

summerhill democratics

Questionnaire:

I Have Money

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*This questionnaire is designed to help you decide whether investing in a school is the right step for you. Please be as thorough as you can in filling out this questionnaire: this stage of the process is **free**. It will provide the basis for your future discussion with us. The more information you give us the better we will be able to start designing a consultation programme that will help you.*

The online I Have Money form can be filled in right away, or you can download Word or PDF versions for sharing. If you use the downloads to share you can email one final form to us or come back to the online version to fill in and send.

How much money are you going to invest?

Is there capital from outside sources as well?

Do you want the school to make money? Or will it be a non-profit organisation?

How much does education cost?

Here are the statistics for the average cost of education provided by the OECD in their publication Education at a Glance 2013, which is free online.

Overall average	\$ 9 313 pa
Primary	\$ 7 974 pa
Secondary	\$ 9 014 pa

In primary and secondary education 94% of the budget goes to cores services. The range in Europe goes from an overall average of \$5 000 in Hungary to a high of \$14 000 in Switzerland and Norway.

The average fees per term for a non-boarding private school in the United Kingdom in 2011 was GBP 4000 or \$ 6 000 or € 5 500. The most expensive private secondary schools charge GBP 10000 per term. The cheapest primary schools can charge as little as GBP 2000 (\$3000) per term.

All of these figures should be multiplied by three as there are three terms in UK education.

If you are going to charge fees they will need to show some parity with what the state is investing in education. If not, you will have to pay your teachers less than they would gain working in the mainstream and will, in the long term, have problems keeping quality staff.

For parents to pay for their children's education they need to have a clear sense that they are gaining something: if the quality of the staff in your school is lower than in the local state school and the curriculum resources are worse, you will struggle to find a market.

The largest single expense in running a school is staffing. Summerhill School has twelve full-time members of staff for a student roll that fluctuates from 60-90 children. This gives a staff-student ratio of 7:1. This figure does not include office staff, kitchen staff and cleaners.

Here you can see how many staff a school with a core budget of \$8 000 per pupil can afford:

Children	Income at 8K	Ancillary Staff	Teachers
7	56 000		1
14	112 000		2
21	168 000	1	3
28	224 000		4
35	280 000		5
42	336 000	2	6
49	392 000		7
56	448 000		8
63	504 000	3	9

Boarding schools are more expensive to run than day schools, but you can charge more for the services you provide.

Even with the smallest of schools you will need to pay the core team a good enough salary so that they are not tempted to move away to another school, or change career path. Staff loyalty is a constant problem in democratic education if money continues to be tight.

Teachers may start and with the project for the idea rather than the prospect of making money but they are normal people with normal lifestyles and will not be able to continue long term if they cannot earn a living wage; unless, of course, they are unable to get a job elsewhere, which means they are probably not the kind of people you want.

Recruitment of excellent teachers is complicated if a school expects an unrealistic financial staff sacrifice.

A constant turn-over of teachers puts a strain on a school if it must continually mentor and monitor new, inexperienced staff.

How much do teachers get paid?

Here is the market price of teachers in different countries across Europe:

United Kingdom	\$40.91 K
France	\$33.57K
Germany	\$55.73K
Spain	\$41.52K
Italy	\$31.36K
Switzerland	\$68.82K
Holland	\$57.87K
Denmark	\$41.17K
USA	\$40.91K
Greece	\$25.75K
Finland	\$42.81K

Source: OECD data (averages gathered over 15 years) (Guardian newspaper)

The figures are in dollars. They also look high because they are estimated over 15 years. A teacher in the UK could start out at half that salary. However, teachers would expect to gain salary for experience and increasing responsibility.

The salary is one part of staffing expense. You will also have to pay the National Insurance (Social Security contributions) for your employees.

Unless you are operating a tiny school you will also want to employ a secretary who can deal with payroll, accounting, billing and day-to-day finances. Schools also need cleaning staff and maintenance.

If children are at the school for a midday meal you will have to think about how you are going to provide this.

This is a breakdown of the staff structure at Summerhill School. You can use it to plan your own staffing expenses by putting the appropriate amounts in the spaces.

Staffing	Base salary	Employer's National Insurance	Pension	Bonuses
School director				
Assisant Director				
Teaching Staff				
Mathematics Teacher				
Science Teacher				
Language Teacher				
Art Teacher				
Woodwork Teacher				
Class Teacher 1				
Class Teacher 2				
Houseparents (only boarding)				
Houseparent 2				
Houseparent 3				
Houseparent 4				
Kitchen Staff				
Cook				
Assistant Cook				
Housekeeper				
Cleaner 1				
Cleaner 2				
Grounds Maintenance				
Office Staff				
Secretary 1				
Secretary 2				

A day school logically does not need houseparents but, depending on the size, might want to have someone to act as "school nurse".

Property

There is a more comprehensive questionnaire called "I have a building". These questions are directly related to money.

Do you own the building?

Yes	No
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How much do you expect to pay per month on mortgage or renting?

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How much do you expect to pay on building insurance? Have you asked about insurance for a school building?

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How many separate building units are there? Give a brief description.

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Are there any prefabricated buildings? (short-term cheap, long-term expensive because of heating costs)

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What is the heating system of the school? (Gas boiler with radiators, Oil boiler, Pellet boiler, Pellet stove, Wood stove, Parafin stove, Electric radiators, Other ?)

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Does the school have a kitchen?

Yes	No
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Housekeeping:

Can you get hold of an electricity bill for the past year for the site?

Yes	No
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Will you be expanding the KW/h when the school is running?

Yes	No
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Is the roof fully insulated?

Yes	No
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Are the rooms carpeted?

Yes	No
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Are the windows double-glazed?

Yes	No
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Are all exterior doors self-closing?

Yes	No
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Have a look at our *I Have a Building* questionnaire if you would like to evaluate a building's suitability for the purpose of a school.

Recouping your investment.

Aside from the core business of your school you might want to consider these options:

- Use sporting facilities for community events
- Run summer camps using the school premises
- Arrange talks/seminars/workshops on democratic education
- Offer adult education classes, in the arts, for example.
- Run fund-raising events
- Seek charitable status