. I had to dig deep and conquer my fear of heights. Used my determination to overcome a fear of heights. All round brilliant! Best experience and I would go back in a heartbeat!

I would recommend this experience to everyone - it was amazing. There were some wee accidents, so people had to learn to manage risk.

Feedback from former P7 pupils at Craigroyston Primary School (now in S1).

The people who were there were loving and caring- they made us feel safe and secure.

Comfy beds and nice room: great sleep. Not all about outdoor learning, we did other stuff too. Gorge walking was challenging but great- had to push myself.

**In-depth feedback from a parent at Craigroyston Primary School.**

For my daughter - helped her to ride a bike - never interested and she went mountain biking and loved it. Huge increase in confidence and interest in cycling. She still cycles now- all thanks to camp!

Confidence - significant impact, pushed herself and was pushed and supported just the right amount.

She tried new foods so helped her to experiment with foods and social eating.

Offered opportunity to develop her independence, organising herself, her equipment and setting her level of challenge etc.

As a parent, I believe it's essential that our children get the opportunity to experience new places... some of our kids never get beyond the very local spaces - how wonderful to exercise the great outdoors in such high quality environments. Wild - but safe!

Honestly - my child loved it, still talks about! Crucial that they get this opportunity- that the Council offers it and ensures cost is not a barrier is amazing.

Getting a break from technology- away from Social media for a week is hugely beneficial for the children.

## Pupil feedback

*Going to Lagganlia made me feel more confident about myself and my abilities. The staff at Lagganlia really encouraged us to do things that were difficult and challenging.*

*The staff got to know us, and they taught us about ourselves and how to accomplish things.*

*The staff made us feel more confident about trying scary stuff.*

*The staff pushed me to get better at things.*

*I learned more about my strengths and how to get better at new things.*

*The staff were amazing. They were really funny and helped us to try new things.*

*I think I made better relationships with all the P7s and with the staff at school.*

*It was overall amazing and I will tell everyone they should go.*

*I have made so many memories.*

*I tried lots of new food.*

*The whole trip was amazing, everything was great. I loved the gorge walking and abseiling.*

## Parents' feedback

Our daughter attended Lagganlia as part of the P7 camp last month. She and her friends have looked forward to their P7 camp in Lagganlia since they had heard about it from older children at the school – and the reality more than lived up to the expectation. She referred to it as “the best week of her life”!

We were particularly impressed by the sheer number of new experiences she enjoyed which took her beyond what we would normally have considered her comfort zone, but in a way that she thoroughly enjoyed rather than felt anxious about.

A specific example would be mountain biking: we've tried this with her ourselves without much success, but the guidance and encouragement offered by the staff at Lagganlia, combined with the enthusiasm of participating alongside her friends, really made the difference. She is now keen to try more – which is great news for us!

In summary, our daughter really enjoyed her time at Lagganlia, and we can see the real boost it has given to her confidence in trying new activities.

Our child hasn't stopped talking about camp since the moment she got back! She's essentially been homesick for Lagganlia which is pretty incredible having been there for only a few days. She's been on several Brownie camps before but this was somehow different - she came home a bit more grown-up, a bit more independent, and a bit more confident. Clearly the benefits of this will last far beyond P7.

*4 days at Lagganlia had a tremendous impact on my daughter. She absolutely loved it. She loved that they got to try so many activities with their schoolmates and make memories that will last the lifetime. My daughter became so emotional that she cried at school assembly when watching the video from camp and she cried at home again today while watching the video because the camp was so great and she misses the place and experiences so much. Kids are talking that it would be great to go to camp in P6 AND P7 (as some other schools apparently are doing), or to go to Lagganlia again. They have such wonderful memories from the camp, they are still filled with positivity, kindness and love of adventure.*

# Post-visit persuasive writing!

## Should I go to camp?

Dear Future p7s,

Around this time next year, you'll be going to Benmore outdoor centre/camp, and I am going to tell you all about it. Hopefully it will convince you to go. Benmore was an amazing experience and I have created so many memories there. The bus ride is only one of the many exciting parts because you know you're on the way but it gets a bit boring halfway through. When you arrive, you'll find out your rooms and make your beds, the beds are a bit squeaky, but you get used to it. Don't worry about sharing showers and people walking in whilst you're using the bathrooms as you have 2 separated showers, and you can lock the door to the toilet. They have a bottom floor, a middle floor and a top floor. I can't tell you much about the top and bottom floor as I was on the middle floor except for the fact they all have fire exits with lights that stay on at night but they're pretty dim.

If you're a picky eater, vegetarian, have allergies or a specific diet not to worry because Benmore provide food for everyone, here is what we had whilst at Benmore. Breakfast: cereal options and bacon rolls, cereal options hash browns beans and toast, cereal options and sausage rolls, cereal options pancakes and toast. Lunch: ham rolls, egg mayo rolls, tuna mayo rolls, cheese rolls and soup with bread every lunch. Dinner: fish and chips with sauce options and a salad option, cheesy pasta bake and salad options, chicken and rice with salad options and on the last day pizza with wedges and sauce. Desserts: chocolate cake, birthday cake, sticky toffee pudding and on the last day waffles with ice cream (optional) and chocolate or strawberry sauce. I'm not gonna go through all of our meals but that's pretty much all of them, if you don't like any of the food they are extremely understanding and always have another option for you.

The activity's keep you busy all day and are very fun, even if you're scared it's so worth it. A few of my favourite activities were gorge walking, abseiling and caving. You do 2-3 activities every day. A morning activity, an afternoon activity and a night activity usually the night activity is a walk or a game. By nighttime you're absolutely shattered and need a good rest. You go to bed at 10 and wake up at 8. Breakfast is at half 8 so you have half an hour to get ready for the day. After tea and cake at 5 you have an hour of free time as dinner is at quarter past 6. After dinner you are given a paper folder thing to write about your day so you can remember what you did at camp, it's basically a diary.

I know some people don't want to go because they don't want to leave their phone but camp is the most fun I've ever had without devices ever. Although you miss your parents it's so much fun and you don't have time to think about how much you miss them. When your doing activities your having too much fun to give them a second thought and when you go to bed your too tired to think about them and maybe you'll think about them at free time but most of the time your too busy or tired to. I also

## Should you go to camp?

To Future Primary 7s,

Are you questioning whether you should go to camp? Well I'm here to persuade you to go. At first camp seemed terrifying to me I was adamant about not going but then I realised that it was a once in a life time opportunity and I decided to go and it was one of the best decisions I've ever made camp was amazing and you should definitely go but here are some reasons to persuade you even More to go.

At benmore the instructors are very nice people and if you are ever in doubt about wanting to do an activity they will try to their very best abilities to get you to do it but you will never be forced to do anything you don't want to. The bedrooms at benmore are not luxury but they are nice but the beds are very creaky and the walls are thin so be quite at night and in the bathroom the showers are quite small.

When you get woken up in the morning you go down for breakfast at 8:30 and the food for breakfast is very good you get cereal then toast and a roll that can either have bacon or sausage in it. If you are worried about being bored at benmore you most likely won't be because when you are doing activities they are all fun, everything is really fun you get free time after dinner until the evening activity in free time there are rooms you can go to like the common room which is pretty much just a hall, the lecture hall which has a pool table, football table thing and connect four and then there is the library which is always quite so I'd recommend going there if your wanting to just chill or read.

When it comes to lunch every day you get soup and rolls but it is a new type of soup every day but with the rolls you get a selection of cheese rolls, ham rolls, egg mayo rolls and tuna rolls I highly recommend the cheese rolls but that is my personal opinion. When you have dinner you get different food everyday when we first arrived on the Monday we had fish n chips also highly recommend putting cheese on the chips then on the Tuesday we had pasta bake which was alright on the Wednesday we had chicken and rice also recommend putting cheese on the chicken the chicken was nice and so was the rice that was probably my favourite meal there.

After dinner you get dessert which was ok I only ate one of them so I can't really give my opinion on this one and I can't remember what we even had so your gonna have to figure that one out on your own sorry .Benmore is a great place and I highly recommend you go because you learn new skills and get opportunities that you might never get again also when you go to benmore you cannot bring any electronics so sadly you can't bring your phone but when you are there you don't really even think about your phone because you are always busy either doing activities or stuff during free time. when you go to benmore you learn to be more independent and survive without your tv and phone or your parents which is hard and once you get back home you get a good sense of achievement. I hope this has persuaded you to think about going to camp.

## Colinton

## Primary

## School

Pupils from Colinton undertake persuasive writing. Their visit provides a purpose / context for writing. The content for the letters was gained form the residential, which then allows the pupils to focus on their writing skills.

The letters are then shared with the next cohort of pupils. This provides a valuable introduction to Benmore.

# Evaluating the RESIDENTIAL

Buckstone Primary School undertakes effective evaluation with learners, parents / carers and staff each year. They then work with the Outdoor Learning Team to develop the following year's visit to Lagganlia. This supports the pre, delivery and post residential work.

## Buckstone Primary School - Lagganlia

### Learners

If you could change one thing, what would it be?

Is there anything you'd like to have known more about Lagganlia?

Was there anything missing from the kit list that you wish you'd brought?

Anything else you'd like to tell us?

### Parent and Carers

What do you think your child gained most from the residential?

Did you find the camp meeting and online question form ahead of camp helpful? Is there anything you feel we should add?

Did you find the information sent to you via email about Lagganlia helpful? Is there anything you feel we should add?

Is there anything you'd like to have had more information about ahead of the residential?

Anything else you'd like to tell us?

### Parent and Carers

What do you think your child gained most from the residential?

- Confidence in his abilities.
- Trying and enjoying new activities.
- Trying a range of outdoor activities.
- Being able to try new activities and challenging themselves.
- Confidence, time with friends and a chance to try new outdoor activities.
- Experiencing lots of different activities, independence and team work!
- Fun with friends.
- Confidence in themselves.
- An amazing experience that they will never forget.
- It was a wonderful experience and the best thing has been just pushing them out of their comfort zones in many different ways.
- New experiences.
- Self-organisation, trying new things.
- Self-confidence of being away from home for 5 days.
- Confidence.

# Residential visit calculator

## Inputs key

Free text entry	Auto (leave)
Choose from the list	

Variables					Notes
Number of pupils:					
Staffing					
Ratio (staff : pupil):					
Number of supervisory adults required:	#N/A				
Additional supervisory adults (above the standard ratio)					
Number of 1:1 staff:					
Provider	Charge			Subtotal	
Residential provider charge (5-day / 4-night / full catering):				0.00	
Transport	Type	Cost		Sub-total	
Transport 1:	None	0.00		0.00	
Transport 2:	None	0.00		0.00	
Other 1 (specify in 'type' and notes e.g. ASN transport / taxi / minibus / train):				0.00	
Other 2 (specify in 'type' and notes e.g. ASN transport / taxi / minibus / train):				0.00	
IGNORE	Type	Cost / hour	No. of hours	No. of staff	Sub-totals
Staffing 1:	None	0.00			0.00
Staffing 2:	None	0.00			0.00
Staffing 3:	None	0.00			0.00
Staffing 4:	None	0.00			0.00
Staffing 5:	None	0.00			0.00
Staffing 6:	None	0.00			0.00
Additional staffing (return any column C cells to 'none' when not in use)	Type	Cost / hour	No. of hours	No. of staff	Sub-totals



Staffing 1:	None	0.00			0.00	
Staffing 2:	None	0.00			0.00	
Staffing 3:	None	0.00			0.00	
Staffing 4:	None	0.00			0.00	
Other 1 (specify in notes):					0.00	
Other 1 (specify in notes):					0.00	
<b>Equipment and kit (return any column C cells to 'none' when not in use)</b>	Type	Unit cost	No.		Sub-total	
ASN equipment hire:	None	0.00	4		0.00	
ASN equipment delivery:	None	0.00			0.00	
Spare clothing allocation (per 30):			0		0.00	
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	Type	Unit cost	No.		Sub-total	
Food - snacks (per 30):			0		0.00	
Other 1 (specify in notes):					0.00	
Other 2 (specify in notes):					0.00	
Other 3 (specify in notes):					0.00	
Other 4 (specify in notes):					0.00	
<b>Adjustments</b>	Type	Unit cost	No.		Sub-total	
Other 1 (specify in notes):					0.00	
Other 2 (specify in notes):					0.00	
Other 3 (specify in notes):					0.00	
<b>Totals</b>						
Total cost of visit:					0	
Number of pupils:					0	
Cost allocation per pupil:					#DIV /0!	

**Not included**

School admin time.

School staff prep time.

Packed lunches on first day - either FSM or provided by parents.

**Scenarios**

		Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4	Scenario 5
Description:						
Number pupils:						
Number of 1:1 pupils:						
Staff to pupil ratio:						
Provider charge:						
Supervisory staff required:						
Transport:						
Staffing backfill notes:						
Other info:						
Per pupil price:						

		Scenario 6	Scenario 7	Scenario 8	Scenario 9	Scenario 10
Description:						
Number pupils:						
Number of 1:1 pupils:						
Staff to pupil ratio:						
Provider charge:						

Supervisory staff required:					
Transport:					
Staffing backfill notes:					
Other info:					
Per pupil price:					

### Leave

	CHOICE			LOOKUP	
1500	Staffing Teacher Main Grade SCP 1:	27.95	51036	None	0
1700	Staffing Teacher Main Grade SCP 2:	29.57	54004	PSA Grade 4 SCP 023	15.63
500	Staffing Teacher Main Grade SCP 3:	31.33	57211	PSA Grade 4 SCP 024	15.84
750	Staffing Teacher Main Grade SCP 4:	33.36	60921	PSA Grade 4 SCP 025	16.00
1100	Staffing Teacher Main Grade SCP 5:	35.25	64377	PSA Grade 4 SCP 026	16.21
1300	PSA Grade 4 SCP 023	15.63	29,361	PSA Grade 4 SCP 027	16.42
350	PSA Grade 4 SCP 024	15.84	29,760	PSA Grade 4 SCP 028	16.63
650	PSA Grade 4 SCP 025	16.00	30,050	PSA Grade 4 SCP 029	16.86
554.16 Ullapool / Stornoway route	PSA Grade 4 SCP 026	16.21	30,449	PSA Grade 4 SCP 030	17.10
843.24 Ullapool / Stornoway route	PSA Grade 4 SCP 027	16.42	30,846	PSA Grade 4 SCP 031	17.34
228.5 Dunoon / HQ route	PSA Grade 4 SCP 028	16.63	31,243	PSA Grade 4 SCP 032	17.51
474.5 Dunoon / HQ route	PSA Grade 4 SCP 029	16.86	31,667	PSA Grade 4 SCP 033	17.80
0	PSA Grade 4 SCP 030	17.10	32,119	PSO Grade 5 SCP 034	18.03
	PSA Grade 4 SCP 031	17.34	32,570	PSO Grade 5 SCP 035	18.31
	PSA Grade 4 SCP 032	17.51	32,886	PSO Grade 5 SCP 036	18.54
	PSA Grade 4 SCP 033	17.80	33,444	PSO Grade 5 SCP 037	18.81
	PSO Grade 5 SCP 034	18.03	33,867	PSO Grade 5 SCP 038	19.06
	PSO Grade 5 SCP 035	18.31	34,397	PSO Grade 5 SCP 039	19.30
	PSO Grade 5 SCP 036	18.54	34,823	PSO Grade 5 SCP 040	19.55
	PSO Grade 5 SCP 037	18.81	35,326	PSO Grade 5 SCP 041	19.60
	PSO Grade 5 SCP 038	19.06	35,803	PSO Grade 5 SCP 042	19.82
	PSO Grade 5 SCP 039	19.30	36,253	PSO Grade 5 SCP 043	20.19
	PSO Grade 5 SCP 040	19.55	36,730	PSO Grade 5 SCP 044	20.44
= 2 x passengers + 2 x empty.	PSO Grade 5 SCP 041	19.60	36,810	PSO Grade 5 SCP 045	20.74
= 2 x passengers + 2 x empty.	PSO Grade 5 SCP 042	19.82	37,234	PSO Grade 5 SCP 046	21.01
ourneys = 2 x passengers + 2 x empty.	PSO Grade 5 SCP 043	20.19	37,922	Staffing Teacher Main Grade SCP 1:	27.95
ourneys = 2 x passengers + 2 x empty.	PSO Grade 5 SCP 044	20.44	38,402	Staffing Teacher Main Grade SCP 2:	29.57
	PSO Grade 5 SCP 045	20.74	38,956	Staffing Teacher Main Grade SCP 3:	31.33
	PSO Grade 5 SCP 046	21.01	39,461	Staffing Teacher Main Grade SCP 4:	33.36
	None			Staffing Teacher Main Grade SCP 5:	35.25
0	None		0		
25	Offroad wheelchair delivery and assembly (£25 per		25		
	To add 1				
	To add 2				
	To add 3				
	To add 4				
	To add 5				

**Response from Glasgow City Council**

**Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill, Responses from Glasgow City Council.**

Context: Glasgow City Council owns and operates one Residential Outdoor Education Centre called Blairvadach which is situated outside Helensburgh. It is important to note that the information below only relates to Blairvadach. Glasgow has 142 primary schools, 30 secondary schools and 21 ASL schools. Given there are only 40 school weeks in the year, only a fraction of these schools can attend Blairvadach each year. The centre is always fully booked which means that those who cannot attend Blairvadach use ROE centres across Scotland. The costs and numbers attending elsewhere are not included below.

6. *The number of pupils currently receiving residential outdoor education provision each year over the last 5 years in your area, including a) the age range of participants and b) the number of participants with additional support needs*

Total Glasgow School Pupil Residential Visits to Blairvadach Outdoor Education Centre							
Year	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022*	2022-2023	2023-2024
Primary	1523	1090	1743	COVID	1056	1685	1141
Primary ASL	124	52	52		0	20	101
Secondary	304	572	251		20	22	374
Secondary ASL	74	25	73		79	18	76
<b>Total</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>1739</b>	<b>2119</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1155</b>	<b>1745</b>	<b>1692</b>

\* Due to COVID, residential provision did not start until 23rd August 2021

7. *The number of staff attending residential outdoor education trips*

Year	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022*	2022-2023	2023-2024
Teachers Attending	239	243	211	0	132	204	202

\* Due to COVID, residential provision did not start until 23rd August 2021

8. *The number of staff that had refused to take part in residential outdoor education trips*

We do not hold any data relating to this question. Schools have not indicated challenges attending. Most teachers generally recognise the relationship benefits that come with attending a residential alongside pupils.

9. *Whether your local authority has any local agreement with teachers on whether they must be willing to attend these residential outdoor education trips and if this is covered in the LCNT*

*No such agreement exists.*

10. *The costs associated with residential outdoor education provision and how these costs have changed over the last 5 years*

	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2022/2023	2023/2024
Total Residential Centre Costs	£1,224,516	1,038,761	£1,071,523	£963,407	£1,109,542	£1,317,399

- All costs have increased over the past 5 years.
- The table does not detail the income associated with providing the residential facility.

11. *Any feedback information gathered from pupils who received residential outdoor education provision.*

See linked documents:

- [Blairvadach Individual Pupil Feedback](#)
- [Annual Impact Report 2023/2024](#)

## Annexe D

### Letter from Liz Smith to the Convener – 28 November 2024

#### **Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill – alternative funding models**

Thank you for inviting me to give evidence to the Education, Children and Young People Committee on Wednesday 18 December as part of your Stage 1 scrutiny of the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill. I am looking forward to discussing my Bill with the Committee and responding to the evidence that has been received during Stage 1.

Having given evidence to the Finance and Public Administration Committee on Tuesday 19 November, and having watched your committee's Stage 1 scrutiny with interest, I am aware that funding the provision of residential outdoor education for school pupils has been a key issue highlighted in evidence. I note that there has been a particular focus on different funding models that could potentially be used to provide such education. This was a matter I discussed with the Finance and Public Administration Committee when giving evidence to that committee. At that meeting, I highlighted to the Committee my interest in exploring the possibility of using a public trust model of finance for the provision of residential outdoor education for young people. It was apparent that members of that committee were interested in such a model. Furthermore, I noted that, in her evidence to your committee on Wednesday 27 November 2024, the Minister for Children, Young People and Keeping the Promise indicated that she too was open to further discussion on additional means of funding. I welcome her willingness to engage in this respect.

As such, ahead of the evidence session on 18 December, I thought that your committee might find it helpful if I shared some examples of possible alternative funding models that I think could be used to fund residential outdoor education for school pupils.

#### *Rethink Ireland*

Firstly, I would encourage the Committee, in considering alternative funding models, to look at the excellent work being done by Rethink Ireland ([About Us - Rethink Ireland](#)). Rethink Ireland is an organisation which provides cash grants and business support to local charities and social enterprises to help them to develop their initiatives and give them access to networks across Ireland. It is funded by philanthropic giving from companies, trusts and foundations, as well as individuals, and receives match funding for donations from the Irish Government.

Individuals and bodies can apply for support through different funding streams. A full list of current funding streams is available on the Rethink Ireland website ([Our Funds - Rethink Ireland](#)). The Committee may be interested to note that it has relatively recently provided funding to enable young people with disabilities to engage in outdoor recreation.

*Inspiring Scotland*

A similar model to Rethink Ireland that is already in existence in Scotland is the funding model provided by Inspiring Scotland ([Home - Inspiring Scotland](#)). Inspiring Scotland was established in 2008 to tackle long-term, entrenched social problems, and to do so by using a venture philanthropy model of financial support matched with tailored development support to the charity sector. It raises money from private individuals, trusts and foundations, and the Scottish Government, and invests it in funds that seek to address specific themes. It is essentially a partnership model between government, business, the voluntary sector and others that seeks to tackle deep seated social problems and deliver change. I consider that Inspiring Scotland, or a similar body, could work to provide funding for every school pupil to undertake residential outdoor education.

*Ernest Cook Trust*

There are other trusts already in existence across the UK which the Committee may consider to be models that could be adopted to enable school pupils to receive residential outdoor education. Of particular note is the Ernest Cook Trust ([The Ernest Cook Trust](#)). This is an organisation based in Gloucestershire, which exists to give grants, fund Outdoor Learning and find innovative ways to work with funding partners, and to provide and fund Outdoor Learning programmes for children and young people. Each year the Trust donates around £2 million of funds generated through income from its estates and investments ([Grants – The Ernest Cook Trust](#)).

I hope that the Committee finds these examples of alternative funding models to be helpful to consider as it scrutinises the financial aspects in relation to my Bill. It is my view that the Scottish Government could use a model along the lines of those referred to above in providing funding to give effect to the provisions of my Bill. Alternatively, it could develop a bespoke Public Trust, chaired by a Minister, civil servant or public appointee, to enable public, private and philanthropic funding to be invested and used to provide residential outdoor education for school pupils. Such a trust might also be used for other initiatives, such as the provision of music tuition in schools or school trips.

I look forward to discussing these matters further on 18 December. As these issues were also raised at his committee, I am copying this letter to Kenneth Gibson MSP, Convener of the Finance and Public Administration Committee. I am also copying this letter to Natalie Don-Innes MSP, Minister for Children, Young People and Keeping the Promise, for information.

Yours sincerely

**Liz Smith CBE MSP**

**ANNEX – UPDATED FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM TABLES**

**ANNEXE – REVISED OVERALL COSTS ON SCOTTISH ADMINISTRATION  
(TABLES 5, 6 AND 7 IN FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM)**

**Year 1 costs (Revised Table 5)**

	<b>Low estimate</b>	<b>Median estimate</b>	<b>High estimate</b>
Cost of pupils attending residential outdoor education	£19,710,075	£26,493,413	£33,276,750
Transport costs	£1,195,620	£1,304,449	£1,413,277
Costs of producing guidance	£2,578	£4,581	£6,584
<b>Total year 1 costs</b>	<b>£20,908,273</b>	<b>£27,802,443</b>	<b>£34,696,611</b>

**Year 2 costs (Revised Table 6)**

	<b>Low estimate</b>	<b>Median estimate</b>	<b>High estimate</b>
Cost of pupils attending residential outdoor education	£20,672,602	£27,981,098	£35,289,594
Transport costs	£1,254,138	£1,368,150	£1,482,163
Costs of producing guidance	£0	£0	£0
<b>Total year 1 costs</b>	<b>£21,926,740</b>	<b>£29,349,248</b>	<b>£36,771,757</b>

**Year 3 costs (Revised Table 7)**

	<b>Low estimate</b>	<b>Median estimate</b>	<b>High estimate</b>
Cost of pupils attending residential outdoor education	£20,492,291	£27,544,833	£34,597,375
Transport costs	£1,243,070	£1,356,217	£1,469,364
Costs of producing guidance	£0	£0	£6,845
<b>Total year 1 costs</b>	<b>£21,735,361</b>	<b>£28,901,050</b>	<b>£36,073,584</b>



## Annexe E

Letter from FPA Committee to the Convener – 13 December 2024

### Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill

As you are aware, the remit of the Finance and Public Administration Committee (the Committee) includes scrutiny of Financial Memorandums (FMs) for Bills. As such, the Committee has been examining the estimated costs of the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill.

The Committee ran a call for views on the FM between 3 July and 4 September 2024 and received 9 responses, which have been published on Citizen Space<sup>1</sup>. The consultation was followed by an evidence session with the Member in charge, which took place on 19 November<sup>2</sup>.

The Member in charge then wrote to the Committee on 2 December<sup>3</sup>, providing further information on the financial implications of the Bill.

According to the most up to date figures, as provided in the Member's letter of 2 December, total costs of the Bill's provision are estimated to range from:

- £20,908,273 to £34,696,611, with a median estimate of £27,802,443 in year 1,
- £21,926,740 to £36,771,757 (with a median estimate of £29,349,248) in year 2 and
- £21,735,361 to £36,073,584 (with a median estimate of £28,901,050) in year 3 and beyond.

In her letter, the Member confirmed that “the likely annual cost of the provisions of the Bill will be at the upper end of those projections”.

The responses received to the Committee's consultation consider that the FM underestimates some of the costs associated with the provisions of the Bill, particularly in relation to staff, potential increases in the costs charged by outdoor education centres, transport, and costs associated with supporting pupils with additional support needs.

During evidence, staff pressures have emerged as a key stakeholder concern in relation to the FM. Submissions received highlighted that currently teaching staff support residential trips on a voluntary basis, and the FM does not provide estimates

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<sup>1</sup> [Published responses for Schools \(Residential Outdoor Education\) \(Scotland\) Bill: Financial Memorandum - Scottish Parliament - Citizen Space](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Meeting of the Parliament: FPA/19/11/2024 | Scottish Parliament Website](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Letter from Liz Smith MSP to the Convener of 2 December 2024](#)

for staffing costs or take into account potential overtime payments, relying instead on the continued “goodwill of staff”<sup>4</sup>.

In their submission, COSLA highlight costs related to “the necessary changes to contractual terms and conditions for staff and the associated administrative burden and potential for increased salary costs in relation to making this a mandatory obligation, as well as additional staffing resource required”.

We also note the evidence your Committee received which highlighted that should the Bill pass in its current form, the teachers’ unions would seek to open up discussions with the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers on renegotiating teachers’ terms and conditions, given the Bill relies on the willingness of teachers and support staff to support the trips.

During the evidence session with the FPA Committee on 19 November, the Member in charge responded to these concerns stating that the evidence she had heard from individual teachers, people who work in the sector and some local authorities “shows that a lot of teachers are very keen to try to participate in this kind of thing without it having major implications”. Despite this, we remain, however, concerned by the potential indirect costs that could arise (and not currently costed in the FM), should teachers’ contracts be renegotiated as a consequence of requirements in the Bill.

Written submissions received by the FPA Committee also highlight potential increases in the costs charged by outdoor centres as well as costs for outdoor centres to update their centres to comply with additional standards that may be set out in guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers under the Bill, which may have been understated in the FM.

COSLA’s submission also highlights the impact that inflation, demand and the location of schools and centres will have on the overall transportation costs, along with the additional costs that would arise in order to allow children and young people with complex needs to benefit from residential outdoor education.

Our scrutiny of the FM highlights remaining lack of clarity in relation to the potential costs of food, clothing, training, insurance and equipment, administrative costs and potential impacts on small rural schools, alongside the cost of supporting pupils with complex needs.

Related to this, we note a general lack of data on current provision of outdoor education and on schools’ own transport facilities, which hinders the ability to obtain clear estimates for these costs. We therefore welcome the Education, Children and Young People Committee’s plans to gather more statistical data and invite you to pursue further detailed information on current outdoor education provision and existing facilities, including schools’ access to transport.

In the absence of this data, we would also highlight comments made by COSLA and the Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES), suggesting that the

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<sup>4</sup> Dumfries and Galloway Council submission

requirements in the Bill are accompanied by a “need to undertake annual review to ensure the costs assumed in any funding formulae are still relative, and take account of provider rates changing, particularly linked to supply and demand”<sup>5</sup>.

In light of these concerns, the Committee explored, during the evidence session on 19 November, the potential models that could be used to fund the provision of outdoor education.

The Member in charge suggested using a public trust model, whereby the Government would work with other partners to provide support to send young people on residential outdoor education. Rethink Ireland was mentioned as a potential funding model that could possibly be replicated in Scotland.

The Member’s letter of 2 December provides further information on how Rethink Ireland operates in practice. In her letter, the Member states her view that, although “the precise nature of the governance of such a trust would be for the Scottish Ministers to decide”, “a model along the lines of Rethink Ireland, whereby government, business and the voluntary sector work together, along with philanthropic bodies and individuals, to provide the necessary and sustained funding and means to enable every school pupil to do one week’s residential outdoor education during their school career, could work very effectively in the Scottish context”.

Inspiring Scotland and the Ernest Cook Trust were also highlighted as potential models to be used for funding outdoor education, alongside the pupil equity funding.

The Committee believes there is merit in exploring the feasibility of alternative funding models, including the use of a trust similar to Rethink Ireland, and invites you to pursue this matter further, including seeking the Scottish Government’s view in relation to how such a trust would operate.

Lastly, we note the FM does not set out any costs or savings for parents. However, anecdotal evidence suggests the Bill may result in savings for those parents who currently contribute to the cost of outdoor residential education. In light of the requirement that the Scottish Ministers fund residential outdoor education, with no parental contribution towards this cost, it is reasonable to conclude that the Bill will lead to savings for those parents.

We would invite the Education, Children and Young People Committee to consider, as part of your wider scrutiny of the Bill, the evidence received by this Committee on the FM, and to pursue further detail from the Member in charge on the Bill on the matters highlighted in this letter.

Yours sincerely,

**Kenneth Gibson MSP**  
**Convener**

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<sup>5</sup> ADES submission