

Education, Children and Families Committee

10:00 am, Tuesday, 1 March, 2022

School Excursions – Equity (Further Update)

Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 Note the options available to schools to achieve progressive and creative outdoor learning experiences and an expectation to ensure that every child can participate equally in school experiences.
 - 1.1.2 Note the rationale for residential visits within a progressive approach, which also includes regular onsite and local beyond the classroom experiences.
 - 1.1.3 Note the rationale and benefits of the Council operating its own centres.
 - 1.1.4 Note the ongoing progress made since the December 2021 report.

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School Excursions – Equity (Further Update)

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Council continues to be committed to ensuring that every child can participate equally in school experiences, and that no child is excluded from these as a result of inability to meet school costs. This includes a range of progressive and creative onsite, local and residential outdoor learning and other education beyond the classroom experiences.
- 2.2 This is a report in response to the Education, Children and Families Committee December 2021 meeting (8.1) and a request for Council officers to: *'report back to Committee in one cycle on the full scope of possible alternative and equitable options, including EPIC days.'* A general update on progress since December 2021 is also included.
- 2.3 A range of options are available to schools in order to achieve progressive and creative outdoor learning experiences, including a consideration of onsite, local and residential experiences; these are reviewed. Options chosen by schools will be determined by a range of factors linked to their context.

3. Background

- 3.1 This report is linked to previous Committee Reports detailed in 8.1 and 8.2. These provide additional background information and reading, attendance data, existing good practice and the next steps for improvement and development.
- 3.2 The cost of school excursions, including residential visits, are considered as 'Part of the Cost of the School Day'; addressed alongside other costs and assessed as part of a school's performance in achieving 'Equity for all Learners' (8.8 - Education Scotland - How Good is Our School 4 – HGIS4).
- 3.3 'Outdoor Learning' is one of the three core strands of Learning for Sustainability, alongside Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development Education. Learning for Sustainability is a core part of the General Teaching Council for Scotland's (GTCS) Professional Standards.
- 3.4 Based on evidence presented in the August 2021 and December 2021 reports (8.1 and 8.2), schools are using different funding sources and spending significant time successfully reducing the cost of excursions for young people from low incomes families, including residential visits, and maximising attendance. They are also

successful in removing or reducing non-financial barriers to attendance. This is always ongoing work to avoid complacency.

- 3.5 Funding sources used to maximise attendance on residential visits include parent/carer contributions; direct national funding such as Pupil Equity Funding (PEF); other eligible Council funding for targeted pupils; eligible external grants some of which are specifically advertised to support school residential visits for certain groups of pupils; and fundraising (in line with 1 in 5 Project guidance). The Council's 2021/22 PEF guidance, designed to close the poverty related attainment gap, expects all spends to be linked to priority criteria, which includes 'Reducing the Cost of the School Day' and the 'Cost of Wider Achievement Opportunities'. This enables schools to allocate PEF to residential offsite visits, thus ensuring this funding is used to reduce/remove barriers.
- 3.6 During the 2018/19 academic year (pre-Covid), there were 3032 excursions involving 24,367 participants approved by the Council's Sport and Outdoor Learning Unit – SOLU (overnight and adventurous day activity).
- 3.7 This report links to the 'Child Poverty Update – Schools and Lifelong Learning' which is also due to be on the Education, Children and Families Committee March 2022 agenda.

4. Main report

- 4.1 Council Officers approached the request from Committee in two parts.
- 4.2 **Part 1: Review of Options Available to Schools** (as part of a range of progressive and creative outdoor learning experiences which are clearly part of the curriculum)
 - 4.2.1 The outdoor environment offers motivating, exciting, different, relevant and accessible contexts for learning. National guidance and wider advice/models advocate this should be delivered through a progressive curriculum that considers onsite, local and residential experiences (9.1). These 3 components are complementary and occur at different frequencies including regular onsite and local learning; all 3 are needed to achieve the very best outcomes.
 - 4.2.2 Schools have access to a wide range of options to deliver progression in outdoor learning and other education beyond the classroom activity. 9.2 provides a summary review of different UK-based options available to mainstream primary and secondary, and special schools.
 - 4.2.3 Linked to the expectation to deliver a range of progressive and creative outdoor learning experiences, schools choose different options specific to their context. Decisions will be determined by a range of factors including but not limited to age and needs of young people; curriculum foci; staff confidence and competency (experiences / training / qualifications); stakeholder views; group size; school and provision locations; time of year;

availability of providers; cost and access to funding; Council expectations and guidance (e.g. visiting Benmore and Lagganlia); and transport solutions. This may include sequencing residential experiences within different year groups subject to equity considerations and funding solutions. The Council expects schools to ensure that every child can participate equally in school experiences.

- 4.2.4 As schools are successfully using a wide range of funding (3.4 and 3.5), they should not automatically default to the cheapest option/s which may then be to the detriment of achieving high quality and relevant experiences and outcomes. Through a strategic approach, including allocated funding, identifying the most relevant options and training it is possible to enable all pupils to have access to sector leading outdoor learning which meets pupils' needs and allows them to achieve well.
- 4.2.5 The benefits and rationale for including residential visits within a progressive set of experiences are detailed in 9.3 and 9.4. The [Learning Away](#) organisation focuses on researching the impact of residential visits and states that: *'a residential learning experience provides opportunities and benefits that cannot be achieved in any other educational context or setting. This impact is greater when residential visits are fully integrated with a school's curriculum and ethos.'* The Scottish Government states that residential visits to outdoor centres (9.4 row 2) are: *'longstanding features of Scottish education as they allow young people to undergo a more immersive educational experience and develop skills for life such as resilience and independence. The overnight aspect is therefore seen as integral to the learning experience'*.
- 4.2.6 The rationale for the Council owning and operating its own centres are detailed in 9.5; a wide range of advantages and benefits to the Council and Edinburgh families.

4.3 Part 2: Update since December 2021

- 4.3.1 The Council is continuing to issue its Covid-19 Excursions Toolbox (updated periodically); providing position statements, resources and supporting forward planning. It considers national guidance, local transmission rates and reflects the Council's risk appetite.
- 4.3.2 The Council is continuing with its incremental restart to deliver a safe, proportionate and manageable return to high quality residential visits. 1609 pupils (up to end of January 2022) from 35 schools have visited Benmore or Lagganlia so far this year. Schools and centres are working hard to maintain a high attendance rate as described in the December Committee Report (8.1).
- 4.3.3 Regarding P7 residential visits and Covid-19 recovery, 79 Council schools are due to attend Benmore or Lagganlia this year, 6 will receive an offer via an interim P7 solution at Bonaly Scout Camp delivered by the Council (SOLU) and 4 with third party providers. Sector leading plans and resources

created in consultation with Health Protection Lothian and delivered by schools / Council's centres are minimising transmission and financial risks. SOLU continues to be available to support schools with any funding questions, request for advice and general support.

- 4.3.4 SOLU is on track to deliver its Outdoor Learning evaluation toolkit (due to be released for review in February 2022). This includes resources for reviewing excursions with staff, families and the wider community within the context of safety, education effectiveness, equity, equality and environmental sustainability (using city-wide guiding principles). This will support schools in appraising and developing the options in 9.2.
- 4.3.5 Speculation continues regarding a national entitlement of some form for school residential visits. A national consultation may emerge during Spring 2022.
- 4.3.6 SOLU is continuing to explore the Community Benefits funding to provide an additional option for schools. An initial meeting has taken place with the relevant Council Officer.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 SOLU will continue to deliver its strategic actions to maximise attendance and remove any inequality. These will assist in updating policy, checking progress, ensuring accountability and identifying priority work.
- 5.2 SOLU will continue to build workforce capacity to support self-led outdoor learning activity through its Career-Ling Professional Learning (CLPL) offer. This builds capacity, confidence, competency and can reduce costs. The Excursions Policy provides the safety framework.
- 5.3 SOLU will continue to monitor attendance on residential visits to ensure guidance and resources are used to maximise attendance in line with the Council's Making Education Equal for All Edinburgh's Pupil Equity Framework.
- 5.4 Council officers will monitor potential discussions regarding national school residential entitlements and any corresponding funding guidance and resources.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 Options and actions listed within the report are funded via a wide range of sources, including those via the Scottish Government, including Pupil Equity Funding.
- 6.2 Schools annually auditing their excursions programmes allow budgets to be allocated in advance, thus minimising financial risks.
- 6.3 There is a potential financial risk if establishments do not comply with the Education and Children's Services Excursions Policy and Covid-19 Excursions Toolbox.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 SOLU undertakes work by involving staff, volunteers, young people, families, and partners. This is via evaluation feedback; surveys; parent enquiries; discussions during training; updates to Council procedures; and meetings with colleagues from across the Council.
- 7.2 Views of parents/carers, families, and young people continue to be gathered by schools as part of the self-evaluation process assessing the impact of the interventions and supports delivered to children and young people experiencing poverty-related barriers.
- 7.3 Views and impact were and continue to be gathered from schools by the local authority in relation to the management of resources to support equity, specifically the use of Pupil Equity Funding and the content of the PEF Plan template.
- 7.4 The Education and Children's Excursions Policy provides guidance on equity and equality. Compliance with this guidance will minimise the risk of equity and equality issues.
- 7.5 A significant number of actions via SOLU and partners are specifically targeted at addressing inequality.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 Excursions – Equity Report (Update). Education, Children and Families Committee, Tuesday, 07 December, 2021. [General link to meeting documents](#).
- 8.2 Excursions – Equity Report. Education, Children and Families Committee, Tuesday, 24 August, 2021. [General link to meeting documents](#).
- 8.3 Outdoor Learning Report. Education, Children and Families Committee, Tuesday, 10 December, 2019. [General link to meeting documents](#).
- 8.4 Curriculum for Excellence Through Outdoor Learning – a planned and progressive approach: <https://education.gov.scot/Documents/cfe-through-outdoor-learning.pdf>.
- 8.5 Scottish Government guidance - Coronavirus (COVID-19): school visits and trips: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-school-visits-and-trips/>.
- 8.6 Educational value of Scotland's Outdoor Education Centres: <https://www.sapoe.org.uk/links/local-authority-outdoor-education-centres/>.
- 8.7 Coronavirus (COVID-19) - guidance to support the reintroduction of school residential visits v2 May 2021: <https://www.goingoutthere.co.uk/appendix/coronavirus-covid-19-reopening-and-operation-of-outdoor-education-centres-and-reintroducing-visits-by-schools/>.

8.8 Education Scotland – How Good is Our School? – HGIOS 4:
<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/HGIOS4>

9. Appendices

Appendix 1	Planned and progressive outdoor learning and excursions
Appendix 2	Options available to schools (UK-based)
Appendix 3	Why high quality residential visits (fully integrated with a school's curriculum and ethos)?
Appendix 4	Rationale for residential visits / different stakeholders recognising the importance of residential visits (as part of a progressive programme)
Appendix 5	Rationale for the Council operating its own centres (Benmore and Lagganlia residential outdoor centres)
Appendix 6	Edinburgh Primary Head Teacher Survey

Appendix 1 Planned and progressive outdoor learning and excursions

1.1 Curriculum for Excellence through Outdoor Learning (national guidance)

“The Journey through education for any child in Scotland must include opportunities for a series of planned, quality outdoor learning experiences”

The vision for outdoor learning in Scotland is that:

- all children and young people are participating in a range of progressive and creative outdoor learning experiences which are clearly part of the curriculum.
- schools and centres are providing regular, frequent, enjoyable and challenging opportunities for all children and young people to learn outdoors throughout their school career and beyond
- teachers and educators embed outdoor learning in the curriculum so that learning in the outdoor environment becomes a reality for all children and young people.

Curriculum for Excellence through Outdoor Learning

Learning and Teaching Scotland 2010

Curriculum for Excellence Through Outdoor Learning – reference to a planned and progressive approach. [Curriculum for Excellence Through Outdoor Learning](#).

1.2 How good is our school (HGIOS)?

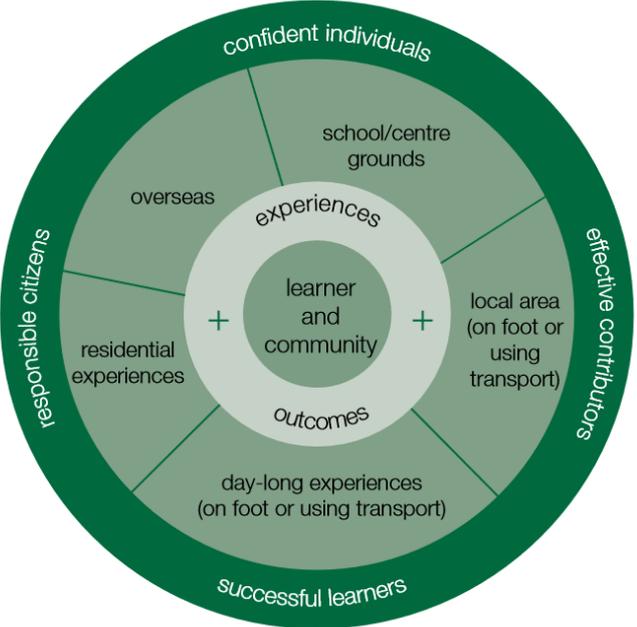
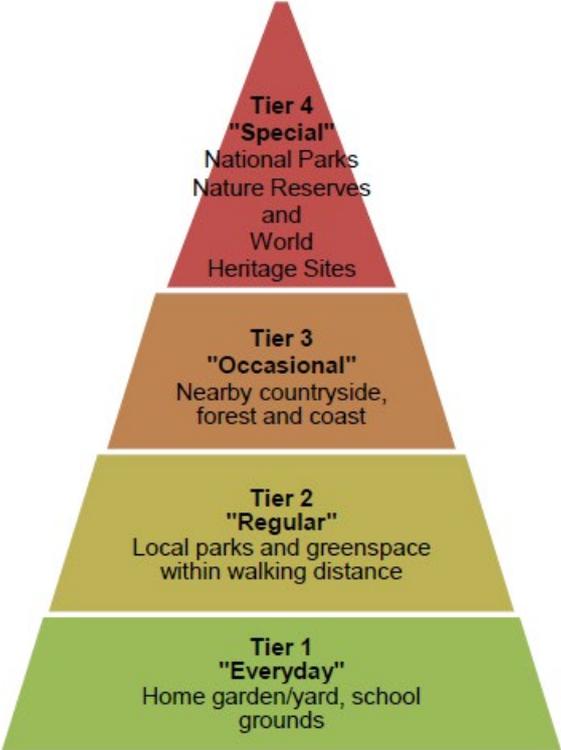
Education Scotland’s 4th EDITION of HGIOS details the importance of a progressive curriculum.

2.2 Curriculum

Features of Highly Effective Practice

Outdoor learning is a regular, progressive curriculum led experience for all learners.

1.3 Diagrams presenting a progressive approach to planning outdoor learning and excursion.

Curriculum for Excellence Through Outdoor Learning	NatureScot
 <p>The diagram is a circular model with a central core labeled 'learner and community'. Surrounding this core is an inner ring divided into 'experiences' (top) and 'outcomes' (bottom). The next ring out is divided into five segments: 'school/centre grounds' (top), 'local area (on foot or using transport)' (right), 'day-long experiences (on foot or using transport)' (bottom), 'residential experiences' (left), and 'overseas' (top-left). The outermost ring is a dark green band with four labels: 'confident individuals' (top), 'responsible citizens' (left), 'successful learners' (bottom), and 'effective contributors' (right). Plus signs are placed between the core and the inner ring, and between the inner ring and the outer ring.</p>	 <p>The pyramid is divided into four horizontal tiers, each with a different color and text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tier 4 "Special" (red): National Parks, Nature Reserves and World Heritage Sites Tier 3 "Occasional" (orange): Nearby countryside, forest and coast Tier 2 "Regular" (yellow-green): Local parks and greenspace within walking distance Tier 1 "Everyday" (green): Home garden/yard, school grounds </p>
<p>Residential experiences are included as a key consideration within the planned opportunities.</p>	<p>The pyramid provides a useful indication of frequency.</p>
<p>Onsite and local greenspaces should be regular and routine.</p>	

Appendix 2 Options available to schools – mainstream primary and secondary and special (UK-based)

Key points

- Due to the effective way schools access and use different sources of funding, the cheapest option should not necessarily be considered the default. A range of factors will be considered by schools to ensure outcomes are maximised and inequity reduced and removed.
- Due to the expectation and benefits of a progression in experiences (onsite, local and residential) and outcomes, **the options below should therefore be considered as complimentary; residential options working alongside more frequent onsite and local activity.** The exact choice will reflect individual schools' contexts and different factors.

A: Non-Residential Options				
	A1 School self-led onsite during the school day	A2 Third party onsite during the school day	A3 School self-led offsite local visits during the school day	A4 Third-party offsite local visits during the school day
Description	-Outdoor learning onsite delivered by school staff. -Frequent throughout the week.	-Outdoor learning onsite delivered by a specialist provider.	-Local offsite activity delivered by school staff. -Regular.	-Local offsite activity delivered by third parties.
Example	Orienteering around the school grounds.	-Specialist bushcraft provider.	-Regular visits to a local greenspace.	-Visits to specific locations and environments potentially requiring specialist competency and equipment e.g. local river.
Potential advantages	-No travelling. -Learning time maximised. -Suitable for all ages. -Flexible timings. -Staff tend to be more confident due to familiar location. -Supports the involvement, professional development and commitment of all school staff.	-Specialist knowledge facilitates specific activity requiring specific competences not available via a school's workforce. -Suitable for all ages. -Flexible timings.	-Active travel (environmental sustainability). -Pupils learn about their local community, including how to manage risks e.g. crossing roads. -Suitable for all ages. -Flexible timings. -Staff tend to be more confident due to familiar location. -Supports the involvement, professional development and commitment of all school staff.	-Active travel (environmental sustainability). -Pupils learn about their local community, including how to manage risks e.g. aware of more hazardous environments. -Suitable for all ages.
Key considerations	-Requires suitable clothing (equity).	-Requires suitable clothing (equity). -Cost.	-Requires suitable clothing (equity). -Following the Council's Excursions Policy.	-Requires suitable clothing (equity). -Following the Council's Excursions Policy. -Cost.
Indicative costs	-Free. -Some resource costs.	-Typically £250-£350 per day (equivalent to £7.58 - £10.60 per pupil – class of 33) – non-adventurous.	Free. Some resource costs.	Typically £250-£350 per day (equivalent to £7.58 - £10.60 per pupil – class of 33) – non-adventurous. Likely to be more expensive if adventurous activity.

A: Non-Residential				
	A5 School self-led offsite extended day visits (local or beyond local)	A6 Third party offsite extended day visits (local or beyond local)	A7 SOLU offsite events (extended day)	A8 SOLU city-wide offsite events (school day)
Description	-School staff lead an offsite activity during or beyond normal operating hours.	-Third party staff lead an offsite activity during or beyond normal operating hours.	-Offsite activity beyond normal operating hours organised by SOLU and located via third party locations.	-Offsite activity beyond normal operating hours organised by SOLU, located via third party locations and most activity delivered by outdoor learning partners.
Example	-Walk into the Pentland Hills Regional Park by school staff (subject to appropriate staff competency).	-Cycling into the Pentland Hills Regional Park by third-party staff.	-2020 P7 Epic Days programme at the Bonaly Scout Centre and Pentland Hills regional Park. -2021 programme – pilot programme to support transition (targeted schools). Targeted rather than universal - reflects key considerations below.	-P6 Outdoor Learning Challenge Days at Holyrood Park (half-day slot for each school – off to all primary schools). Due to restart in September 2022, subject to approval.
Potential advantages	-Active travel or public transport (cheaper). -Learning time increased due to extended day. -Improve pupils' sense of place: city-wide e.g. viewing Edinburgh from a different perspective.	-Access more specialist activity and/or environments. -Active travel or public transport (cheaper). -Learning time increased due to extended day. -Improve pupils' sense of place: city-wide e.g. viewing Edinburgh from a different perspective.	-Effective partnership working utilising and supporting key resources and partners within the Edinburgh area. -Potential to increase self-led activity to reduce costs. -Active travel or public transport (cheaper). -Learning time increased due to extended day. -Improve pupils' sense of place: city-wide e.g. viewing Edinburgh from a different perspective.	-Effective partnership showcasing outdoor learning partners. -Continuing professional learning incorporated into event. -Increases schools' awareness of more outdoor learning providers. -Allows pupils to explore and enjoy new environments.
Key considerations	-Suitable for some ages. -Competency of staff linked to activity and location. -Requires suitable clothing (equity).	-Suitable for some ages. -Extending beyond hours may limit frequency. -Cost. -Requires suitable clothing (equity).	-Cost -Requires significant additional tertiary staff (at least 25), plus using existing Council staff e.g. Active Schools Coordinators (significant allocation required). -Subject to availability of sufficient tertiary workers – current sector shortage of appropriately qualified instructor staff. Significant likelihood of uncertainty between each recruitment phase. -Requires a full term to deliver 1 day to all primary schools. -Requires shared use of third-party site with increasingly more stakeholder demand following Covid.	-Outdoor learning providers provide their time free of charge (normally 2 days). Therefore unlikely to be able to extend time for schools and do more than 2 days. -Requires significant time and capacity from the SOLU team to organise.
Indicative costs	-Free. -Potentially some transport costs.	-Typically £350-£500 per day (per person costs depends on activity and ratio). Potentially some transport costs.	-£38 per pupil per day plus transport (higher cost if unable to utilise existing Council staff). More realistic charge: £45 to backfill existing staff to ensure other duties are fulfilled. Costs could be reduced via more self-led activity (being worked into the 2021 targeted model).	-Free. -Potentially some transport costs.

A: Non-Residential

A: Non-Residential	
	A9 Multi-day programme delivered by a third-party
Description	-Third party staff lead a programme of separate days (non-residential).
Example	-Programme of multi-activity sessions.
Potential advantages	-Access specialist providers. -Flexibility – consecutive days or spread out permitting school-based work in-between. -Improve pupils' sense of place: different locations.
Key considerations	-Suitable for some ages. -Significant travel time each day, potentially minimising activity time and greater environmental impact. -Some providers will deliver within the school day which shortens activity time. -Potential lack of breadth in choice of activity and locations (restricted by location and time). -Unable to deliver breadth and depth of outcomes and experiences to the same level as detailed for residential in Appendices 9.3 and 9.4.
Indicative costs	-Charges will vary depending on distance, activities and providers. <u>One example – adventurous activity.</u> £45 per person per day excluding transport costs (4 day = £180 / to support comparison with a residential). Includes technical equipment. Food and transport not included. £70 per person per day including transport by the provider (4 day = £280 / to support a comparison with a residential). Includes technical equipment. Food not included. Cost can be reduced by using school self-led activity and a more restricted selection of activity – non-adventurous (subject to staff competency).

B: Residential			
	B1 Council owned outdoor learning centres	B2 SOLU delivery at a third-party outdoor learning centre	B3 Third-party owned outdoor learning centres
Description	-Residential visits to Benmore and Lagganlia (operated by SOLU).	-Residential visits organised by SOLU using third party sites.	-Residential visits to non-Council providers.
Example	N/A.	-Residential visits to Bonaly Scout Centre. -NEW for 2022: to support a very small number of P7 schools during the Covid recovery. -Medium/long term: 2 and 1-night residential for younger pupils as part of a progression of residential experiences.	-Many providers available via the Council's approved provider process.
Potential advantages	See Appendix 9.5.	-Part of a progression of residential experiences. Helps to reduce concerns by pupils about longer stays. -Develop skills in preparation for the next residential step. -Assured safety and quality (in-house). -Local to Edinburgh. -Activity delivered by SOLU (Bonaly no longer has instructors). -Technical kit provided.	-Some providers cater for specialist needs and outcomes e.g. physical disabilities and exam field work. -Provides increased capacity (Council centres do not have the capacity to deliver to all primary, secondary and special schools). -A small number of providers can take large numbers e.g. 180+, which can support some secondary schools. -Technical kit provided.
Key considerations	-The Council expects primary schools to use its Benmore and Lagganlia centres. -Cost (previous Committee reports indicate schools are generally effective in utilising a wide range of funding to reduce and remove the risk of inequality). -Length of stay. Cost can be reduced via a shorter stay. Research and feedback suggest an extended stay of 4 days is proportionate to planning time, transport costs and securing significant outcomes. -Time of stay – seasonal prices.	-Cost. -Capacity for staying indoors – 70 pupils (limiting factor). -Requires additional tertiary/fixed term staff. -Requires shared use of third-party site with increasingly more stakeholder demand following Covid. -Significantly less choice of activity e.g. no watersports, environments e.g. no gorges and more onsite activity e.g. onsite climbing tower rather than rock climbing. -Likely to be unable to meet universal demand – targeted offers likely and SOLU is currently devising a new innovative programme involving Bonaly. -Potential to increase capacity via camping and expand to family provision (lower cost).	-Quality (activity, food and buildings) varies between providers. -Some providers only supply onsite activity which can easily be accessed in or around Edinburgh. -Some providers allocate different instructors per day or even per activity. -Some centres rely on in-house training rather than national governing body qualifications. -Cost (previous Committee reports indicate schools are generally effective in utilising a wide range of funding to reduce and remove the risk of inequality). -Length of stay. Cost can be reduced via a shorter stay. Research and feedback suggest an extended stay of 4 days is proportionate to planning time, transport costs and securing significant outcomes. -A few providers offer subsidy schemes for disadvantaged pupils. -Time of stay – seasonal prices.
Indicative costs	4-night stay charges range from £290 - £335 (excluding transport).	Estimated 2-night stay £135.	4-night stay charges range from £244 - £424 (excluding transport).

B: Residential

	B4 School self-led visits to third-party owned centres	B5 School self-led onsite residential (outdoors)	B6 School self-led offsite camping
Description	-School staff hire third party centre. -May be self catering or pay for food.	-School staff deliver an overnight camping experience at the school – greenspace.	-School staff deliver a camping expedition.
Example	-Selection of venues across the UK, including close to Edinburgh.	-School playing field.	-Duke of Edinburgh’s Award camping expedition.
Potential advantages	-Support specialist need e.g. field work or additional needs. -Smaller size support some pupils. -Self-led may deliver better outcomes. -Flexibility in programme design and ad-hoc changes.	-Lower cost, shorter duration overnight experience as part of a progression in residential experiences. -Familiar location to assist with maximising attendance. -No transport costs / lower carbon footprint.	-Supports specific wider achievement awards. -Generally lower cost when compared to using external providers. -Flexibility e.g. not reliant on provider availability. -Potential for primary schools to develop this kind of provision.
Key considerations	-Cost. -Staff confidence and competency to self-lead. -Size of venue – often only support small groups. -Access to activity and environments (potentially limited to staff competency). -Planning and preparation time.	-Restricted in breadth of activity, experiences and location. Generally low risk non-adventurous activity. -Suitability of site including security and access to indoor resources e.g. toilets. -Subject to Council approval. -Staff confidence and competency to self-lead. -Planning and preparation time.	-Staff confidence and competency to self-lead. -Planning and preparation time. -Access to technical kit. -Access to competent staff. -Succession planning e.g. member of competent staff leaves.
Indicative costs	-Vary significantly depending on venue and location. -Normally lower cost than fully-serviced residential visits due to being self-led.	-Low. Potential cost of kit hire e.g. tents, food and facilities management costs.	-Transport, food, kit hire and camp site fees. -Typically up to £12 per day.

B: Residential

	B9 Third-party offsite camping	B10 SOLU delivery of offsite camping	B11 Third party package tours
Description	-Third party staff deliver a camping expedition for a school.	-SOLU staff deliver a camping expedition for a school.	-Package tour company for a school – accommodation, food, transport and activity.
Example	-Duke of Edinburgh's Award camping expedition.	-Duke of Edinburgh's Award camping expedition.	-Many specialist tour companies exist.
Potential advantages	-Supports specific wider achievement awards. -Access to specialist competent staff. -Potentially a wider choice of locations. -Potentially access to kit. -Some providers offer transport solutions / expedition packages – less planning time for school staff.	-Supports specific wider achievement awards. -Access to specialist competent Council staff. -Potentially a wider choice of locations. -Access to technical kit. -Transport included.	-May support specific experiences and outcomes linked to a school priority, which requires a residential experience. -Access to specialist persons. -Visit managed by a specialist thus reducing planning and preparation time for school staff.
Key considerations	-Cost. -Provider availability and capacity.	-Cost. -Availability and capacity.	-Cost. -Required experiences and outcomes. -Location and distance.
Indicative costs	<u>One example (paid staff not volunteers):</u> £60 - £80 per day including transport, kit hire, campsite fees and instructors. Some organisations use volunteers and external grants which may reduce costs.	£35 - £40 per day including transport, kit hire, campsite fees and instructors.	Vary significantly. Typically more expensive than self-led activity.

Appendix 3 Why high quality residential visits (fully integrated with a school's curriculum and ethos)?

The [Learning Away](#) organisation focuses on researching the impact of residential visits and states that:

'a residential learning experience provides opportunities and benefits that cannot be achieved in any other educational context or setting. This impact is greater when residential visits are fully integrated with a school's curriculum and ethos.'

Research via Learning Away indicates the following:

Residential visits provide the opportunity and experience of living with others. This transforms relationships and develops a strong sense of community and belonging between staff and students involved. Our evaluators found that this sense of community supports a wide range of positive social and learning outcomes long after the return to school.

The table below sets out Learning Away's theory about the changes that happen to learning through high quality residential experiences (**rooted in research**).

Residential bring:	Which in the short and medium term lead to:	Which in the longer term lead to:
The overnight stay and an intensity of experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended time away from home • A new environment and routines • Fewer distractions • Opportunities to work intensively and be immersed in learning • A collaborative community environment • Unstructured time 	Enhanced relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students and staff trust each other • Students feel more able to ask staff for help • Students feel more comfortable with each other • Students are more able to empathise • The sense of community is sustained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved achievement, progress and attainment • Improved knowledge, skills and understanding • Improved relationships • Improved engagement • Improved behaviour and attendance • More successful transition experiences (at all key stages)
A new context for relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to break down existing barriers, hierarchies and power relationships • Students and teachers work more collaboratively in unfamiliar surroundings on unfamiliar tasks • The teacher is not automatically the expert • Residential are a leveller for students and staff • Opportunities to develop and practise key social skills 	Improved engagement and confidence in learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased motivation and engagement • Improved behaviour and attendance • Increased participation in lessons • More enjoyment of learning • Enhanced confidence, resilience and wellbeing • Increased ability to overcome challenges and try new activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised aspirations • Greater cohesion and a sense of belonging • Enhanced trajectories to work, sixth form, further and higher studies
Different and varied opportunities to experience success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of practical and physical challenges • Opportunities for everyone to be successful at something • Opportunities to overcome fears • Immediate opportunities to revisit and build on learning experiences 	New and developing skills and understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New learning continues to develop, including skills in: independent learning; study and research; self management; communication; team working and problem solving • Deeper and better understanding of specific subjects/topics • Developing vocabulary • Improving creativity • Meaningful opportunities to develop and practise leadership skills • Increased ability to apply learning and skills in new contexts 	
New ways of learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A safe space to explore new ways of teaching and learning • Focus on real-life activities and experiences • Increased levels of student responsibility 		

Appendix 4 Rationale for residential visits / different stakeholders recognising the importance of residential visits (as part of a progressive programme)

	Key points	Links
1	<p>High quality residential visits can deliver unique and intensive opportunities to achieve significant outcomes.</p> <p>The Learning Away organisation focuses on researching the impact of residential stays and states that: <i>'a residential learning experience provides opportunities and benefits that cannot be achieved in any other educational context or setting. This impact is greater when residential visits are fully integrated with a school's curriculum and ethos.'</i></p> <p>Research indicates the importance and impact of residential experiences. For example, <i>'Impact of residential experiences on pupil progress and attainment'</i> (A Learning Away 2015 Comparative Study in partnership with University of Cumbria).</p>	<p>Example research.</p>
2	<p>The Scottish Government describes the importance of outdoor learning school residential visits via its national COVID-19 guidance, stating these are:</p> <p><i>'longstanding features of Scottish education as they allow young people to undergo a more immersive educational experience and develop skills for life such as resilience and independence. The overnight aspect is therefore seen as integral to the learning experience'.</i></p>	<p>Scottish Government link</p>
3	<p>National education guidance incorporates residential experiences within schools' considerations for delivering progression in outdoor learning.</p> <p>The <i>Curriculum for Excellence Through Outdoor Learning</i> sets out a vision which includes; <i>'all children and young people are participating in a range of progressive and creative outdoor learning experiences which are clearly part of the curriculum'</i></p> <p>Residential experiences are included within the planning considerations:</p> 	<p>Link to document.</p>

	<p>An good practice example of a progressive approach involving onsite, local and residential learning is evidenced by St Andrew's FC RC Primary School https://standrewsfoxcovert.com/classrooms-without-walls/.</p> <p>St Andrew's recently become the first school in Scotland to achieve the Gold Learning Outside the Classroom Mark (https://www.lotc.org.uk/st-andrews-primary-school-becomes-first-school-in-scotland-to-achieve-gold-lotc-mark/) and took part in the recent outdoor learning thematic inspection (row 4 below).</p> <p>The school was included as a case study for maximising attendance in the August 2021 Committee Report (8.2).</p>	
4	<p>Edinburgh local authority was involved in the national Outdoor Learning thematic inspections (Autumn 2021).</p> <p>The importance of school residential visits was highlighted by a key strand of questioning regarding residential visits; recognising good practice and identifying potential barriers linked to Covid19 recovery.</p>	Inspections link
5	<p>The Scottish Cross-Party Group on Outdoor Education was set up in Autumn 2021.</p> <p>The importance of a progressive approach to outdoor learning was highlighted and recognised. This included residential visits and a significant portion of the meeting in November focused on the importance of high-quality school residential experiences, current/future financial stability of providers and how best to support the reintroduction of residential visits.</p> <p>Two Council officers attended via membership bodies; the Scottish Advisory Panel for Outdoor Education (SAPOE) and the Association of Heads of Outdoor Education (AHOEC).</p>	Link to agenda and minutes
5	<p>Speculation regarding a Scottish-wide consultation on a national entitlement to residential visits continues. More information is expected soon and Council officers are engaged at the national level. This may result in parliamentary support for an entitlement of some kind to high quality residential visits. This is indicative of stakeholder support for residential visits.</p>	N/A

Appendix 5 Rationale for the Council operating its own centres (Benmore and Lagganlia residential outdoor centres)

	Key considerations
1	<p>The Council operating its own centres allows it to directly control the safety, availability of residential provision and quality of its services in accordance with national guidance, Council policy and good practice; guaranteeing some of the best and safest provision in the UK to Edinburgh children and young people.</p> <p>The centres work closely with Edinburgh schools and are a beacon of good practice throughout the UK and beyond. This supports the delivery of meaningful programmes and there are countless examples of the Centres and School staff working effectively as Council employees to best support individual pupils and families. Council staff can also collaborate on key priorities, new programmes and access shared resources through the IT systems.</p> <p>A complete reliance on third parties may introduce significant capacity issues (access to high quality provision) and fluctuating charges including increased charges due to demand across the sector.</p> <p>Council schools have priority booking and are always accommodated first. Many non-CEC schools and LAs pursue places at Benmore and Lagganlia.</p> <p>The Council having its own centres allows it to better manage capacity and future charges.</p>
2	<p>Utilising the Council’s centres delivers high quality provision via inspirational locations (National Parks) allowing Edinburgh’s young people to experience at first hand Scotland’s inspirational landscape (Curriculum for Excellence requires an understanding of Scotland’s landscape).</p> <p>Instructors are generally with a group for the week; this has a profound impact on developing relationships and maximising outcomes e.g. trusting relationships and young people given time to develop and apply skills rather than experiencing a strict timetable of activity. Activity is wide-ranging and mostly offsite. Pupils build confidence and instructors are not rushed due to another group needing to use a specific resource (can be the case with venues that use just onsite activity).</p> <p>Cheaper alternatives do exist; these tend to involve onsite activities, which can generally be replicated in or around Edinburgh, and delivery by multiple instructors trained via inhouse qualifications. Conversely, more expensive options exist with some retaining the features of onsite activity and staff trained ‘inhouse’.</p>
3	<p>Operating its own centres has allowed the Council to commence with a prompt incremental restart during this pandemic; delivering a safe, proportionate and manageable return to high quality residential visits.</p> <p>Being the user and the provider via Benmore and Lagganlia has allowed the Council to manage/coordinate the whole process and trial guidance and resources. This has involved developing an enviable relationship with Health Protection Lothian and the creation of</p>

	<p>robust sector leading resources and processes. Recognised nationally, Council staff are currently co-leading the development of generic resources for use across Scotland.</p> <p>The impact of all of this is that 35 schools and 1609 pupils have currently visited the Council's centres this academic year (up to January 2022). SOLU is planning for 79 out of 89 Council primary schools to visit Benmore and Lagganlia this academic year. These numbers are sector leading during the pandemic and the Council should be proud of its approach.</p> <p>Feedback from schools is overwhelmingly positive (100% strongly agree; 'Overall, our visit has been a success' and 100% satisfaction rates for Covid support and mitigations); the robust planning, resources, repatriation solutions and Covid financial guarantee has provided significant and unrivalled reassurance and confidence to staff and families. This has had a significant impact on maintaining a high attendance rate for Benmore and Lagganlia residential.</p>
4	<p>The importance of the Council having its own centres is highly valued by Edinburgh schools as highlighted in a survey of Council Primary Head Teachers (Appendix 9.9 in the August Committee report – 8.2). 100% of survey responses from primary Head Teachers (40 responses) agreed that 'Our school community values CEC having its own residential centres'. Quotes from Head Teachers are recorded in Appendix 9.6 below.</p> <p><i>'It's particularly important that our centres are managed by our own staff who share our values, understand our contexts and ensure the high-quality provision using trained and experienced staff. The Health and Safety around our visits are simplified and are a shared responsibility.'</i> Head Teacher response.</p>
5	<p>Speculation regarding a Scottish wide consultation on a national entitlement to residential visits continues. More information is expected soon, and Council officers are engaged at the national level.</p> <p>If a national entitlement was proposed and introduced, the Council having its own centres is likely to be of significant benefit to implementing a plan promptly; meeting statutory requirements and ensuring high quality outcomes. A national entitlement may introduce national capacity challenges potentially resulting in a phased introduction whilst this is being addressed. This Council, depending on entitlement conditions, may be able to respond sooner.</p> <p>Operating its own centres is therefore future proofing potential requirements.</p>
6	<p>Operating two residential outdoor centres supplies significant breadth and depth of technical expertise to review, advise, support and approve a vast number of different types of excursions across Education and Children's Services (2018/19: 3032 excursions approved by the Council's Sport and Outdoor Learning Unit involving 24,367 participants - overnight / and adventurous day activity). This is an important health and safety benefit that is allowing Edinburgh young people to access a wide range of safe activity.</p>

7	Council staff at Benmore and Lagganlia provide flexible workforce solutions. A good example is how SOLU was able to incorporate Benmore and Lagganlia staff into the 2021 P7 Epic Days programme (c3000 pupils during the 2021 summer term). This allowed for a much larger programme and a key part of the Council's Covid recovery. This innovative programme was shared with inspectors during the Outdoor Learning thematic inspections (see row 8 below).
8	Inspectors via the national thematic inspections were shown how Edinburgh invests in residential school visits and the importance of a progressive approach (onsite, local and offsite). These were noted with positive initial feedback and the Council awaits the report in Spring 2022. https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/news-and-events/news/hm-inspectors-of-education-will-undertake-a-phased-return-to-scrutiny-activities-this-academic-year/
9	Both centres operate onsite kit stores which provide access to a comprehensive range of technical kit and general clothing. This is a key part of reducing and removing inequality, whilst allows pupils to access a wide variety of environments and enjoy/experience many kinds of activity.
10	Lagganlia (Friends of Lagganlia - FoL) and Benmore (Friends of Benmore House – FoBH) have associated charities. FoL has an established record of supporting eligible families with the cost of residential. FoBH is more recently established and is planning fundraising activity to support eligible families in the future.
11	Having many schools visiting a fewer number of centres supports efficient working and responding to exceptional circumstances. The latter has been proven by how the Council has been able to respond to the pandemic and incrementally reintroduce residential visits (row 3).
12	The effectiveness of the Council's centres is illustrated by the demand of bookings from non-Edinburgh Council schools. Both centres regularly turn down requests for stays as Edinburgh schools are always prioritised.

Subject to Covid-19 guidance and when safe to do so, SOLU would welcome the opportunity to take Councillors to Edinburgh' centres so they can meet pupils, visiting staff and centre staff. This will allow Councillors to see at first hand the quality of experiences and impact achieved. Any feedback and ideas will be useful in helping the service to develop further.

Appendix 6 Edinburgh Primary Head Teacher Survey - Residential Outdoor Centres (Benmore and Lagganlia) March 2021

- Only relevant questions and responses are included.
- 40 primary Head Teachers completed the survey.

	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
Q1 Our school community values CEC having its own residential centres?	40 (100%)	0	0
Q2 Explain your response (linked to previous question)	<p>Selected response to illustrate the breadth of responses:</p> <p>CEC's commitment to Outdoor learning is mirrored in its protection of Benmore and Lagganlia. This sends a strong message to school communities about the value placed on residential experiences and acknowledges that these centres provide an expertise beyond our school's ability.</p> <p>Community values the excellent opportunity provided by highly qualified professional staff in great location. Many parents and carers also had a Benmore / Lagganlia experience and remember it as one of the most memorable and important experiences of their school career.</p> <p>The residential experience provided at Lagganlia is outstanding. Parents, children and staff can all rely on the excellent quality of instruction at a very reasonable price.</p> <p>Having staff who know how Edinburgh works, understand how education and outdoor learning can work together and support each other to develop our own practice. We love having Lagganlia staff come and visit our school following a residential.</p> <p>The families, staff and children consistently rank residential as being a key and critical part of what [school name] can offer. Everyone gains from the residential and they are very well supported by almost all children taking part.</p> <p>Its particularly important that our centres are managed by our own staff who share our values, understand our contexts and ensure the high-quality provision using trained and experienced staff. The Health and Safety around our visits are simplified and are a shared responsibility.</p> <p>Benmore have always offered my schools a high-quality experience for my children - and staff. They truly do make the 'magic happen'. They have moulded determined and dedicated staff. I have had experiences where they have 'made the impossible, possible' during our residential stays at Benmore for some of my children with complex, extensive and sensitive needs. They give our children memories of a lifetime and ensure everything is led seamlessly.</p> <p>Benmore always provide an outstanding learning and life experience for our visiting pupils. They have the setting and skills to offer outdoor learning that is not available in the city.</p> <p>It's brilliant. They incorporate our resilience / growth mindset work. We know that they are 'ours'.</p> <p>Really important in maintaining standards, sustainability of staff. It is a very different experience to any other outdoor central I have visited and that is because it is attached to CEC. Has highly trained staff who often stay for many years and are part of the CEC CPD programme following the same priorities.</p> <p>At [school name] we strongly believe that a residential experience for all learners is a key experience for all. Our CEC residential centres provide this excellent experience and so much more!</p> <p>Outdoor Learning is critical to pupils wellbeing, learning & development. Learning to take risks safely - challenge themselves, being organised, independent and coping with being away from home is essential and having a CEC trusted centre is invaluable as part of the CEC learning provision. Same high standards, values and policies. Investment into future - high quality recruitment, training & staff retention is evident and essential to the relationships forged between staff & pupils.</p> <p>CEC residential centres are *far* better than any others I have visited. They can be more expensive but even still, CEC centres represent far better value for money than the best of the rest.</p> <p>The centres provide an incredible opportunity for our children with new experiences ranging from their first time away from home to new activities to time away from all things electronic to time with different peers and the chance to form new friendships.</p> <p>Having taken P7 pupils to Lagganlia many times over the last 20 years I know what an outstanding experience it is for our learners. It's the highlight of our pupils year, the experience pupils have been most upset about missing this year but far more than just staff and pupil's love of the experience is the knowledge that in that one week the opportunities pupils have and the things they learn about themselves and others develop skills they will take with them through their life. It truly is life changing for some and for all unforgettable. The instructors are second to none but I also believe it's the experience of being away from home, eating different meals, living with people not from your family, managing your own belongings,</p>		

organising yourself that really are developed in a way we could never do in school. We couldn't underestimate the value of this week for our pupils - it is amazing.

Build relationships with staff, security of knowing the standards/risk assessment/training is the same as in council activities in Edinburgh, continuity of staff and school and know what to expect and good communication as inter authority.

A rich experience, new experiences - some of the children have never experienced such life skills, being away from the family, making beds etc HWB, independence, self-management, risk taking (safely), relationships, resilience, transitions - very positive.

It is vitally important that CEC continue to have its own residential centres where education is at the forefront of decision making in both these establishments. I believe we owe it to the children and families of CEC to ensure our community has the opportunity to experience the very best outdoor educational experience on offer in the best setting with the best staff.

There are huge benefits from having own centres from working with colleagues (rather than a provider), similar arrangements and protocols, vision and values.

This is an invaluable experience for all young people and one which cannot be replicated in school. We have seen the direct positive impact this has on the children and the new ways they develop confidence in their abilities and skills. The instructors are amazingly skilled, and the children love them.

We have a programme of outdoor learning in our school and residential experiences are a core feature of this and the fact our council also values this by owning its own centres is fantastic. We believe that every child should be given the opportunity to have at least one residential experience in primary school, but preferably more!

Reassuring for parents. Consistency and continuity.

