

2024

# Marketing to Education Forecasts

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To help you create a successful marketing to education strategy, we've pulled out the top priorities for schools in 2024, and the marketing trends we expect to see gain traction over the next year.

Our forecasts are based on our conversations with teachers and education staff, extensive research from trusted education sources, and key trends we've observed in our clients' marketing campaigns over the past 12 months.



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*Managing Director*

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# Key focus areas for schools in 2024

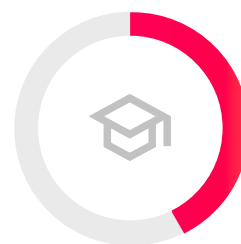


# 1. Education recovery

Education recovery has been a key focus for schools and education establishments over the last few years. And it continues to be a top priority for schools according to our 2023 Schools Survey and our 2024 Education Forecasts Survey.

## In fact,

42.86% of teachers and education staff selected 'continued education recovery' as one of the biggest challenges for their school in 2024, according to our 2024 Education Forecasts Survey.



## Government funding to support with education recovery

To mitigate the impact of lost learning and help pupils catch up, the Department for Education has invested £4.9 billion since the 2020-21 academic year and this funding will continue to support schools throughout the remainder of the 2023-24 academic year. Of this funding, £3.5 billion was allocated for education recovery interventions in schools including:

- The National Tutoring Programme introduced in 2020
- The catch-up premium
- The recovery premium

## The Accelerator Fund - Literacy and numeracy programme

In 2022, the government announced they would be investing an additional £66 million into the Accelerator Fund for the following 3 academic years, to help provide more schools with access to high-quality literacy and numeracy programmes.

Through this funding, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) is set to receive up to £41.5 million to: support their research of effective programmes and interventions, help them enhance their existing programmes, and support them as they help schools to implement these programmes. Of the funding, up to £21 million will help Maths and English Hubs to deliver high quality programmes in schools.

Further information can be found here:

[£200 million of funding announced to address the disadvantage gap - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/200-million-of-funding-announced-to-address-the-disadvantage-gap)

## Education recovery support for 16 to 19 students

All 16-19 students are set to benefit from 40 additional learning hours across the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years (as well as in the 2022-23 academic year). The funding to support this initiative increased in 2021 by an extra £800 million. And this funding has been extended to students aged up to 24 who have an EHC plan (education, health and care plan).

What's more, the 16 to 19 tuition fund will continue to help students catch up from missed learning throughout the 2023-24 academic year by providing them with access to one-to-one and small-group tutoring sessions.

More information on this can be found here:

[NASUWT | Education Recovery Package](#)

In our 2024 Education Forecasts Survey, we asked teachers what steps their school will be taking in 2024 to support with ongoing education recovery. Below are some examples:

- Tutoring and small group interventions for core subjects such as English and maths.
- Adjustments to resources and the curriculum model to improve pupil outcomes.
- Support from external agencies.
- Continued use of the National Tutoring Programme.
- Provide extra support for students who need it.
- Continuing professional development and staff training.
- Additional resources for pupil premium students.
- After-school sessions in all subjects, and homework clubs.
- Improved tracking and monitoring of homework, and overall academic performance.
- Individual mentoring for struggling students and those working below age-related expectations.
- Literacy Improvement Programme.
- Year 11 revision booster programmes and Character Development Programmes.
- PSHE and RE sessions across the whole school.

## OUR FORECASTS

## What schools will need in 2024

Schools will be keen to access learning products and solutions that help them to: accelerate their pupils' progress, increase engagement, build resilience, boost attendance and help pupils achieve. With this in mind, **we expect high-impact learning solutions such as educational workshops to be in demand in 2024.**

However, the speed at which pupils catch up on missed learning isn't solely down to the educational resources they have access to. It's also linked to other factors, such as their mental wellbeing and their environment. That's why we expect to see an increase in popularity across a wide range of services and solutions.

Below are just a few example products and their impact:

### Mental wellbeing workshops

Helping pupils to better understand how to support their mental health and grow in self-confidence. And equipping staff with the tools and knowledge they need to support pupils.

### School trips

Helping to increase pupil engagement, boost retention and memory recall.

### After-school workshops and clubs, parent-child workshops, extra-curricular activities

Supporting students with additional learning to help them catch up and increase engagement through fun activities.

### Sports activities

Helping pupils to feel good through physical exercise, and in turn, boost their engagement in class.

### Classroom renovation

Creating a more inspiring learning environment to increase engagement and enjoyment of learning.

### Tracking software

To help teachers more closely track and monitor pupil attendance, performance, and plan appropriate interventions.

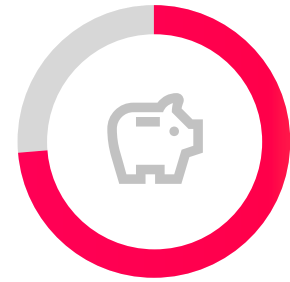
### Training sessions for staff and teacher CPD

To equip staff with the tools they need to best support their learners.

## 2. School finances

The rising cost of bills and supplies will continue to be a struggle for multiple sectors, including the education sector.

74.29% of teachers we spoke to in our 2024 Education Forecasts Survey selected ‘the cost of living crisis and squeezed budgets’ as the joint biggest challenge for their school in 2024 alongside pupil and staff mental wellbeing. Some respondents said they would only be buying essentials in 2024, and others identified staff cutbacks as a way in which they could make their budgets go further. **Energy bills also cropped up as a key struggle, so schools will be looking for ways to reduce costs here too.**



Although some schools have reported financial struggles, the extent to which schools are feeling the impact differs from school to school, and the type of school. What's more, up to 90% of schools regularly have a surplus budget at the end of the financial year as can be seen below.

### Number of schools with surplus budgets vs. deficit

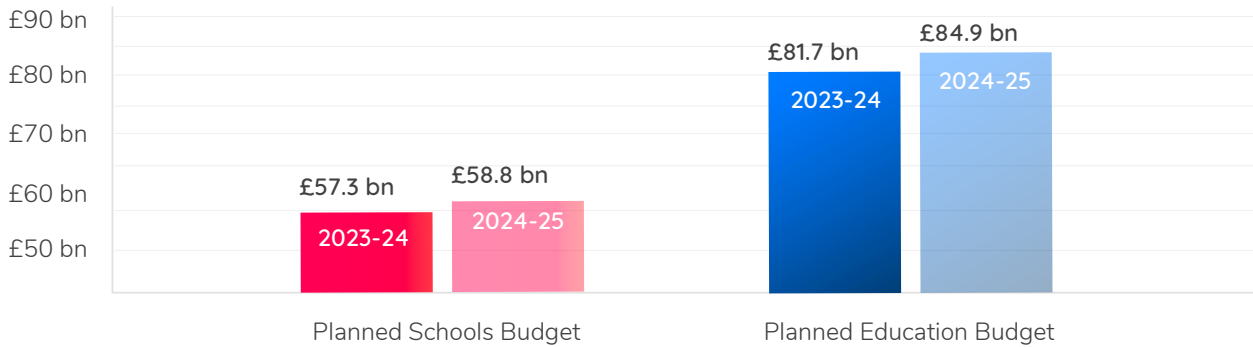
School revenue reserves, for all LA maintained schools in England, for financial years 2015-16 to 2021-22.

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Average revenue balance per school	£124,415	£105,683	£103,690	£110,448	£110,692	£160,486	£178,500
Percentage of schools with a negative revenue balance (deficit)	6.0%	9.1%	10.2%	9.9%	12.0%	8.4%	8.8%
Percentage of schools with a surplus revenue balance	93.1%	90.0%	88.6%	89.3%	87.3%	91.1%	90.6%

Source: [LA and school expenditure, Financial year 2021-2022 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)

To find out more on what funding is available for schools right now, check out our [resource](#)

## Schools and education budget



**OUR FORECASTS**

### School spending in 2024

Investing in cost-effective solutions and services will likely be a top priority for schools in 2024.

#### Value for money

We expect to see an increase in spending for products and services that offer great value for money, and flexibility too. For example, if schools can test your product first before committing, they'll be more inclined to get in touch.

#### Energy-efficient solutions

We also expect schools will be looking now more than ever to reduce overhead costs and energy bills and introduce energy-efficient solutions.

#### IT solutions

We forecast an increase in spending on IT solutions that help to quicken processes and streamline teachers' workloads. With staff cutbacks and many teachers now covering multiple roles, time-saving solutions will likely be in demand.

#### External services

Schools will be keen to know where they can save costs, and this may be through accessing external expertise e.g. business consultants. We expect more schools will consider investing in consultants who can help them to review their spending plans and identify areas where they can reduce costs.



## Advice on marketing content

To help schools maximise their budgets, and help you generate leads, consider running marketing campaigns which include the following:

### ✓ Clear benefits

Your marketing campaigns have seconds to make an impact, and teachers are incredibly busy. So always make sure the benefits of your products and services are clearly stated in your campaigns.

### ✓ Cost-saving solutions

If you can help schools save money on bills, resources, or any area of their spending plan, make sure to communicate this effectively in your marketing. For example, if you offer energy-saving solutions, emphasise to schools how you can help them to reduce their energy costs e.g. by switching to LED lighting, installing solar panels, or introducing smart meters to track their energy usage.

### ✓ Free demos and trials

Let schools try before they buy, it's a great way for them to see if your product is right for them, and they'll trust you more for allowing them flexibility.

### ✓ Free resources

If you can, offer schools something for free that's valuable and that's easy and inexpensive for you to provide, e.g. a free learning resource. Freebies are known as lead magnets in the world of marketing, and they're an effective way to boost conversions in the long-term.

### ✓ Evidence that your products and services work

Schools want to be able to clearly identify and see evidence of how your offering will support their pupils. Statistics, results, testimonials from schools are all effective ways in which you can communicate the value of what you're promoting.

## 3. Staff recruitment and retention

In our 2023 Schools Survey, 91% of the head teachers and business managers we spoke to identified 'staffing' as the biggest challenge for their school this academic year.

According to research conducted by Teacher Tapp and SchoolDash, secondary school job vacancies have increased by 40% in the last 2 years. And 80% of teachers who participated in corresponding polls observed a decrease in applicants for job vacancies compared to the usual numbers.

The current struggle to appoint new teachers and retain existing staff is expected to continue in 2024, with 60% of respondents to our 2024 Education Forecasts Survey choosing this category as one of their biggest challenges.

**To tackle this, the government has devised a recruitment and retention strategy with 4 key steps focused on the following areas:**

- 1) Create more supportive school cultures and reduce teachers' workloads.
- 2) Provide better support for new teachers as they start their careers.
- 3) Offer greater flexibility with work opportunities and career paths.
- 4) Simplify the application process to become a teacher.

### OUR FORECASTS

## Staff recruitment and retention in 2024

### Time-saving products and services

We expect to see an increase in demand for solutions and services designed to streamline and reduce staff workloads, and help staff save on PPA time. This could range from solutions designed to quicken the sign-in process, to educational workshops and resources where assembly plans and lesson plans are provided.

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## Artificial intelligence

The government is investing £2 million in funding into Oak National Academy to provide teachers with new AI tools. The aim is to help reduce teachers' workloads, make lesson planning quicker and easier, and help teachers create classroom quizzes. Thousands of teachers already signed up to a pilot of an AI quiz builder and lesson planner, demonstrating the growing need for AI technology in the education sector, and the need to understand its role and capabilities within the classroom. This new funding will enable Oak National Academy to further develop these AI tools and to support the roll out to teachers in England.

In the same announcement, the government stated this investment marked the first step to equipping all teachers with their own personalised AI lesson-planning assistant.

More information on this can be found [here](#).

**We expect to see a proliferation of AI technologies in education over the next decade, and a greater demand for technology providers in 2024.**

## Mental health support for staff

We predict there will be an increase in schools looking to enhance their mental health provision and specifically ways in which they can support staff wellbeing. To do this, we expect to see more schools investing in:

- Wellbeing and mental health training workshops and webinars.
- Pupil behaviour management solutions to mitigate the impact on staff of poorly behaved pupils.
- One to one tutoring to support with difficult pupils and manage pupil behaviour.
- Technology and software to reduce teacher workloads and reduce the mental toll on staff.

## 4. Mental health and wellbeing

In 2021, the government announced new funding to help schools train a senior mental health lead. Over 13,900 schools (primary and secondary) and colleges claimed a training grant between October 2021 and July 2023.

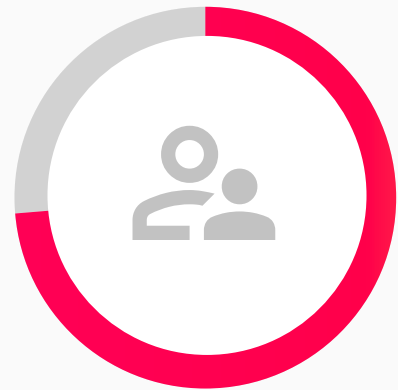
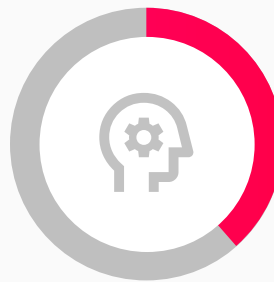
The government has now made a second grant available in the 2023-24 financial year, for eligible schools and colleges whose senior mental health lead left before they'd successfully implemented a whole school or college approach to mental health.

### 2024 Education Forecasts Survey

In our 2024 Education Forecasts Survey, **40% of the teachers we spoke to identified mental health awareness and training as a top priority** for the year ahead.

What's more, when asked what the biggest challenges were for their school in 2024, **74.29% of the teachers we spoke to selected pupil and staff mental health and wellbeing.**

From our survey results, it's clear mental wellbeing will continue to be a key focus in schools in 2024, whether it's through introducing new mental health strategies or building upon existing support structures in schools.



Below is a list of the measures schools have implemented and are looking to implement in 2024 to support their mental health strategy for pupils and staff, according to our 2024 Education Forecasts Survey:


- Focused support for staff including days in lieu, wellbeing apps, mental health training sessions and wellbeing committees.
- Introduce senior mental health leads, wellbeing leads and mental health first aiders.
- Student drop-in sessions with CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), and other external mental health support agencies and counselling services.
- ELSA interventions (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant).
- Canine assisted learning, music therapy and art therapy.
- Revised PSHE programmes, mental health assemblies and enhanced pastoral support.
- Review and reform teachers' workloads through planning, assessment and reporting.

#### OUR FORECASTS

## Mental health in schools in 2024

We expect mental health support to continue to be in demand in 2024 whether it be workshops, resources or solutions that improve pupil and staff wellbeing and help schools to implement a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

We expect more schools to get involved in mental health awareness days, and for related campaigns to see an increase in engagement during these periods.

 Some key dates include:

**Time to Talk Day:** 1st February 2024

**Children's Mental Health Week:** 5th - 11th February 2024

**University Mental Health Day:** 14th March 2024

**Stress Awareness Month:** April 2024

(Cont.)

**Mental Health Awareness Week:** 13th - 19th May 2024

**World Mental Health Day:** 10th October 2024

**National Stress Awareness Day:** 6th November 2024

**Men's Mental Health Awareness Month:** November 2024

**Anti-Bullying Week:** 13th - 17th November 2024

More awareness days can be found at:








[Mental health awareness days - Mental Health UK \(mentalhealth-uk.org\)](https://www.mentalhealth-uk.org)

## 5. Sustainability

We expect more schools to invest in sustainable solutions in 2024 but also across the next few years.

In our 2024 Education Forecasts Survey we asked teachers if their school was environmentally aware, and if they'd implemented or planned to implement measures to reduce their carbon footprint. From the survey results, it appears some schools have progressed further than others in their sustainable journey.

Below are some examples of measures schools have implemented so far according to the teachers we spoke to:

-  Frequent walk and cycle to school weeks.
-  Pupil-led eco-teams, eco-councils, and eco-representatives, where pupils complete activities through the school and host regular meetings.
-  Recycling programmes.
-  Making the switch to digital and printing only where necessary.
-  Energy saving devices and solutions installed e.g. LED lighting and solar panels.
-  Environmental awareness unit taught across the school in Geography.
-  Summer term topics based around environmental issues.

### Sustainability and climate change strategy for education

As part of their sustainability and climate change strategy for education, the government has rolled out a new support programme for schools to help them introduce and implement sustainable measures and further their environmental strategies. The programme was first rolled out in December 2023, and includes:

- An online hub of resources and tools to help schools create or further develop their climate action plan.
- Peer to peer learning opportunities and support through access to a network of regional coordinators. These coordinators will share their expertise and knowledge with schools to help them identify and implement environmental measures.

(Cont.)

- By 2025, the aim is for all education establishments to have identified a sustainability lead and to have implemented a climate action plan.

Further information on this programme can be found [here](#).

## Key dates for your marketing calendar

Some key environmental awareness dates include:

**RSPB's Big Schools' Birdwatch:** 8th January - 19th February 2024

**World Wildlife Day:** 3rd March 2024

**Global Recycling Day:** 18th March 2024

**Earth Day:** 22nd April 2024

**Stop Food Waste Day:** 24th April 2024

**National Children's Gardening Week:** 25th May - 2nd June 2024

**World Environment Day:** 5th June 2024

**World Oceans Day:** 8th June 2024

**World Refill Day:** 16th June 2024

**Plastic Free July:** July 2024

**Zero Waste Week:** 2nd - 6th September 2024

**Recycle Awareness Week:** 16th September – 22nd September 2024

**Recycle Week:** 25th September - 1st October 2024

**International Walk to School Month:** October 2024

Further key dates can be found [here](#).



# Marketing forecasts for 2024

Now that you're familiar with the areas schools will be prioritising in 2024, it's time to consider how best to approach schools with your marketing campaigns.

In this section, we outline our predictions for email marketing to education trends and broader marketing trends we expect will perform well.

You'll be able to use our forecasts and insights to shape the content and format of your marketing campaigns.

# Email marketing trends

**Forecast 1:** Campaigns sent before school, midday and after 3pm to achieve high open rates.

From our comprehensive analysis of client campaigns sent in 2023, we found that email campaigns sent before school, around lunch and break times, and at the end of the school day achieve the best engagement rates.

These findings differ from the results of our previous surveys, where email campaigns sent before the start of the school day achieved the highest engagement rates. This change in behaviour may reflect a broader shift in the workplace culture, with many teachers now accessing their mobiles and laptops to check emails while on the go and outside of school hours.

Below are the current top-performing times:

	7-8am	8-9am	9-10am	10-11am	11am-12pm	12-1pm	1-2pm	2-3pm	3-4pm
Open rates									
Click-to-open rates									

We expect these times to continue performing well in 2024.

**Forecast 2:** For all days across the week to offer high engagement rates.

We always found in the past that Tuesdays were consistently the best performing days in terms of engagement rates. However, we’ve noticed a shift over the past few years and it’s now more equally spread across all days.

From our 2023 client campaign analysis, we found that Mondays and Fridays achieved the highest average open rate, and that Wednesdays achieved the highest click-to-open rate (this is the number of teachers who open an email and then click a link in the email.) Tuesdays and Thursdays also performed well and so it appears that there is no longer one set day that performs best anymore.

**With these insights, we recommend testing different days to discover what works best for your business.**

**Forecast 3:** *Designed email campaigns to generate high engagement.*

In our 2023 Schools Survey, we found that 93% of teachers are more likely to engage with a designed email over a text-based email campaign.

We expect this trend to continue in 2024, so make sure you include high quality photos and visuals in your campaigns.

To get inspiration for your campaign designs, check out our [creative portfolio](#).

**Forecast 4:** *Emails sent direct to teachers' inboxes to achieve highest click-to-open rate.*

Our 2023 client campaign analysis revealed that email campaigns sent directly to teachers' inboxes achieved up to 30% higher engagement rates compared to those sent to the generic school address e.g. 'sallysmith@stmarys.org.uk' as opposed to 'info@stmarys.org.uk'.

# Broader marketing trends

## Forecast 5: *Increased preference for smartphones.*

90% of teachers access their emails on a smartphone, and 70% on a laptop, according to our 2023 Schools Survey.

We expect smartphones to continue increasing in popularity amongst teachers as a way of viewing marketing content – so make sure your marketing campaigns and website are mobile-optimised. However, when it comes to actually making purchases, teachers will be more likely to use their PCs or laptops, especially if another member of staff in the school is completing the purchase on their behalf.

You may need to adapt your web-based content to ensure it looks and reads well on mobile.

## Forecast 6: *Increased demand for trustworthy suppliers and evidence of impact.*

With financial challenges affecting some schools, we expect schools to be even more selective with how and where they spend their budgets in 2024.

That's why we expect campaigns demonstrating an understanding of the education sector to perform well in 2024, especially those addressing key priority areas in schools e.g. pupil attendance and mental health and wellbeing.



To help you convey authority in your marketing and build trusting relationships with your target education staff, it's helpful to understand how schools are assessed, and specifically the criteria Ofsted use to grade schools. You can then tailor your marketing content around what schools are looking for.

Below are Ofsted's 4 assessment areas with some key areas they look for:

### 1. **Quality of education**

This category includes 3 key areas: Intent, Implementation and Impact.

- The curriculum is ambitious and equips learners with the knowledge and cultural capital to succeed.

- The school promotes inclusivity and equal opportunities for students, especially the most disadvantaged and those with SEND.
- Teachers are knowledgeable on their subject areas, use assessment well and form an environment that helps learners to focus.
- Learners achieve well, and the knowledge and skills they develop mean they're well-prepared for their next steps.

## 2. Behaviours and attitudes

- High expectations for behaviour are upheld.
- Learners have a positive attitude towards their studies and are committed to achieving their best.
- Learners' attendance and punctuality rates are high.
- The school has an anti-bullying policy that protects against discrimination.

## 3. Personal development

- The curriculum supports learners' wider development, helping them to discover their talents and interests, whilst boosting resilience, confidence and independence.
- The curriculum helps learners to understand how to be physically and mentally healthy.

## 4. Leadership and management

- Leaders have set out a clear, ambitious vision for providing high-quality education and training in their school.
- Leaders engage effectively with the whole school community including learners, parents, carers, employers, and local services.
- Leaders manage staff well and are supportive.
- Leaders enhance teaching by focusing on developing staff knowledge and provide a supportive and protective environment for all staff.
- Leaders put pupils' interests and wellbeing first with open and positive safeguarding procedures.

The full list of assessment points Ofsted use can be found on the government [website](#).

**Forecast 7:** *Increased number of attendees at education exhibitions.*

We spoke with one of the UK's leading education exhibition companies to understand new trends in the sector.

According to the analysis of their 2023 show in the West Midlands, the number of exhibitors was up by 25% compared to their London event. And they had over 2,000 teachers and education staff attend.

They are expecting the number of exhibitors and attendees to increase in 2024 at their London event as they plan to introduce new features and co-located events.

**With these insights, we predict attending education exhibitions will continue to be a great way to promote your products and services to schools.**

# Government updates



## Oftsed inquiry

Beyond Ofsted, an inquiry into the future of school inspection, is currently underway. This inquiry falls as part of a wider agreement that Ofsted is long overdue a reform. According to the Beyond Ofsted report, Ofsted is currently perceived as 'not fit for purpose' with some schools viewing the school inspection structure as toxic.

A more collaborative, self-evaluation model may be introduced.

Political parties are yet to review the inquiry recommendations and more information will be released over the coming months.

For more information on the inquiry, you can access the full report [here](#).

## School strikes consultation

On the 28th November 2022, the government opened a consultation to gather views on introducing minimum service levels (regulations) in education services during strike action. These regulations would protect children against the disruption of future strike action.

This legislation is already in place for public services in many countries including France, Italy and Spain, and will work to ensure children and young people in England still receive education during any future strike action.

## School summer holidays in Wales

The Welsh government has proposed a shorter summer holiday break for schools in Wales. If accepted, this change will shorten the summer break from 6 weeks to 5 weeks, and 4 weeks in the long-term. The overall number of holidays will remain the same, but the 2 weeks removed from the summer break will be redistributed throughout the school year such as an extra week in the October half term.

The Welsh government has suggested these changes will better support children from disadvantaged backgrounds as well as helping parents with childcare. The decision will be made this spring and will be introduced in the 2025-26 academic year if accepted.

## Autumn Statement 2023 and key education targets

In the [Autumn Statement 2023](#), the government outlined 5 key focus areas for the next few years, with delivering world-class education as one of their targets. To achieve this, over £2.4 billion has been invested in additional education funding for 2023-24, and over £2.8 billion set aside for 2024-25.



## Government funding

### Nurseries and childcare

To tackle the cost of childcare in England, the government has pledged to invest new funding over the next few years. £289 million has been made available for the wraparound childcare fund, and nurseries are set to receive a £204 million cash boost.

This funding will be allocated across the country to support childcare providers with staffing costs, training and bills.

For more information on childcare funding and upcoming investments, you can read the article [here](#).

### SEND support

In March 2023, the government announced further plans to invest in a new national SEND and alternative provision system. These new plans will come into effect in the next 2 years.

There will be a range of upcoming investments and interventions, and below are just a few examples:

- New funding will be available for up to 5,000 early years staff to help them achieve an accredited Level 3 early years SENCO qualification. This training will be available for early years staff until August 2024.
- Between 2022 and 2025, the government will invest £2.6 billion into improving the existing SEND provision for children and young people, and for those in need of alternative provision. This investment will also fund new places in special schools.

For all the latest government funding updates, check out our [resource](#).

## General election

A general election will be called between now and 17th December 2024. **Below are links to the different school policies from each political party:**

[Conservatives](#)

[Labour](#)

[Liberal Democrats](#)

# Summary

There are several priority areas for schools and education establishments in 2024, with teacher recruitment and retention, mental health and wellbeing, and support with the cost of living crisis as some of the key focuses nationwide.

These priority areas and challenges bring new opportunities for education suppliers to support education staff and pupils and help schools and education establishments to continue delivering high-quality education.

Our marketing to education forecasts are designed to help you create more informed marketing campaigns that reflect the current education climate, and offer the best possible support for schools right now.

For more information on any of the topics discussed in this resource, be sure to check out our [education resources](#) or get in touch with us.

## Get in touch

✉ [info@buzz-education.com](mailto:info@buzz-education.com)

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# Sources

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- ⇒ [The Guardian - Welsh schools could have shorter summer holidays in proposed shakeup](#)
- ⇒ [The Independent - Inquiry says Ofsted viewed as 'not fit for purpose'](#)
- ⇒ [UK Parliament - Education recovery in schools in England](#)

