

Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill

Financial Memorandum

Introduction

1. As required under Rule 9.3.2 of the Parliament's Standing Orders, this Financial Memorandum is published to accompany the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill, introduced in the Scottish Parliament on 20 June 2024. It has been prepared by the Parliament's Non-Government Bills Unit on behalf of Liz Smith MSP (the Member).
2. The following other accompanying documents are published separately:
 - Explanatory Notes (SP Bill 50–EN);
 - a Policy Memorandum (SP Bill 50–PM);
 - a Delegated Powers Memorandum (SP Bill 50–DPM); and
 - statements on legislative competence made by the Presiding Officer and the Member in Charge of the Bill (SP Bill 50–LC).

Background

Provisions of the Bill

3. The Bill provides that education authorities or, as the case may be, managers of grant-aided schools, must provide or secure the provision of at least four nights and five days of residential outdoor education for each pupil within its management. It is the Member's preference that this should be taken as one continuous block, where possible. However, the Bill provides that the four nights and five days of residential outdoor education may be aggregated over a pupil's school career.
4. The Bill also provides that the Scottish Ministers must prepare and publish guidance for education authorities and managers of grant-aided schools about their duties to provide residential outdoor education under the Bill. The Bill provides that the Scottish Ministers must pay education authorities and the managers of grant-aided schools such amounts as are sufficient to enable them to carry out those duties.

This document relates to the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill (SP Bill 50) as introduced in the Scottish Parliament on 20 June 2024

5. Finally, the Bill makes provision for local authorities to have regard to the extent to which a course of residential outdoor education would be provided to pupils at an independent school where those pupils attend on bursaries paid for by the education authority.

Funding residential outdoor education

6. The Member acknowledges that what mechanism the Scottish Ministers use to allocate funding required for this Bill is a matter for them.

7. At present, there are a number of funding mechanisms. Most funding is allocated to local authorities for their various functions through annual budget allocations from the Scottish Government. There are other targeted funding mechanisms in existence, such as Pupil Equity Funding (PEF), a fund that is allocated directly to schools by the Scottish Government and is targeted at closing the poverty-related attainment gap, which can be used for residential outdoor education. Furthermore, the Member has previously raised with the Scottish Ministers the possible use of public trust funds for providing residential outdoor education.

8. There are a range of funding mechanisms currently in place for the provision of residential outdoor education and these can vary greatly on a school-by-school basis, for example some schools rely to a degree on fundraising events. Shortfalls in funding for the provision of residential outdoor education currently tend to be met by parents or carers contributing towards fees and charges for, for example, instruction, activities and catering. In many cases, parents or carers pay in full for their child's residential outdoor education.¹ Residential outdoor education can also be funded by the third sector, for example through grants.² Looked-after children may also be able to receive support from, for example, third sector organisations such as Who Cares? Scotland and others³.

9. The Bill as introduced does not provide for any element of parental contribution towards this cost. Whilst the Member is sympathetic to the principle of parents who can afford to pay being able to contribute towards their child's residential outdoor education, she is concerned that, unless there is a requirement for the Scottish Ministers to fund residential outdoor education, then there is a risk that the families of children who are experiencing poverty might be required to contribute to ensure their children receive one course of residential outdoor education.

10. As drafted on introduction, the Bill provides that funding of residential outdoor education for school pupils will be provided by the Scottish Ministers. The Member does not want to absolutely preclude situations where schools, parents and carers or others may contribute towards trips. However, the Member considers that these contributions should only ever supplement the overall cost of these trips and this should only ever take place where schools, parents and others are in a financial position to do so.

¹ [liz-smith-consultation-document-final.pdf \(parliament.scot\)](#)

² See for example: Youth Link Scotland - [Youth Work Funding | YouthLink Scotland](#)

³ [Support for Care Experience – Young Scot](#)

This document relates to the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill (SP Bill 50) as introduced in the Scottish Parliament on 20 June 2024

11. Under this Bill, the responsibility for funding for the provision of residential outdoor education rests with the Scottish Government, thus ensuring blanket provision, as opposed to what the Member considers to be the patchy provision that exists at present. This approach also improves equity of access regardless of household income and ensures the number of places for residential outdoor education across Scotland begins to grow and is reinstated to the previously much higher levels that used to be enjoyed.

Costs on the Scottish Administration

Background and methodology

Number of pupils who will receive the opportunity

12. The Bill does not specify at what point in a pupil's school education they should experience residential outdoor education (as this will be for the Scottish Ministers to specify in guidance issued under inserted section 6B of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980). It is the Member's policy objective that the experience be offered to pupils in local authority-run and grant-maintained schools in years P6 to S4 of their school careers. This is because the Member considers that below P6 is generally too young to undertake some of the activities involved in residential outdoor education, and by S5 and S6, pupils will be focussing heavily on exams or may have left school. The Scottish Government publication, *Summary statistics for schools in Scotland 2023*, which provides the latest official information regarding pupil numbers,⁴ (for 2023) recorded a total of 352,560 pupils as falling into the P6-S4 cohorts (not including pupils at independent schools).

13. These figures were made up of 114,648 P6/7 pupils⁵, 231,665 pupils in S1-S4⁶ and 4,357 children attending special school in the age range 9 to 15⁷.

14. The S1-S4 figures include the number of pupils at Jordanhill School, which is a grant-aided mainstream established school.

15. There is no detailed breakdown for each of the seven grant-aided special schools. The notes section of the Classes and Pupils chapter of the statistics records that there were 108 pupils at these schools in 2023.⁸

Estimated number of placements

16. The Member anticipates that, in the long term, the proportionate split between primary and secondary school pupils undertaking residential outdoor education will be roughly 50/50, as set out in Table 1. In the initial years following the Bill coming into force, there may have to be a slightly higher take up among secondary school pupils,

⁴ [Summary statistics for schools in Scotland 2023 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-for-schools-in-scotland-2023/pages/classes-and-pupils/)

⁵ [Primary School Information Dashboard \(shinyapps.io\)](https://shinyapps.io/primary-school-information-dashboard/)

⁶ [Secondary School Information Dashboard \(shinyapps.io\)](https://shinyapps.io/secondary-school-information-dashboard/)

⁷ [Special School Information Dashboard \(shinyapps.io\)](https://shinyapps.io/special-school-information-dashboard/)

⁸ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-for-schools-in-scotland-2023/pages/classes-and-pupils/>

This document relates to the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill (SP Bill 50) as introduced in the Scottish Parliament on 20 June 2024

given the need for this cohort to complete residential outdoor education before they reach S5 or leave school.

17. Equally, the Member recognises that providers of residential outdoor education currently tend to be more focussed on primary schools rather than secondary schools, so may not be in a position to prioritise secondary school pupils in the first year of operation. Therefore, figures in Table 1 assume that, in year 1, there will be a 50/50 split between primary school and secondary pupils undertaking residential outdoor education, but that, in year 2, the proportion of secondary school pupils receiving residential outdoor education will have to increase to 60% to ensure that they are able to receive such education during their school career.

18. However, by year 3 and beyond, the Member envisages that there will be a more even spread of attendance across primary and secondary. As such the figures in the table reflect an assumption that, from year 3 onwards, the balance between primary and secondary school pupils undertaking residential outdoor education will return to a 50/50 split. However, the Member recognises that the point at which pupils undertake residential outdoor education is for schools and education authorities to determine in each case, and therefore the percentages referred to in Table 1 are best estimates.

Table 1 (Proportions)

Year	P6/7	S1/2/3/4
1	50%	50%
2	40%	60%
3 and beyond	50%	50%

19. The Memorandum estimates that, if the provisions of the Bill come into force, around 60,000 pupils from P6 to S4 will receive residential outdoor education each year. This represents around one-sixth of the total cohort and the equivalent of one full school year.

20. There will be some variation on this figure, some pupils may receive their course of residential outdoor education as early as P6, whilst others may wait until S4, and some may have their course of residential outdoor education aggregated. It is also worth noting that: this number (60,000) may fluctuate from year to year; there may be increased demand in the early years of the Bill's provisions coming into force, and it is not a requirement for the pupil to take up the opportunity to receive one week's residential outdoor education. The Memorandum therefore projects lower and upper ranges of 55,000 and 65,000 pupils to receive residential outdoor education in any given year.

21. This therefore would equate to the following number of pupils from each year group attending for each of the assumed take-up rates (assuming a range of between 55,000 and 65,000 pupils attending per school year):

Table 2 (Pupil numbers)

55,000 pupils

Year	P6/7	S1/2/3/4
1	27,500	27,500
2	22,000	33,000
3 and beyond	27,500	27,500

60,000 pupils

Year	P6/7	S1/2/3/4
1	30,000	30,000
2	24,000	36,000
3 and beyond	30,000	30,000

65,000 pupils

Year	P6/7	S1/2/3/4
1	32,500	32,500
2	26,000	39,000
3 and beyond	32,500	32,500

Cost of attending outdoor education centres

22. Given the variety of courses available, covering a wide range of activities and differing types of residential accommodation offered, it is difficult to give precise estimates of the cost of a one-week residential outdoor education experience.

23. However, on the basis of the prices published by some providers, including the Abernethy outdoor centres, run by the Abernethy Trust⁹, the Lochranza Centre¹⁰, the Ardentinn Centre¹¹, Scout Adventures¹² and the Outward Bound Trust¹³, a price range of courses of between £300 to £600 has been assumed in this Memorandum. These prices do not include travel to and from the outdoor centre.

24. As students become older, and more mature both physically and mentally, they may be able to complete more challenging, and potentially more expensive, courses. On that basis, the Memorandum estimates that the cost of a week’s residential outdoor

⁹ [Events \(venue360.me\)](https://venue360.me)

¹⁰ [4a369c_1d40e97de18045498f56a8ae97b5514e.pdf \(lochranzacentre.co.uk\)](https://lochranzacentre.co.uk/4a369c_1d40e97de18045498f56a8ae97b5514e.pdf)

¹¹ [Ardentinnycentre.org.uk](https://ardentinnycentre.org.uk)

¹² [School packages 2024 \(scoutadventures.org.uk\)](https://scoutadventures.org.uk)

¹³ [5 Day Adventure 13-15 years old \(outwardbound.org.uk\)](https://outwardbound.org.uk)

This document relates to the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill (SP Bill 50) as introduced in the Scottish Parliament on 20 June 2024

education for a primary school pupil will be in the region of £300 to £400 per week per pupil, and for a secondary school pupil it will be in the region of £400 to £600.

Total cost of pupils attending residential outdoor education

25. Using these lower to upper estimates for each pupil group the estimated final cost across each take-up range over each year is set out in Table 3, below. The formula for arriving at these figures is [Number of attendees x cost for each year]. So, for example:

- in a scenario where there were only 55,000 pupils attending in year 1, for primary school pupils attending residential outdoor education in that year, and where the outdoor centre cost was at the lower end of the range (£300 per pupil), the sum would be [$300 \times 27,500 = £8,250,000$].
- in a scenario where there were 65,000 pupils attending in year 3, for secondary school pupils attending residential outdoor education in that year, and where the cost was at the higher end of the range (£600 per pupil), the sum would be [$600 \times 32,500 = £ 19,500,000$].

Table 3 (Attendance costs)

	Lower range (55k attendees)	Median range (60k attendees)	Higher range (65k attendees)
Year 1	P6/7 £300 - £400 £8,250,000 - £11,000,000	P6/7 £300 - £400 £9,000,000 - £12,000,000	P6/7 £300 - £400 £9,750,000 - £13,000,000
	S1/2/3/4 £400 - £600 £11,000,000 - £16,500,000	S1/2/3/4 £400 - £600 £12,000,000 - £18,000,000	S1/2/3/4 £400 - £600 £13,000,000 - £19,500,000
	Total: £19,250,000 - £27,500,000	Total: £21,000,000 - £30,000,000	Total: £22,750,000 - £32,500,000

Year 2	<p>P6/7 £300 - £400</p> <p>£6,600,000 - £8,800,000</p> <p>S1/2/3/4 £400 - £600</p> <p>£13,200,000 - £19,800,000</p> <p>Total:</p> <p>£19,800,000 - £28,600,000</p>	<p>P6/7 £300 - £400</p> <p>£7,200,000 - £9,600,000</p> <p>S1/2/3/4 £400 - £600</p> <p>£14,400,000 - £21,600,000</p> <p>Total:</p> <p>£21,600,000 - £31,200,000</p>	<p>P6/7 £300 - £400</p> <p>£7,800,000 - £10,400,000</p> <p>S1/2/3/4 £400 - £600</p> <p>£15,600,000 - £23,400,000</p> <p>Total:</p> <p>£23,400,000 - £33,800,000</p>
Year 3	<p>P6/7 £300 - £400</p> <p>£8,250,000 - £11,000,000</p> <p>S1/2/3/4 £400 - £600</p> <p>£11,000,000 - £16,500,000</p> <p>Total:</p> <p>£19,250,000 - £27,500,000</p>	<p>P6/7 £300 - £400</p> <p>£9,000,000 - £12,000,000</p> <p>S1/2/3/4 £400 - £600</p> <p>£12,000,000 - £18,000,000</p> <p>Total:</p> <p>£21,000,000 - £30,000,000</p>	<p>P6/7 £300 - £400</p> <p>£9,750,000 - £13,000,000</p> <p>S1/2/3/4 £400 - £600</p> <p>£13,000,000 - £19,500,000</p> <p>Total:</p> <p>£22,750,000 - £32,500,000</p>

26. The calculations indicate that the cost to the Scottish Administration of providing one course of such education during every pupil's school career would be in the region of £19.25 million to £32.5 million in year 1; £19.8 million to £33.8 million in year 2, and £19.25 million to £32.5 million in year 3. The Memorandum assumes that levels of provision will remain stable from year 3 onwards, and, as such, the figures for year 3 represent recurring costs.

Other costs associated with residential outdoor education

27. Other costs that need to be factored into estimates of the overall cost of residential outdoor education include transport costs and school staff costs.

Transport costs

28. The cost of transporting pupils and staff to and from centres will vary considerably, depending on a number of factors, including:

This document relates to the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill (SP Bill 50) as introduced in the Scottish Parliament on 20 June 2024

- Number of pupils travelling from each school;
- Method of transportation (coaches, minibuses, train, ferries etc);
- Distance travelled;
- Journey time;
- Specific accessibility requirements;
- Whether the school has its own vehicle (in which case costs would be significantly lower, covering only fuel).

29. It is assumed that the majority of the school parties will be transported by coaches, which would require to be hired with a driver. This estimated cost may be at the higher end of the spectrum, as in practice schools may opt to use minibuses operated by the local authority and driven by teachers or support staff.

30. The cost of coach hire varies from operator to operator, and is also dependent on the size and quality of the vehicle. Figures¹⁴ from a coach hire comparison website have been used which reflects standard rates of £22 per hour for a 16-seater coach, £30 per hour for a 29-seater coach and £43 per hour for a 53-seater coach.

31. This Memorandum assumes that most schools will opt to hire 16- or 29-seat standard coaches over two days to account for travel to and from the location.

32. Assuming that the coaches will be hired for an average of seven hours each day, the total cost per school of coach hire would range from £308 (£22 x 14 hours) to £420 (£30 x 14 hours). For the purposes of this Memorandum, a median figure (based on 16- and 29-seater coaches) of £26 per hour has been used, which results in an average estimated cost of £364 per hire (£26 x 14 hours).

33. According to the most recent statistics¹⁵, the average primary class size is 23.3, with a pupil-to-teacher ratio of 15.3 to one. On the assumption that not every pupil in a class will attend the course, for the purposes of this Memorandum, an average primary cohort of 20 pupils per trip is being projected.

34. The pupil:teacher ratio for secondary schools is 12.5 to one¹⁶. On the basis, however, that pupils have a limited time frame to take up the opportunity of a residential, the Member has assumed that the average secondary cohort would consist of 15 pupils.

35. On the basis of the estimated pupil numbers attending residential outdoor education set out in Table 2 above, Table 4 projects the transport costs for primary and secondary pupils in the first three years and beyond. The calculations used in that table are based on the projected numbers of pupils attending residential outdoor education set out in Table 2 divided by the average cohort (20 for primary; 15 for secondary) then multiplied by the cost of coach hire to take pupils to and from outdoor centres (£364).

¹⁴ [Coach & Mini Bus Hire | Cheap Coach Hire Prices | Coach Hire Comparison](#)

¹⁵ [Primary School Information Dashboard \(shinyapps.io\)](#)

¹⁶ [Secondary School Information Dashboard \(shinyapps.io\)](#)

This document relates to the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill (SP Bill 50) as introduced in the Scottish Parliament on 20 June 2024

36. The cost of coach hire for such trips will vary depending on location and time taken to get from the school to the outdoor centre. As such, costs for schools in remote and rural areas may be higher than those for schools in urban areas. Furthermore, it will vary depending on where the outdoor centre is. For example, travel costs for a group going from a school in Dundee to an outdoor centre in Perthshire would be considerably less than costs for a group going from a school on Skye to an outdoor centre in Speyside or for a group going from Edinburgh to an outdoor centre on Arran.

Table 4 (Transport costs)

55,000 pupils

Formula: Years 1 and 3 - Primary $27,500/20 = 1,375$; Secondary $27,500/15 = 1,833$

Year 2 - Primary $22,000/20 = 1,100$; Secondary $33,000/15 = 2,200$

Year	P6/7	S1/2/3/4	Total
1	1,375 x £364 = £500,500	1,833 x £364 = £667,212	£1,167,712
2	1,100 x £364 = £400,400	2,200 x £364 = £800,800	£1,201,200
3 and beyond	1,375 x £364 = £500,500	1,833 x £364 = £667,212	£1,167,712

60,000 pupils

Formula: Years 1 and 3 - Primary $30,000/20 = 1,500$; Secondary $30,000/15 = 2,000$

Year 2 - Primary $24,000/20 = 1,200$; Secondary $36,000/15 = 2,400$

Year	P6/7	S1/2/3/4	Total
1	1,500 x £364 = £546,000	2,000 x £364 = £728,000	£1,274,000
2	1,200 x £364 = £436,800	2,400 x £364 = £873,600	£1,310,400
3 and beyond	1,500 x £364 = £546,000	2,000 x £364 = £728,000	£1,274,000

This document relates to the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill (SP Bill 50) as introduced in the Scottish Parliament on 20 June 2024

65,000 pupils

Years 1 and 3 - Primary $32,500/20 = 1,625$; Secondary $32,500/15 = 2,167$

Year 2 - Primary $26,000/20 = 1,300$; Secondary $39,000/15 = 2,600$

Year	P6/7	S1/2/3/4	Total
1	1,625 x £364 = £591,500	2,167 x £364 = £788,788	£1,380,288
2	1,300 x £364 = £473,200	2,600 x £364 = £946,400	£1,419,600
3 and beyond	1,625 x £364 = £591,500	2,167 x £364 = £788,788	£1,380,288

37. Based on these figures, it is estimated that costs of transport for year 1 range from £1,167,712 to £1,380,288; in year 2 from £1,201,200 to £1,419,600; and in year 3 (and recurring in future years) from £1,167,712 to £1,380,288.

Staff costs

38. For the schools that currently undertake residential outdoor education, there will be no additional staff costs as a result of this Bill. Staff costs for the implementation of this policy at schools where there are currently no opportunities for residential outdoor education, or the offering is below the threshold of four nights and five days set out in the Bill, there will be cost implications. This will vary for a number of reasons.

39. The bigger the school, the bigger the cohort of children and young people attending an experience, and therefore more teachers, school staff (and potentially parents helping with the trip or trips) will be required than in smaller schools. The extent to which the outdoor centre provides close to full staffing support for the visit will also vary and impact on the number of teachers and other school staff required for the full duration of the trip.

40. In relation to cover for teachers in their absence from school, for primary schools it is reasonable to assume that teachers and support staff attending the trip may not need to be covered for at the school. Teachers in primary schools tend to educate children in their class on a variety of disciplines and therefore cover for their lessons may not be required if the whole class, or the majority of a class, goes on a trip. Any children unable to attend the visit would require supervision and lessons to be set in the absence of the teacher. There will be a time commitment from staff for the preparation of any lessons and also supervision time.

This document relates to the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill (SP Bill 50) as introduced in the Scottish Parliament on 20 June 2024

41. Where a cohort of secondary school pupils are experiencing residential outdoor education, the challenge of providing cover at the school will most likely be more complex. For example, teachers are more likely to teach a range of pupils from different classes in a specific subject specialism. The classes that do not attend the visit will therefore require specialist teachers to cover, including potentially supply teachers and/or prescriptive lesson plans.

42. Grant-aided schools providing education to children with pronounced additional support needs will require to provide tailored support for each child or young person attending the outdoor education experience. On that basis, there are likely to be a higher number of support staff per pupil. Some pupils will require one-to-one support.

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

44. As set out above, the estimated range of costs for the provision of the experience at an outdoor centre and the transport costs have included estimates which are at the higher end of the scale. As noted above, the number of pupils per year attending an experience is estimated at between 55,000 and 65,000 per year.

45. The Member anticipates that, in most years, the median figure in this range, 60,000, would represent the maximum number of pupils that would attend. However, a higher figure of 65,000 has been included in case there is a particularly high number in one given school year. On that basis, the actual costs will be lower than the top projected cost as 65,000 pupils will not attend every year. In addition, it is likely that a number of children will opt not to attend an outdoor experience, or their parents or carers will consider that they are not in a position to do so (this might be for a range of personal reasons, such as a recent bereavement or an ill relative). As such, the level of funding allocations outlined above would leave funding available that would contribute to cover the staff costs required of schools that are not currently providing residential outdoor education experiences.

46. The Scottish Government, in providing allocations of funding to education authorities that takes into account staffing costs, may wish to weigh up a number of considerations in assessing required funding levels on an education authority by education authority basis. For example:

- The number of children and young people in the area of the age covered by the bill during a particular financial year;
- The extent to which the schools in a particular area intend to provide residential outdoor education in order to comply with the minimum requirement of four nights and five days, ideally in one trip (for example, in some areas, all secondary schools may provide experiences as standard and primary schools feeding into these secondary schools may not provide them, in other areas primary schools and secondary schools may provide these experiences as standard);
- The proportion of children and young people in a particular area with additional support needs, including assessing the extent to which these

This document relates to the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill (SP Bill 50) as introduced in the Scottish Parliament on 20 June 2024

needs would require additional support during the course of an experience; and

- The number of children and young people attending independent schools in each education authority area that have places at those schools funded by education authorities.

Ancillary costs

Cost of producing guidance

47. The Bill provides that the Scottish Government must produce guidance for education authorities and the managers of grant-aided schools regarding the provision of residential outdoor education. The Member envisages that this guidance will be in published in electronic form.

48. It is estimated that the cost of producing guidance will be minimal. The Financial Memorandum for the Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019¹⁷ estimated that the costs of publishing statutory guidance on investigative interviews would be £2,000. As a further example, the Financial Memorandum for the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018¹⁸ estimated that the cost of publishing a National Islands Plan would be £5,000 per plan.

49. Using the Scottish Parliament Information Centre's (SPICe), real terms inflation calculator¹⁹, this Memorandum therefore estimates that the cost of publishing guidance in 2025-26 would be between £2,518 and £6,430. Should the Scottish Government choose to revise the guidance in future years, the Member estimates a further £2,518 to £6,430 (subject to inflation) could be incurred each time. As such Table 5 (Year 1 projections) incorporates the cost of Guidance, but Table 6 (Year 2) does not (as it is assumed that revised Guidance would not be issued in year 2). Table 7 (Year 3 and beyond) includes the £6,430 figure in its upper estimate, but has a projection of £0 in its lower and median estimates. It is assumed that this revision would take place in Year 5 for the reason set out at paragraph 50, below.

50. In most years, the Guidance should not require to be updated. It will be for the Scottish Ministers to decide when to prepare and publish updated Guidance. By way of comparison, the National Gaelic Language Plan (provided for by the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005) is updated every five years. Preparing revised guidance every five years, to account for changes in pupil cohorts and changes in how residential outdoor education is delivered, would appear to be reasonable.

¹⁷ <https://www.parliament.scot/-/media/files/legislation/bills/previous-bills/age-of-criminal-responsibility-scotland-bill/introduced/financial-memorandum.pdf>

¹⁸ <https://www.parliament.scot/-/media/files/legislation/bills/previous-bills/islands-scotland-bill/introduced/financial-memorandum-islands-scotland-bill.pdf>

¹⁹ [Real terms calculator – SPICe Spotlight | Solas air SPICe \(spice-spotlight.scot\)](https://www.spice-spotlight.scot/)

Overall costs on the Scottish Administration

51. Based on the elements discussed previously, the total estimated costs on the Scottish Administration for year 1 are set out in Table 5, for year 2 are set out in Table 6 and for year 3 and beyond are set out in Table 7.

52. These tables show that the total estimated costs on the Scottish Administration in year 1 range from £20,420,230 to £33,886,718 (with a median estimate of £27,153,474); in year 2, the Memorandum estimates a range from £21,001,200 to £35,219,600 (with a median estimate of £28,110,400); whilst in year 3 and beyond the Memorandum estimates a range from £20,417,712 to £33,886,718 (with a median estimate of £27,149,000):

Table 5 (Total year 1 costs)

	Low estimate	Median estimate	High estimate
Cost of pupils attending residential outdoor education	£19,250,000	£25,875,000	£32,500,000
Transport costs	£1,167,712	£1,274,000	£1,380,288
Costs of producing guidance	£2,518	£4,474	£6,430
Total year 1 costs	£20,420,230	£27,153,474	£33,886,718

Table 6 (Total year 2 costs)

	Low estimate	Median estimate	High estimate
Cost of pupils attending residential outdoor education	£19,800,000	£26,800,000	£33,800,000
Transport costs	£1,201,200	£1,310,400	£1,419,600
Costs of producing guidance	£0	£0	£0
Total year 2 costs	£21,001,200	£28,110,400	£35,219,600

Table 7 (Total year 3 and beyond costs)

	Low estimate	Median estimate	High estimate
Cost of pupils attending residential outdoor education	£19,250,000	£25,875,000	£32,500,000
Transport costs	£1,167,712	£1,274,000	£1,380,288
Costs of producing guidance (anticipated to be produced every five years)	£0	£0	£6,430
Total year 3 and beyond costs	£20,417,712	£27,149,000	£33,886,718

Costs on local authorities

53. The Bill places a duty on local authorities to provide or secure the provision of one course of residential outdoor education to each pupil under its management. The Bill also requires the Scottish Ministers to pay local authorities such amounts as are sufficient to enable them to carry out their duties under section 6A. On that basis that the calculations in this Memorandum assume that the Scottish Ministers will allocate sufficient funds to local authorities and as such there would be no additional costs falling on local authorities.

Costs on other bodies, individuals and businesses

54. There are a number of other bodies, individuals and business who are affected by the provisions of the Bill, and for whom there will be a potential financial impact.

Grant-aided schools

55. Section 1 of the Bill places a duty on the managers of grant-aided schools to provide or secure the provision of one course of residential outdoor education to each pupil attending its school. Section 1 also requires the Scottish Ministers to pay the managers of grant-aided schools such amounts as are sufficient to enable them to carry out their duties under section 6A. As such, the Member considers that there will therefore be no cost to grant-aided schools of the provisions of this Bill. As set out above, the cohort of children and young people at these schools at the relevant age for outdoor education is likely to be under 100 and therefore the estimates above for the cost of provision is sufficient to include funding for grant-aided schools. As also noted above, it is likely that those with additional support needs or disabilities will need tailored support to attend these experiences.

Outdoor education centres

56. The existing facilities in place will require some adjustments in order to meet increased demand resulting from the provisions of the Bill. The vast majority of these centres are provided by the private and charitable sectors.

57. There may be some cost implications for outdoor centres of updating their centres to comply with additional standards that may be set out in guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers under the Bill. Furthermore, there may be longer-term implications of additional demand for the use of outdoor education centres, for example in relation to additional staff costs, wear and tear and cleaning etc. However, the Member considers that any such additional costs are likely to be offset by the additional revenue privately-run outdoor centres will receive from increased volume of pupils attending residential outdoor education at their centres.

58. The Member's consultation document noted that, since the 1980s, many smaller and local authority centres have closed resulting in fewer but larger centres, and that overall bed capacity remained high, at 4,351 in 2022, and that "providers from the sector are confident that sufficient capacity exists to meet any demand arising from the proposed bill".²⁰ As such, the Member does not consider that the provisions of the Bill will result in the need to build new centres. It is likely that centres that have been recently closed would be able to be reopened. In addition, those that have repurposed could be returned to their original purpose or increase their current capacity by focussing more on the provision of residential outdoor education as opposed to other outdoor pursuits courses.

Independent schools

59. The Member understands that pupils at independent schools already receive residential outdoor education covered by school fees and/or funded by parents of children attending a school. Therefore, the Bill does not place any duties on independent schools to provide a course of residential outdoor education.

60. The Bill does, however, make provision in respect of pupils who attend independent schools where their fees are paid for by their education authority. The Bill requires education authorities, before placing a pupil in an independent school and paying their fees, to have regard to the provision of residential outdoor education suitable to a pupil's age, ability and aptitude at the independent school. In practical terms, the Member envisages that this would mean that the education authority would add the fees for residential outdoor education to the relevant bursary. The pupil could potentially then participate in the independent school's programme of residential outdoor education.

²⁰ [liz-smith-consultation-document-final.pdf \(parliament.scot\)](#)

This document relates to the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill (SP Bill 50) as introduced in the Scottish Parliament on 20 June 2024

61. The Member understands that this relates to a very small cohort of independent school pupils²¹ and that, subsequently, the financial implications of such bursaries being increased will not be significant. Furthermore, there will be no direct financial impact of the provision on independent schools themselves.

Savings

62. Turning to potential savings arising from this Bill, the Policy Memorandum accompanying it sets out what the Member considers to be the significant benefits to children and young people from doing one week's residential outdoor education during their school career. These include self-confidence, empowerment, independence, understanding of risk, awareness of healthy living and social skills.

63. Whilst none of those represent savings in financial terms, it is the Member's view that spending for pupils to receive one week's residential outdoor education represents investment in the future, as it will shape young people in a way that will help them to make a positive contribution to society after they have left school. For example, the life skills they establish can help them identify where their vocation lies and can improve their employability.

64. Whilst this Memorandum does not put a figure on this, the Member considers that in the long-term the societal benefits may result in financial savings to the public purse, such as through reduced burden on the NHS resulting from people developing healthier lifestyles and fewer young people going through the criminal justice system due to positive, formative experiences during residential outdoor education.

²¹ Figures from the Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS) show that approximately 28,000 children and young people in Scotland are educated in the independent sector, of whom 3.1% receive 100% financial assistance. However, it should be noted that only some of these pupils will be supported by their local authority – see <https://www.scis.org.uk/facts-and-figures/>

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Financial Memorandum

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