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Department
for Education

Research and analysis

School and college voice: September 2024

Updated 1 May 2025

Applies to England

Contents

1. Introduction

The Department for Education (DfE) commissioned Verian (formerly known as Kantar Public) to recruit and maintain a panel of school and college leaders and teachers in England, known as the School and College Voice (SCV). The SCV provides robust evidence to help DfE understand the perspectives of teachers and leaders. This allows us to make more effective policy.

The SCV works as a series of short online surveys across the academic year, covering a range of new and longstanding policy issues. This report is about the findings from the September 2024 SCV survey wave.

2. Methodology

The SCV survey is answered by teachers and leaders who have agreed to participate in regular research surveys on topical education issues.

We select participants randomly using records from the School Workforce Census and invite them to take part. For the first survey of the academic year, we send invitation letters and emails to teachers and leaders. For subsequent surveys in the same academic year, we send the invitation by emails and text messages to those who agreed to join the panel in the first survey.

We ran a survey between 27 September and 28 October 2024. The respondents were:

Audience	Responses
Primary school leaders	994
Secondary school leaders	1011
Special school leaders	342
Primary school teachers	842
Secondary school teachers	937
Special school teachers	904

Questions that gained fewer than 30 responses (before weighting) are not included in this report. Complete findings can be found in the published 2024 data tables, which include more detail on how different groups answered each question.

The report makes some comparisons with surveys conducted in previous academic years – for example, the School and College Panel Omnibus Surveys for 2023 to 2024. These comparisons help us understand how trends may be changing. However, the survey methodology changes over time, so comparisons to previous years are not as reliable as survey findings within an academic year. We invited special school teachers and leaders to take part in the SCV in the 2023 to 2024 academic year, so any comparisons from previous academic years do not include these audiences.

In this report we round figures to the nearest whole number. We do not describe 0% and 100% as 'none' and 'all' because figure rounding may mean this is not accurate – for example, 100% may be 99.6% of respondents, rounded to the nearest whole number. Unless otherwise stated, when we refer to the 'average' we are reporting the arithmetic mean.

Further information on the survey methodology is available in the accompanying [technical report](#).

3. Topics covered in this survey

The survey included questions about:

- pupils' consumption of energy drinks
- breakfast clubs
- guidance on school uniform costs
- confidence in supporting pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- attendance monitoring in schools
- use of Oak National Academy resources
- teacher and leader wellbeing

4. Pupils' consumption of energy drinks

We asked leaders whether their school had a policy regarding pupils' consumption of high-caffeine energy drinks on school premises or during the school day. The majority of secondary school leaders (74%) said their school had a policy, compared to 36% of primary school leaders and 40% of special school leaders.

In almost all cases – 88% of secondary and special school leaders and 91% of primary school leaders – the policy was that all pupils are banned from consuming high-caffeine energy drinks both on school premises or during the school day.

5. Breakfast clubs

We asked primary school leaders about breakfast clubs currently running at their school. The majority (84%) said breakfast was provided during childcare provision before the start of the school day, while a minority (13%) said breakfast was provided in classrooms during the school day or their school did not offer breakfast to pupils (11%).

In most cases (87%), the breakfast offer was open to all pupils. However, whether all eligible pupils were able to be catered for varied, with 62% of primary school

leaders saying all eligible pupils could be offered a breakfast and 28% saying they could not. A small percentage (10%) did not know.

Charging for breakfast provision also varied, with primary school leaders reporting several models.

Figure 1: Groups of pupils offered breakfast at school for free

Response	Percentage
Pupils eligible for free school meals or pupil premium, or both	32%
Some pupils selected on criteria other than free school meals or pupil premium, or both eligibility	28%
N/A - no groups receive it for free	27%
All pupils	20%
Don't know	4%

Base: Primary school leaders whose school provides breakfast to pupils. (n = 854). Leaders could select from among pupil groups they had said were eligible for breakfast provision. Data table reference = "breakfast_free".

Primary school leaders also estimated the proportion of pupils who were eligible for the school's breakfast provision and had chosen to take it up.

Figure 2: Proportion of eligible pupils who accessed breakfast provision in the past 2 weeks

Audience	Less than 25%	Between 25-50%	Between 51-75%	Over 75%	Don't know	Total
Primary school leaders	48%	15%	7%	10%	21%	100%

Base: Primary school leaders whose school provides breakfast to pupils (n = 886). Data table reference = "breakfast_proportion".

6. Guidance on school uniform costs

We asked leaders the extent to which they were aware of the [statutory guidance on the cost of school uniforms](#) which came into force in September 2022. Overall, 84% of leaders said they had heard of the guidance, with 27% saying they knew a lot about it.

Among leaders aware of the guidance, we asked which actions had been taken by their school since its publication.

Figure 3: Actions taken by the school since the publication of the statutory guidance on the cost of school uniform

Response	Percentage
Introduced a second-hand uniform scheme	64%
Published the school uniform policy on our school website	60%
Reduced the number of branded items required	54%
Governing body / Trust board have reviewed the uniform policy against the requirements of the guidance	52%
Reduced overall costs of compulsory uniform items	28%
Reduced the overall number of items required	28%
Consulted with parents about potential revisions to the school's uniform policy	27%
Consulted with pupils about potential revisions to school uniform policy	18%
Run a competitive tender to set up a new contract for school uniform	14%
Other	9%
None of the above	5%
Don't know	6%

> Base: Leaders aware of the statutory guidance on the cost of school uniform (n = 1982). Data table reference = "schooluniform_action".

We also asked leaders to what extent their school was currently compliant with the guidance.

Figure 4: Extent to which the school is compliant with the statutory guidance

on the cost of school uniforms

Response	Primary	Secondary	Special
We are fully compliant	76%	57%	77%
We are not fully compliant, but we have done all we can so far given existing supplier contracts	7%	17%	6%
We need to make minor changes to become compliant	2%	4%	2%
We need to make significant changes to become compliant	0%	0%	0%
Don't know	15%	22%	15%

Base: Leaders aware of the statutory guidance on the cost of school uniform (n = 1982). Data table reference = "schooluniform_compliance".

In March 2023, when we last asked these questions, about the same proportion of primary school leaders (76%) and fewer secondary school leaders (51%) aware of the guidance said their school was fully compliant. Note that these figures are slightly different to the findings published in the March 2023 School and College Panel report, which were based on all school leaders rather than just those aware of the guidance.

For those leaders who said their school needed to make minor or significant changes to become compliant, we asked what actions, if any, they were planning to make the school's uniform policy compliant.

Figure 5: Changes planned to make the school uniform policy compliant with the statutory guidance on the cost of school uniforms

Response	Percentage
Run a consultation with parents and pupils about potential revisions to your school uniform policy	23%
Reduce the number of branded items required	21%
Introduce a second-hand uniform scheme	16%
Publish the school uniform policy on our school website	13%
Run a competitive procurement process to appoint a new supplier	13%

Reduce the overall number of items required	10%
Other	4%
None of the above	9%
Don't know	22%

> **Base**: Leaders who said their school needed to make changes to become compliant with the statutory guidance (n = 69). Data table reference = "schooluniform_changes".

7. Confidence in supporting pupils with SEND

We asked leaders the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that their school can effectively support pupils with SEND or learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD).

Figure 6: Whether the school can effectively support pupils with SEND or LDD

phase	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
Primary	19%	41%	12%	20%	7%	0%	100%
Secondary	22%	50%	10%	15%	3%	0%	100%
Special	89%	10%	1%	1%	0%	0%	100%

> Base: All leaders (n = 2347). Data table reference = "send_effective".

Almost all special school leaders (98%) agreed or strongly agreed that their school was able to meet the needs of pupils with SEND or LDD, with 72% of secondary school leaders and 60% of primary school leaders saying the same.

We asked leaders which barriers, if any, the school experienced in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND or LDD.

Figure 7: Barriers experienced by the school in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND or LDD

Response	Primary	Secondary	Special
Lack of funding	95%	86%	76%
Staff supporting a large number of pupils with differing needs	82%	73%	38%
Lack of access to external specialist services or professionals	79%	79%	59%
Lack of capacity in the school workforce	65%	63%	40%
Lack of support from local authority	63%	61%	47%
Students don't have access to appropriate equipment or technology	28%	24%	21%
Lack of expertise in the school workforce	27%	15%	11%
Lack of relevant government guidance or advice	12%	9%	11%
Lack of support from multi-academy trust or other governors	4%	4%	4%
Other	8%	6%	14%
There are currently no barriers	0%	1%	5%

> Base: All leaders (n = 2347). Data table reference = "send_barriers".

We also asked teachers questions about their expertise and experiences supporting pupils with SEND.

The majority of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they had sufficient skills and knowledge to support pupils with SEND. This was the case for almost all teachers in special schools (97%), compared to 83% of secondary school teachers and 82% of primary school teachers. A much greater proportion of special school teachers strongly agreed (76%) than did primary (24%) or secondary school teachers (23%).

Figure 8: Whether a teacher has sufficient skills and knowledge to support pupils with SEND

phase	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know

phase					
Primary	24%	58%	5%	10%	3%	0%
Secondary	23%	60%	7%	9%	1%	0%
Special	76%	21%	2%	1%	0%	0%

> Base: All teachers (n = 2683). Data table reference = "send_skills".

Similarly, the majority of primary (79%), secondary (86%), and special (99%) school teachers said they were very or fairly confident about meeting the needs of pupils requiring support for SEND. A much greater proportion of special school teachers strongly agreed (69%) than did primary (17%) or secondary school teachers (17%).

Figure 9: Teachers' confidence in meeting the needs of pupils requiring support for SEND

phase	Very confident	Fairly confident	Not very confident	Not at all confident	Don't know	Total
Primary	17%	63%	17%	4%	0%	100%
Secondary	17%	69%	12%	1%	1%	100%
Special	69%	30%	1%	0%	0%	100%

> Base: All teachers (n = 2683). Data table reference = "send_needs".

We asked teachers what, if anything, would improve their confidence in supporting pupils with SEND.

Figure 10: What would improve teachers' confidence in supporting pupils with SEND

Response	Primary	Secondary	Special
More external specialist support (for example, educational psychologist, speech and language therapist)	76%	50%	55%
More training on SEND	48%	42%	34%
More support from learning support assistants	28%	42%	15%
More internal specialist support (for example,	38%	34%	14%

SENCO, safeguarding lead)

More support from senior leaders or governors	12%	9%	17%
Additional relevant government advice / guidance	16%	9%	15%
More support from teaching colleagues	4%	6%	7%
Something else	12%	12%	10%
I do not need anything to improve my confidence	3%	6%	15%
Don't know	0%	1%	3%

> Base: All teachers (n = 2683). Teachers could choose up to 3 responses. Data table reference = "send_confidence".

We also asked teachers which sources, if any, they already use to support children and young people who have (or may have) SEND.

Figure 11: Which resources teachers use to support children and young people who have or may have SEND

Response	Primary	Secondary	Special
Advice from the SENCO	87%	90%	33%
Internal training courses delivered by school	73%	80%	88%
Speaking to teaching colleagues	75%	80%	80%
Looking for resources myself (for example, via online research or library search)	68%	49%	73%
Speaking to other specialists (for example, educational psychologists, speech therapists)	60%	18%	72%
Mental health services or other health professionals	33%	21%	39%
Training courses delivered by local authority	37%	18%	35%
Other training courses (for example, from NASEN or another charity)	16%	8%	28%
Education Endowment Foundation / other	28%	24%	20%

academic research

Work shadowing	10%	8%	21%
Other resources or support from the local authority	15%	7%	12%
Other	2%	2%	6%
I do not access information or training about supporting children and young people with SEND	0%	0%	0%
Don't know	0%	1%	1%

> Base: All teachers (n = 2683). Data table reference = "send_resources".

Finally, we asked teachers what barriers, if any, prevent them from effectively providing support to pupils with SEND.

Figure 12: Barriers that teachers experience to providing effective support to pupils with SEND

Response	Primary	Secondary	Special
Not enough available staff (for example, teaching assistants)	85%	72%	63%
I do not have enough time	64%	67%	49%
Class sizes are too big	46%	65%	31%
I do not have the right resources	42%	23%	32%
I do not have the right expertise	30%	21%	5%
Other barriers	16%	9%	18%
No current barriers	2%	4%	12%
Don't know	0%	1%	2%

> Base: All teachers (n = 2683). Data table reference = "send_barriers".

8. Attendance monitoring in schools

We asked leaders whether their school analyses attendance data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support. For the purposes of the survey, we explained that by 'analyse' we meant to go beyond headline attendance percentages, looking instead at individual pupils, cohorts and groups across the school, including pupils who may be persistently or severely absent.

Almost all leaders said their school conducted such analysis. The regularity varied by phase, with secondary school leaders saying that attendance data was analysed most regularly.

Figure 13: Regularity with which schools analyse attendance data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support

Response	Primary	Secondary	Special
At least fortnightly	62%	83%	67%
At least half termly	32%	14%	27%
Less than half termly	4%	1%	4%
Not at all	1%	0%	1%
Don't know	0%	1%	1%

Base: All leaders (n = 2347). Data table reference = "attendance_monitor".

Almost all leaders (94%) said their school benchmarked absence data against local schools or national levels, or both.

We asked leaders whether their school held meetings with the Local Authority to identify pupils and cohorts at risk of poor attendance and agreed targeted actions and access to services for those pupils. Overall, 68% of leaders said their school held such meetings, with 53% saying they took place at least termly.

The majority of leaders (74%) said their school had a single point of contact in the local authority for all attendance related issues, compared to 5% who said they did not have such a contact. A smaller percentage (20%) did not know.

9. Use of Oak National Academy resources

We asked teachers which resources they had used to develop their lesson planning in the previous academic year (2023 to 2024).

Figure 14: Resources teachers had used to develop lesson planning in the previous academic year (2023 to 2024)

Response	Secondary	Special	Primary
Curriculum resources you developed personally	88%	84%	74%
Curriculum resources paid for by your school, trust or teachers	43%	60%	88%
Curriculum resources developed by your school, trust, or other teachers in the school	73%	60%	67%
Other free online resources	66%	69%	69%
Oak National Academy resources	13%	11%	11%

> Base: All teachers (n = 2683). Data table reference = "oakacademy_resources".

For teachers who had used either curriculum resources paid for by their school, trust or teachers, or from the Oak National Academy, we asked follow-up questions about their use of those resources.

We asked teachers who had used curriculum resources paid for by their school, trust or teachers whether their usage had increased, decreased or stayed the same compared to the previous academic year (2022 to 2023).

Figure 15: Change in the frequency of teachers' use of curriculum resources paid for by their school, trust or teachers, in the previous academic year (2023 2024)

Audience	Increased a lot	Increased a little	Stayed the same	Decreased a little	Decreased a lot	Don't know
Teachers	9%	26%	48%	10%	3%	4%

> Base: Teachers who said they had used curriculum resources paid for by their school, trust or teachers (n = 1704). Data table reference = "oakacademy_frequency_paidresources".

We also asked teachers who had used Oak National Academy resources (regardless of whether they had used paid resources) whether their usage had

increased, decreased or stayed the same compared to the prior academic year (2023 to 2024).

Figure 16: Change in the frequency of teachers' use of Oak National Academy resources in the last academic year (2023 to 2024)

Audience	Increased a lot	Increased a little	Stayed the same	Decreased a little	Decreased a lot	Don't know
Teachers	10%	17%	32%	19%	22%	1%

> Base: Teachers who said they had used Oak National Academy resources (n = 318). Data table reference = "oakacademy_frequency_oakresources".

We asked all teachers how they perceived the quality of Oak National Academy resources.

Figure 17: Teachers' perceptions of the quality of Oak National Academy resources

Audience	Very high quality	High quality	Neither high nor low quality	Low quality	Very low quality	Don't know	Total
Teachers	1%	18%	24%	6%	2%	49%	100%

> Base: All teachers (n = 2683). Data table reference = "oakacademy_quality".

10. Teacher and leader wellbeing

We asked teachers and leaders a series of questions validated by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) about personal wellbeing. These questions are known as the 'ONS4' personal wellbeing measures and are answered using a scale from 0 to 10. For happiness, life satisfaction, and the sense of things you do in life being worthwhile, a higher score indicates better personal wellbeing. For anxiety, a lower score indicates better personal wellbeing.

In the September 2024 survey, average scores for each personal wellbeing measure were as shown in figure 18.

Figure 18: Most recent ONS4 personal wellbeing scores

Wellbeing measure	Leader	Teacher
Anxiety	4.3	4.6
Happiness	6.8	6.5
Life satisfaction	7.3	7.0
Worthwhile	7.9	7.8

> Base: All teachers (n = 2683) and all leaders (n = 2347). Data table references = "wellbeing_anxious"; "wellbeing_happy"; "wellbeing_worthwhile"; "wellbeing_satisfied".

Across the previous academic year, when we asked teachers the same questions, the average scores for each wellbeing measure were as shown in figure 19.

Figure 19: Teacher's ONS4 personal wellbeing measures scores: academic year to date and previous 2 academic years

Survey date	Anxiety	Happiness	Life satisfaction	Worthwhile
2024-09	4.6	6.5	7.0	7.8
2024-05	4.5	6.6	6.9	7.4
2024-03	4.5	6.4	6.8	7.4
2023-12	4.4	6.8	7.1	7.7
2023-04	4.8	6.3	6.0	6.7
2023-01	4.8	6.0	5.9	6.7
2022-09	4.7	6.2	6.0	6.9

> Base: All teachers (n = 2683). Bases refer to most recent data: see previous reports for base sizes at each data point. Data table references = "wellbeing_anxious"; "wellbeing_happy"; "wellbeing_worthwhile"; "wellbeing_satisfied".

Across the previous academic year, when we asked leaders the same questions, the average scores for each wellbeing measure were as shwon in figure 20:

Figure 20: Leader's ONS4 personal wellbeing measure scores: academic year to date and previous 2 academic years

Survey date	Anxiety	Happiness	Life satisfaction	Worthwhile
2024-09	4.3	6.8	7.3	7.9
2024-05	4.4	6.8	7.2	7.9
2024-03	3.7	6.8	7.4	8.0
2023-12	3.8	7.2	7.4	8.2
2023-04	4.8	6.3	6.1	7.1
2023-01	4.4	6.4	6.4	7.3
2022-09	4.4	6.4	6.2	7.3

> Base: All leaders (n = 2347). Bases refer to most recent data: see previous reports for base sizes at each data point.Data table references = "wellbeing_anxious"; "wellbeing_happy"; "wellbeing_worthwhile"; "wellbeing_satisfied".

We also asked teachers and leaders how satisfied they are with their job. This question used a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 means 'completely dissatisfied' and 7 means 'completely satisfied'. Figure 21 shows the percentages of teachers and leaders who said they were somewhat satisfied, mostly satisfied or completely satisfied with their job in this wave and across previous survey waves.

Figure 21: Teacher and leader job satisfaction: academic-year-to-date and previous 2 academic years

Survey date	Leader	Teacher
2024-09	76	67
2024-05	72	62
2024-03	77	62
2023-12	76	68
2023-01	60	48

> Base: All teachers (n = 2683) and all leaders (n = 2347). Bases refer to most recent data: see previous reports for base sizes at each data point. Data table reference = "wellbeing_jobsat".

In the September 2024 survey, 76% of leaders said they were completely, mostly, or somewhat satisfied with their job, compared to 20% who were completely, mostly, or somewhat dissatisfied with their job. For teachers, the equivalent findings were 67% satisfied compared to 26% dissatisfied.

11. Glossary of terms

Special educational needs and disability (SEND): A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age
- have a disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions

Some children and young people who have SEND may also have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is '…a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEND definition.

Special schools: Schools that provide an education for children with a special educational need or disability. Almost all pupils in special schools have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.

Education health and care (EHC) plan: A plan for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support. EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs.

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