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Research and analysis

School and college voice: January 2025

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Applies to England

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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 is designed to collect robust evidence to help the DfE understand the perspectives of teachers and leaders. This allows us to make more effective policy.

The SCV works as a series of short surveys across the academic year, covering a range of new and longstanding policy issues. This report is about the findings from the January 2025 survey wave of the School and College Voice.

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 16 January and 10 February 2025. The respondents were:

Audience	Responses
Primary school leaders	679
Secondary school leaders	906
Special school leaders	214
Primary school teachers	527
Secondary school teachers	554
Special school teachers	803

Questions with fewer than 30 responses (before weighting) are not included in this report, and base sizes of below 100 should be treated with caution. Complete findings can be found in the [published data tables](#), which include more detail on how different groups answered each question.

The report makes some comparisons to previous surveys conducted in previous academic years, for example the [School and College Panel Omnibus Surveys for 2023 to 2024](#). These comparisons are helpful to understand how trends may be changing. However, the survey methodology changes over time and so comparisons to previous years are not as reliable as survey findings within each academic year. We introduced special school teachers and leaders to 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 instance, 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](#).

Topics covered in this survey

The survey included questions about:

- the [Plan Technology for Your School](#) service
- awareness of guidance on behaviour and exclusions
- awareness of the targeted retention incentive payment
- professional supervision among senior leaders
- pupil premium strategy
- wraparound childcare and breakfast clubs
- school based nurseries
- support for reading at secondary school
- confidence in supporting pupils with special educational needs and disabilities

(SEND)

- training to support pupils with SEND
- access to specialist support for pupils with SEND

The Plan Technology for Your School service

We asked all primary, secondary and special school leaders whether they are involved in the planning or procurement of technology for their school. About a quarter (25%) said they are fully involved, 45% said they are partially involved and the remaining 30% said they are not involved in the planning or procurement of technology for their school.

We asked leaders who said they are partially or fully involved in planning or procuring technology at their school whether they had heard of the Plan Technology for Your School guidance service.

Figure 1: Awareness of the Plan Technology for Your School guidance service

Level	Yes - and I knew a lot about it	Yes - and I knew a little about it	Yes - but I have only heard the name	No - I have never heard of it	Don't know	Total
Leader	2%	9%	15%	74%	0%	100%

Base: Leaders partially or fully involved in planning or procuring technology for their school (n = 1230). Data table reference = "plantechnology_aware".

Awareness of guidance on behaviour and exclusions

DfE has published guidance on behaviour (the [‘Behaviour in Schools’ guidance](#)) and exclusions (the [‘Statutory Suspension and Permanent Exclusion’ guidance](#)).

We asked teachers and leaders whether, prior to the survey, they had heard of the behaviour guidance.

Figure 2: Awareness of the ‘behaviour in schools’ guidance

Audience	Yes, I’m familiar with the detail of the guidance	Yes, I know a bit about the guidance	Yes, I’m aware of it in name only	No, I’ve not heard of this guidance	Don’t know	Total
Teachers	9%	31%	25%	34%	1%	100%
Leaders	44%	37%	12%	7%	0%	100%

Base: All leaders (n = 1799) and all teachers (n = 1884). Data table reference = “behaviourandexclusions_behaviour_aware”.

We asked teachers and leaders who were both aware of the behaviour guidance, and said they had used it, how useful they had found it.

Figure 3: Usefulness of ‘behaviour in schools’ guidance

Audience	Very useful	Fairly useful	Not very useful	Not useful at all	Don’t know	Total
Teachers	10%	61%	18%	1%	9%	100%
Leaders	18%	66%	9%	1%	6%	100%

Base: Leaders who were aware of the guidance and had used it (n = 1413) and teachers who were aware of the guidance and had used it (n = 632). Among respondents, 20% of teachers and 4% of leaders said they had not used the guidance: those responses were removed before calculating the percentages in this table. Data table reference = “behaviourandexclusions_behaviour_useful”.

We also asked teachers and leaders whether they had heard of the exclusions guidance.

Figure 4: Awareness of the ‘Statutory Suspension and Permanent Exclusion’ guidance

Audience	Yes, I’m familiar with the detail of the guidance	Yes, I know a bit about the guidance	Yes, I’m aware of it in name only	No, I’ve not heard of this guidance	Don’t know	Total
Teachers	6%	24%	32%	37%	1%	100%
Leaders	45%	34%	13%	8%	0%	100%

Base: All leaders (n = 1799) and all teachers (n = 1884). Data table reference = “behaviourandexclusions_exclusion_aware”.

We also asked teachers and leaders who were both aware of the exclusions guidance, and said they had used it, how useful they had found it.

Figure 5: Usefulness of ‘Statutory Suspension and Permanent Exclusion’ guidance

Audience	Very useful	Fairly useful	Not very useful	Not useful at all	Don’t know	Total
Teachers	10%	64%	18%	2%	7%	100%
Leaders	30%	59%	6%	1%	5%	100%

Base: Leaders who were aware of the guidance and had used it (n = 1355) and teachers who were aware of the guidance and had used it (n = 407). Among respondents, 30% of teachers and 7% of leaders said they had not used the guidance: those responses were removed before calculating the percentages in this table. Data table reference = “behaviourandexclusions_exclusion_useful”.

Awareness of the targeted retention incentive payment

We asked teachers and leaders about their awareness of Targeted Retention Incentive (TRI) payments, previously known as the Levelling Up Premium, for chemistry, computing, maths and physics teachers in the first 5 years of their careers.

Figure 6: Awareness of TRI payments

Audience	I know a lot about the TRI payments	I know a bit about the TRI payments	I have heard of the TRI payments, but I don't know any details about it	I haven't heard of the TRI payments at all	Don't know	Total
Teachers	5%	17%	33%	42%	3%	100%
Leaders	4%	32%	41%	22%	2%	100%

Base: Secondary school leaders (n = 906) and secondary school teachers (n = 554). Data table reference = “lup_aware”.

The majority of teachers (55%) and leaders (77%) said they had at least heard of TRI payments. A similar proportion of teachers (59%) and leaders (75%) said they had at least heard of this payment when we last asked this question in January 2024, although the question was worded slightly differently: please refer to our [January 2024 SCV report](#) .

We asked those aware of the TRI payments where they had found out about them.

Figure 7: Where teachers and leaders found out about TRI payments

Response	Teachers	Leaders
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Through a colleague	49%	34%
National and trade media	20%	23%
Social media	15%	17%
Department for Education communication channels	13%	27%
A union	7%	5%
Conferences/events	3%	5%
Through my multi-academy trust	0%	6%
Other	11%	8%
Don't know	8%	6%
Headteacher networks	0%	9%
Through my local authority	0%	2%

Base: Secondary school leaders who are aware of TRI payments (n = 697) and secondary school teachers who are aware of TRI payment (n = 307). Data table reference = "lup_findout".

When we last asked this question in January 2024, leaders had most commonly found out about the payments through a colleague (32%) and through DfE communication channels (32%), and teachers had most commonly found out about the payments through a colleague (43%) and through social media (25%). The question was worded slightly differently in January 2024: see [January 2024 SCV report](#).

Professional supervision among senior leaders

We asked leaders whether, prior to the survey, they had heard of professional

supervision. We defined professional supervision as a formal, confidential and collaborative process where a leader engages in supportive dialogue with a trained supervisor. It aims to enhance the leader’s practice, personal growth and wellbeing, helping them prioritise mental health, develop coping strategies and find greater fulfilment and control in their role.

Figure 8: Awareness of professional supervision

Phase	Yes - and I knew a lot about it	Yes - and I knew a little about it	Yes - but I have only heard the name	No - I have never heard of it	Don't know	Total
Primary	41%	38%	6%	14%	1%	100%
Secondary	31%	31%	13%	25%	0%	100%
Special	49%	38%	5%	9%	0%	100%

Base: All leaders (n = 1799). Data table reference = “supervisionleaders_challenging”.

We asked leaders what approaches, if any, they used to seek support for their mental health and wellbeing at work. Leaders were allowed to select all responses that applied.

Figure 9: Approaches leaders take to seek support for their mental health and wellbeing

Response	Percentage
I do not currently seek support	44%
Peer support groups	23%
Professional supervision delivered by another provider	22%
Professional supervision delivered by my school team	14%

Online forums or communities	11%
Professional development workshops	11%
Mentoring programmes	6%
Other	11%
Prefer not to say	1%

Base: All leaders (n = 1799). Data table reference = "supervisionleaders_seeksupport".

We also asked leaders what types of mental health and wellbeing support they were aware of being available for senior leaders at their school. Leaders were allowed to select all responses that applied.

Figure 10: Support available to senior leaders for mental health and wellbeing

Response	Percentage
Access to external counselling or therapy services	59%
Opportunities for informal networking with other senior leaders	50%
Online mental health resources or communities, such as those provided on GOV.UK or by charities	37%
Coaching or mentoring specific to senior leadership roles	32%
Professional supervision delivered by another provider	31%
Dedicated mental health and wellbeing training sessions	21%
Professional supervision delivered by Education Support	21%
Structured peer support groups	15%
Flexible wellbeing programmes tailored to individual needs	10%

Other	3%
Don't know	12%

Base: All leaders (n = 1799). Data table reference = “supervisionleaders_availablesupport”.

Pupil premium strategy

We asked leaders whether, prior to the survey, they had heard of the 5 steps set out in DfE’s guidance [Using pupil premium: guidance for school leaders](#). We asked about the version of the guidance published in February 2024, which was the most recent at the time of the survey.

Figure 11: Awareness of the steps set out in ‘Using pupil premium: guidance for school leaders’

Phase	Yes - and I know a lot about them	Yes - and I know a little about them	Yes - but I have only heard of them	No - I have never heard of them	Don't know	Total
Primary	47%	36%	9%	8%	0%	100%
Secondary	44%	34%	12%	10%	0%	100%
Special	34%	38%	14%	14%	0%	100%

Base: All leaders (n = 1799). Data table reference = “pupilpremium_aware”.

For those aware of the guidance, we asked which of the 5 steps, if any, they found most challenging to implement. Leaders were allowed to select up to 2 responses.

Figure 12: Which of the steps leaders found most challenging to implement

Response	Percentage
Evaluating and sustaining your strategy	29%
Delivering and monitoring your strategy	20%
Using evidence	17%
Developing an effective strategy plan	14%
Identifying the challenges faced by the school's disadvantaged pupils	13%
Not applicable - I do not find any of the steps challenging	22%
Don't know	8%

Base: Leaders aware of 'Using pupil premium: guidance for school leaders' (n = 1624). Leaders were allowed to select up to 2 responses. Data table reference = "pupilpremium_challenges".

We also asked leaders aware of the guidance which resources, if any, they had used to help develop their pupil premium strategy.

Figure 13: Resources used to help develop pupil premium strategies

Response	Percentage
Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) resources	77%
DfE Pupil Premium guidance	68%
DfE Pupil Premium strategy statement template	55%
Advice from other school leaders	45%
DfE strategy statement worked examples	31%
Support from your multi-academy trust or federation	26%
Local Authority support	16%

Other	6%
Not applicable - I have not used any resources	3%
Don't know	7%

Base: Leaders aware of 'Using pupil premium: guidance for school leaders' (n = 1624). Data table reference = "pupilpremium_resources".

Wraparound childcare and breakfast clubs

We asked primary and special school leaders if their school offered any form of childcare provision or breakfast provision.

Figure 14: Childcare provisions offered in primary and special schools

Response	Primary	Special
Before-school childcare, with breakfast provision	80%	8%
After-school childcare, not including extracurricular clubs	67%	9%
Breakfast provided before or during the school day, not including childcare	18%	51%
Before-school childcare, without breakfast provision	9%	2%
My school does not offer any of the above	12%	38%
Don't know	0%	0%

Base: Primary and special school leaders (n = 893). Data table reference = "breakfast_childcareoffer".

For leaders who said their school offered before- or after-school childcare, we asked how often, since September 2024, the school has been fully able to fully meet demand from parents for wraparound childcare.

Figure 15: How often schools are able to fully meet demand for wraparound childcare

Audience	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	None of the time	Don't know	Total
Primary and special school leaders	49%	32%	12%	4%	3%	100%

Base: Primary and special school leaders whose school offers before- or after-school childcare (n = 618). Data table reference = “wraparound_meetdemand”.

Where leaders said that their school was able to meet demand less than ‘all of the time’, we asked why this was the case.

Figure 16: Why schools are unable to fully meet demand for wraparound childcare

Response	Percentage
We do not have enough space on the school premises	43%
We are unable to recruit enough staff	40%
We cannot meet the needs of low income parents (e.g. subsidised costs)	25%
We cannot meet the needs of pupils with SEND	15%
Other reasons	29%
Don't know	3%

Base: Primary and special school leaders whose school offers before- or after-

school childcare and is not able to fully meet demand all of the time (n = 312).
Data table reference = “wraparound_whynotmeetdemand”.

Where schools offered a breakfast provision during the school day, either as part of childcare or not, we asked what proportion of pupils with SEND took up the provision on offer.

Figure 17: Proportion of pupils with SEND who took up a breakfast provision

Up to 20%	Up to 40%	Up to 60%	Up to 80%	All pupils	Don't know	Total
46%	11%	4%	2%	3%	35%	100%

Base: Primary and special school leaders whose school offers breakfast provision (n = 688). For special school leaders we asked about “pupils”, rather than “pupils with SEND”, in the question. Data table reference = “breakfast_sendproportion”.

We also asked who had delivered the breakfast provision for pupils with SEND.

Figure 18: Who had delivered breakfast provision at schools

Response	Percentage
Teaching assistants	79%
Other unqualified childcare workers	18%
Qualified childcare workers	18%
Teachers	15%
Catering staff	12%
SEND specialist staff	6%
Older workers	4%
Apprentices	3%

Students such as in sixth form or colleges	3%
Family relation or carer of pupils at the school	1%
Other	11%
Don't know	2%

Base: Primary and special school leaders whose school offers breakfast provision (n = 688). For the responses “Older workers unrelated to pupils” and “Family relation or carer of pupils at the school”, we specified that the person should not be employed in any other capacity at the school. Data table reference = “breakfast_sendstaff”.

Similarly, we asked which spaces had been used at school to deliver the breakfast provision for pupils with SEND.

Figure 19: Spaces used to deliver breakfast provision at school

Response	Percentage
Communal spaces, such as a hall, sports hall, or canteen	77%
Outdoor space, such as the playground	30%
Classrooms	22%
Another designated space on school premises	19%
A nearby venue outside school premises, such as a community hall	0%
Other	1%
Don't know	1%

Base: Primary and special school leaders whose school offers breakfast provision (n = 688). Data table reference = “breakfast_sendspaces”.

We asked primary school leaders whose school offered breakfast during the school day, either as part of childcare or not, whether they had specialist breakfast provision for pupils with SEND. The majority of leaders (66%) said their school did not offer such provision.

We asked those leaders why the school did not offer specialist breakfast provision to pupils with SEND.

Figure 20: Why schools do not offer specialist breakfast provision to pupils with SEND

Response	Percentage
There is insufficient demand from parents	62%
The school does not have sufficient staff	42%
It is not financially viable	40%
The school does not have the space/facilities	27%
The staff available are not sufficiently trained	18%
The school cannot offer the transport necessary for pupils with SEND to attend	9%
Breakfast provision is available elsewhere	5%
Other	7%
Don't know	3%

Base: Primary school leaders whose school offers breakfast provision but does not have specialist breakfast provision for pupils with SEND (n = 378). Data table reference = “breakfast_sendchallenges”.

School based nurseries

We asked primary school leaders whether nursery provision is available on their school site (whether delivered directly by the school or another provider). The majority of leaders (64%) said nursery provision was available.

Where leaders said that nursery provision was available on the school site, we asked what were the benefits, if any, from the school having a nursery. Leaders were allowed to select all responses that applied.

Figure 21: Benefits from having a nursery on the school site

Response	Percentage
Building relationships with families	93%
Improving school readiness of reception pupils	89%
Identifying SEND needs early	87%
Supporting disadvantaged children	72%
Increased take up of school places	67%
Financial profitability	18%
Career development opportunities for staff	13%
None	1%
Other	1%
Don't know	1%

Base: Primary school leaders whose school has nursery provision on the school site (n = 436). Data table reference = “nursery_benefits”.

Where leaders said that nursery provision was not available, we asked what the biggest barriers were to offering nursery provision on the school site. Leaders were allowed to select up to 3 responses.

Figure 22: Biggest barriers to offering nursery provision on the school site

Response	Percentage
We don't have the space	45%
Availability of capital funding	39%
We don't have the staff resource	21%
Insufficient demand for places	9%
Concerns about recruiting staff	8%
Leadership capacity	8%
Property and estates expertise	7%
None	2%
Other	13%
Not applicable - we are not considering offering nursery provision	20%
Don't know	0%

Base: Primary school leaders whose school does not have nursery provision on the school site (n = 243). Data table reference = "nursery_mainbarrier".

We also asked what were the biggest barriers to extending that nursery provision on the school site. Leaders were allowed to select up to 3 responses.

Figure 23: Biggest barriers to extending nursery provision

Response	Percentage
Availability of capital funding	38%
We don't have the space	37%
We don't have the staff resource	31%
Insufficient demand for places	21%

Concerns about recruiting staff	17%
Leadership capacity	4%
Property and estates expertise	4%
Other	4%
None	3%
Not applicable - we are not considering extending nursery provision	15%
Don't know	5%

Base: Primary school leaders whose school has nursery provision on the school site (n = 436). Data table reference = “nursery_expandbarriers”.

We asked primary school leaders whether their school had any classroom space that is not used for teaching. A minority (22%) said that the school had such space.

We asked the leaders who said their school did have classroom space not used for teaching how that space was used.

Figure 24: Current uses of classroom spaces that are not being used for teaching

Response	Percentage
Mental health and wellbeing provision	65%
Library or shared resources (such as music or art)	61%
Other SEND provision	57%
Breakfast clubs or wraparound provision	31%
LA commission SEND provision	7%
Nursery provision	6%
Other	16%

Base: Primary school leaders whose school has classroom space not used for teaching (n = 158). Data table reference = “nursery_classroomuse”.

Support for reading at secondary school

We asked secondary school teachers and leaders which measures to support reading were used at their school.

Figure 25: Measures to support reading teachers and leaders are aware of being used in their school

Response	Teachers	Leaders
Assessments for Year 7 pupils to identify reading level	90%	93%
Access to a library resource to borrow and read texts	88%	92%
Dedicated reading time for all pupils, such as during form time	85%	88%
Structured intervention programme(s) for struggling readers	82%	91%
Subject teachers supporting all pupils to access texts	72%	79%
Staff who are trained to deliver reading interventions	69%	84%
Assessments for year groups other than year 7 to identify reading level	65%	82%
Identification of specific areas where struggling readers may require support (such as with decoding or comprehension)	56%	78%
I am not aware of any of these taking place at my school	1%	0%
Not sure	0%	0%

Base: Secondary school leaders (n = 906) and secondary school teachers (n = 554). Data table reference = “secondaryreading_support”.

We also asked secondary school teachers which techniques they personally used to support pupils to access written work.

Figure 26: Techniques secondary school teachers use to support pupils written work

Response	Percentage
Teacher reading aloud	92%
Breaking text down into smaller chunks	85%
Pre-teaching vocabulary	75%
Use of visual aids to support comprehension of text	75%
Pupils in the class reading aloud	74%
Teacher using think-aloud or modelling strategies	73%
Using support staff to read with the students	44%
Reinforcing reading intervention strategies for struggling readers	35%
Providing the same reading materials adapted to different reading ages	28%
None of these	1%
Other	5%

Base: Secondary school teachers (n = 554). Data table reference = “secondaryreading_techniques”.

We asked secondary school teachers what proportion of the year 7 pupils they teach began the year with sufficient reading skills to access the content of their

subject.

Figure 27: Proportion of year 7 pupils who began the year with sufficient reading skills to access subject content

Audience	All of them	Most of them	Some of them	A few of them	None at all	Don't know	Total
Secondary school teachers	6%	48%	34%	9%	0%	3%	100%

Base: Secondary school teachers (n = 465). Data table reference = “secondaryreading_proportion”.

Finally, we asked secondary school leaders what the main barriers were to providing more support to struggling readers at their school.

Figure 28: Main barriers to providing more support to struggling readers

Response	Percentage
Lack of staff time or resource	66%
Lack of funding for tools and resources	58%
Pressures on pupils' timetables	54%
Lack of parental or guardian engagement	50%
Lack of staff trained to deliver reading interventions	37%
Low levels of pupil engagement	27%
Subject teachers unaware of how to support pupils to access written work	12%
Uncertainty which intervention programmes to use	7%
Uncertainty which assessment and diagnostic tools to use	6%

Uncertainty whether pupils require intervention	2%
There are no barriers to providing more support at my school	5%
Other	2%
Not sure	3%

Base: Secondary school leaders (n = 906). Data table reference = “secondaryreading_barriers”.

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 29: 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	22%	46%	14%	14%	4%	0%	100%
Secondary	21%	51%	13%	11%	4%	0%	100%
Special	88%	9%	1%	1%	0%	0%	100%

Base: All leaders (n = 1799). Data table reference = “send_effective”.

Almost all special school leaders (97%) 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 68% 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 30: Barriers experienced by the school in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND or LDD

Response	Primary	Secondary	Special
Lack of funding	93%	86%	71%
Staff supporting a large number of pupils with differing needs	78%	73%	34%
Lack of access to external specialist services or professionals	70%	76%	56%
Lack of capacity in the school workforce	51%	64%	36%
Lack of support from Local Authority	55%	58%	37%
Students don't have access to appropriate equipment or technology	28%	26%	26%
Lack of expertise in the school workforce	27%	20%	12%
Lack of relevant government guidance or advice	10%	14%	9%
Lack of support from multi-academy trust or other governors	4%	4%	3%
Other	9%	5%	10%
There are currently no barriers	1%	1%	9%
Don't know	0%	1%	0%
Prefer not to say	0%	1%	0%

Base: All leaders (n = 1799). 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 (98%), compared to 70% of secondary school teachers and 74% of primary school teachers. A much greater proportion of special school teachers strongly agreed (78%) than did primary (17%) or secondary school teachers (15%).

Figure 31: Whether teachers have sufficient skills and knowledge to support pupils with SEND

Phase	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Primary	17%	57%	10%	12%	4%	0%
Secondary	15%	55%	15%	12%	3%	0%
Special	78%	19%	1%	0%	1%	0%



Base: All teachers (n = 1884). Data table reference = “send_skills”.

Similarly, the majority of primary (78%), secondary (76%) 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 (70%) than did primary (13%) or secondary school teachers (13%).

Figure 32: 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	13%	65%	20%	2%	1%	100%

Secondary	13%	64%	22%	1%	1%	100%
Special	70%	29%	1%	0%	0%	100%

Base: All teachers (n = 1884). Data table reference = “send_needs”.

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

Figure 33: What would improve teachers' confidence in supporting pupils with SEND

Response	Primary	Secondary	Special
More external specialist support (e.g., educational psychologist, speech and language therapist)	73%	56%	62%
More training on SEND	46%	45%	35%
More internal specialist support (such as SENCO, safeguarding lead)	30%	38%	18%
More support from learning support assistants	29%	36%	13%
More support from senior leaders or governors	14%	14%	18%
Additional relevant government advice/guidance	13%	8%	16%
More support from teaching colleagues	2%	4%	5%
Something else	18%	17%	14%
I do not need anything to improve my confidence	1%	4%	12%
Don't know	0%	2%	1%

Base: All teachers (n = 1884). 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 34: Which sources teachers use to support children and young people who have or may have SEND

Response	Primary	Secondary	Special
Internal training courses delivered by school	69%	72%	91%
Advice from the SENCO	86%	85%	33%
Speaking to teaching colleagues	72%	79%	84%
Speaking to other specialists, such as educational psychologists, speech therapists	57%	19%	78%
Looking for resources myself, via online research or library search, for example	66%	46%	72%
Mental health services or other health professionals	29%	22%	45%
Training courses delivered by local authority	33%	16%	36%
Other training courses, for example from National Association for Special Educational Needs (NASEN) or another charity	13%	9%	35%
Education Endowment Foundation / other academic research	28%	30%	23%
Work shadowing	13%	9%	21%
Other resources or support from the local authority	14%	5%	18%
Other	3%	2%	7%
I do not access information or training about	0%	1%	0%

supporting children and young people with SEND

Don't know	0%	1%	0%
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Base: All teachers (n = 1884). Data table reference = “send_resources”.

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

Figure 35: Barriers that teachers experience to providing effective support to pupils with SEND

Response	Primary	Secondary	Special
Not enough available staff (such as teaching assistants)	85%	71%	62%
I do not have enough time	64%	71%	50%
Class sizes are too big	49%	67%	33%
I do not have the right resources	51%	26%	36%
I do not have the right expertise	29%	30%	5%
Other barriers	16%	10%	23%
No current barriers	3%	4%	11%
Don't know	1%	0%	1%

Base: All teachers (n = 1884). Data table reference = “send_barriers”.

Training to support pupils with SEND

We asked primary and secondary school teachers what training they had received or accessed to help them support children with SEND since January 2023.

Figure 36: Training accessed or received by teachers to support children with SEND

Response	Primary	Secondary
Training from your school special educational needs coordinator (SENCO)	68%	74%
Training from a specialist SEND teacher	39%	40%
Training from your local authority	33%	15%
Training from your multi-academy trust	19%	22%
Early Career Framework (ECF)	14%	15%
A National Professional Qualification (NPQ)	13%	12%
Universal SEND services	4%	4%
Other	7%	5%
No - not received or accessed this type of training	10%	8%
Don't know	1%	1%

Base: All primary and secondary school teachers (n = 1081). Data table reference = “sendtraining_received”.

For those who reported accessing any training, we asked what topics were covered.

Figure 37: Topics covered in training for teachers to support children with SEND

Response	Primary	Secondary
Adaptive Teaching	76%	80%

Supporting pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs	67%	70%
Supporting pupils with cognition and learning needs	61%	68%
Supporting pupils with communication and interaction needs	60%	58%
Supporting pupils with sensory and/or physical needs	52%	44%
Meeting complex behavioural needs	35%	38%
The process of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)	26%	35%
Using assistive technology (such as dictation tools, screen readers or communication aids)	18%	24%
Other	8%	5%
None of the above	2%	1%
Don't know	1%	1%

Base: Teachers who had received training to support children with SEND (n = 975). Data table reference = “sendtraining_topics”.

We asked a more general question about whether primary and secondary school teachers had heard of the Universal SEND Services programme prior to the survey.

Figure 38: Awareness of the Universal SEND Services programme

Phase	Yes - and I know a lot about it	Yes - and I know a little about it	Yes - but I have only heard the name	No - I have never heard of it	Don't know	Total
Primary	2%	20%	15%	61%	1%	100%
Secondary	2%	15%	16%	66%	1%	100%

Base: All primary and secondary school teachers (n = 1081). Data table reference = “sendtraining_universalaware”.

Finally, for teachers who said they had accessed Universal SEND Services since January 2023 (4%), we asked which areas, if any, they had used the Universal SEND Services offer to improve their knowledge.

Figure 39: Areas in which teachers had used the Universal SEND Services offer to improve their knowledge

Response	Percentage
Meeting the needs of pupils with a particular special educational need (such as autism or dyslexia)	91%
Creating a safe environment	71%
Developing resources for pupils with SEND	67%
Promoting mental wellbeing in pupils	54%
Supporting pupils develop independence	51%
Curriculum-specific teaching	47%
Supporting transitions, such as moving schools, key stages	38%
Supporting executive function and memory development	31%
None of the above	1%
Don't know	3%

Base: All primary and secondary school teachers who have used Universal SEND Services (n = 40). Data table reference = “sendtraining_universalused”.

Access to specialist support for pupils with SEND

We also asked teachers whether they had needed support when teaching or working with pupils with SEND from external specialists.

Figure 40: External specialists that teachers required support from when teaching or working with pupils with SEND

Response	Primary	Secondary	Special
A speech and language therapist	60%	12%	77%
An occupational therapist	28%	7%	65%
An educational psychologist	59%	19%	44%
Social services	25%	12%	49%
Mental health services	35%	26%	43%
A physiotherapist	7%	2%	35%
Local authority education services	28%	14%	21%
Physical health services	8%	5%	24%
Alternative provision schools, including PRUs, AP academies and free schools	14%	18%	9%
Non-school based or unregistered alternative provision	5%	6%	7%
I do not need support for pupils with SEND from any of these external services	9%	31%	6%
Don't know	8%	28%	3%

Base: All teachers (n = 1884). Data table reference = “sendsupport_external”.

We asked teachers who said they needed a particular type of external support how often they were able to access it. Teachers who said they needed more than 3 types of support were asked about three chosen randomly among those they selected.

Figure 41: Availability of required external specialists

Support type	Always	Most of the time	Some of the time	Never	It varies too much to say	Don't know	Total
A speech and language therapist	7%	19%	42%	15%	14%	1%	100%
Non-school based or unregistered alternative provision	4%	10%	29%	17%	22%	19%	100%
An educational psychologist	4%	13%	40%	19%	20%	4%	100%
Mental health services	2%	11%	47%	19%	15%	5%	100%
Social services	3%	16%	34%	22%	15%	10%	100%
Physical health services	5%	27%	42%	10%	14%	3%	100%
An occupational therapist	5%	20%	42%	18%	10%	5%	100%
A physiotherapist	8%	27%	34%	17%	10%	3%	100%
Local authority education services	4%	12%	50%	9%	17%	7%	100%
Alternative provision schools	3%	10%	41%	20%	15%	12%	100%

Base: Teachers who said they needed support when working with pupils with SEND from a particular service. Base sizes vary by support type, please refer to accompanying data tables. Prefer not to say not charted (1% or below for each support type). Data table reference = “sendsupport_oftenext”.

We also asked teachers whether they had needed support when teaching or working with pupils with SEND from internal specialists.

Figure 42: Internal specialists that teachers required support from when teaching or working with pupils with SEND

Response	Primary	Secondary	Special
SENCO	88%	75%	29%
Teaching assistants	76%	71%	81%
Safeguarding lead(s)	45%	47%	75%
Other internal support staff	26%	24%	46%
Mental health lead	21%	20%	27%
I do not need support for pupils with SEND from any internal specialists	1%	5%	5%
Don't know	1%	2%	1%

Base: All teachers (n = 1884). Data table reference = “sendsupport_internal”.

We asked teachers who said they needed a particular type of internal support how often they were able to access it. Teachers who said they needed more than 3 types of support were asked about 3 chosen randomly among those they selected.

Figure 43: Availability of required internal specialists

Support type	Always	Most of the time	Some of the time	Never	It varies too much to say	Don't know	Total
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SENCO	30%	30%	29%	2%	8%	0%	100%
Safeguarding lead(s)	44%	28%	22%	2%	3%	0%	100%
Teaching assistants	24%	31%	34%	3%	7%	0%	100%
Mental health lead	31%	28%	29%	4%	6%	1%	100%
Support staff	18%	40%	35%	1%	6%	0%	100%

Base: Teachers who said they needed support when working with pupils with SEND from a particular service. Base sizes vary by support type, please refer to accompanying data tables. Prefer not to say not charted (1% or below for each support type). Data table reference = “sendsupport_oftenint”.

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
- 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.

Pupil premium grant: the pupil premium grant is funding to improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in state-funded schools in England.

To support schools to make effective use of the Pupil Premium, DfE has set out 5 steps in its guidance, 'Using pupil premium: guidance for school leaders', published in February 2024.

The steps are:

1. Identifying the challenges faced by the school's disadvantaged pupils.
2. Using evidence.
3. Developing an effective strategy.
4. Delivering and monitoring your strategy.
5. Evaluating and sustaining your strategy.

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