

WELCOME TO OUR

ECM Newsletter

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Summary of Actions

| Focus Area | Action(s) |
|---|---|
| New Writing Framework Published! | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend the ECM Briefing on 12/09/25 or 19/09/25. • Set a date to share with all staff in staff meeting. • Share with your English Lead immediately. |
| Inclusion & SEND: New Specialist Places to Be Created in Mainstream Schools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share with School Leaders and Governors. • Look out for further updates on SEND and inclusion in the Autumn term. • Attend our termly Headteacher & Senior Leader Briefings here. |
| What's Next for RISE? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep an eye out for developments in RISE teams. • This will be covered in more detail in the Autumn Headteacher & Senior Leader Briefings. |
| Urgent Guidance on AI-Generated Child Sexual Abuse Material (AI-CSAM) | Make sure all students are aware of the following resource: Childline Report and Remove Tool |
| Pressures of Inspection Driving Primary Staff to Leave the Profession | For your information. |
| Nursery Teachers to Receive £4,500 to Work in Disadvantaged Areas | For your information. |
| KCSIE Updated!!! | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read all amendments. • Update your policy and share with all staff and Governors. • Update your website with updated and dated policies. |
| Shorter Teaching Apprenticeships Available from August 2025 | For your information. |
| SATs Results 2025 | Ensure some form of internal progress measures are used to show how pupil performance has risen. |
| Ofsted Judgements on Safeguarding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the new Ofsted Safeguarding toolkit in September when published. • Look out for new ECM inclusion reviews early in the autumn term. Training and reviews against new framework coming soon. |

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| Five Principles of Promising Practice: Inclusion in Practice Report Published | Essential reading for leaders and SENDCO. |
| One-Stop Family Hubs to Be Opened in All English Council Areas | For circulation and information. |
| A new data tool to help schools better understand and support development in Reception: School Readiness Data Tool To Be Launched | For circulation and information. |
| Early Years Special Educational Needs Coordinator Training Programme | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Essential reading for leaders and Early Years and SENDCOs.• Share with appropriate governors |
| A blog post on KS2 interventions and booster programmes: What does July 8th mean to you? | Share with Assessment Leaders and Year 6 Teachers. |

Actions

- Attend the ECM Briefing on 12/09/25 or 19/09/25.
- Set a date to share with all staff in staff meeting.
- Share with your English Lead immediately.

New Writing Framework Published!

[DFE THE WRITING FRAMEWORK](#)

The DfE has released its latest **Writing Framework**, providing updated guidance on how schools can best support pupils in developing their writing skills.

Below is a **summary of the messages in the new framework**:



WRITING IS COMPLEX

Writing places **significant demands** on pupils' **working memory** so it is vital to teach it in a **sequenced way** that helps to manage those demands.



TEACH HANDWRITING AND SPELLING IN RECEPTION

Teaching handwriting and spelling (transcription) from the reception year is crucial to ensure that these skills **become automatic for children**. This will **free up their working memory** for composition.



SENTENCE INSTRUCTION IS ESSENTIAL

All writing is made up of sentences. **Knowledge of grammar** helps pupils to control sentences and convey meaning, but it **does not support their writing fluency when taught in isolation**.



SPOKEN LANGUAGE IS AS IMPORTANT FOR WRITING AS FOR READING

Pupils should **compose orally** while they are developing their **transcription skills**. This can still be valuable even when they can transcribe fluently.



QUALITY IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN LENGTH

Pupils need to master the **foundations of writing** – handwriting, spelling and sentence construction. They should not be expected to write at length before they are ready.



THE RECEPTION YEAR IS VITAL

The **reception year** builds the foundations that support pupils' writing throughout primary school and underpin their **future success**.



IDENTIFY PUPILS WHO NEED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

It is important to **identify the pupils who need additional support with writing as early as possible**, from reception onwards. Teachers can then adapt their teaching and make it accessible. This includes giving pupils **more time and practice** so that they can make **good progress**.



IT WILL TAKE TIME TO TACKLE ALL THE CHALLENGES IN TEACHING WRITING

Schools should **concentrate initially on teaching high-quality transcription and sentence instruction**, while gradually developing broader writing skills.



AVOID FOCUSING TOO HEAVILY ON TEST PREPARATION

This can limit the development of skills and knowledge, **stifling pupils' creativity and wider writing development**.



LEADERS MUST ESTABLISH THE CULTURE AND CURRICULUM

Leaders are responsible for:

- Establishing a **positive writing culture**
- Developing a **well-sequenced curriculum**
- Ensuring that **all teachers are trained to teach writing**



ECM CPD Spotlight: New Writing Framework Briefing
12th September 2025 and 19th September 2025
[Register your interest here](#)

Actions

- Share with School Leaders and Governors.
- Look out for further updates on SEND and inclusion in the Autumn term.
- Attend our termly [Headteacher & Senior Leader Briefings here](#).

Inclusion & SEND: New Specialist Places to Be Created in Mainstream Schools

Major reforms to SEND system kicked off with a £740 million capital investment to create more specialist places in mainstream schools.

The Government has announced...

This new funding can be used to adapt classrooms to be more accessible for children with SEND, and to create specialist facilities within mainstream schools that can deliver more intensive support adapted to suit the pupils' needs.

To drive support for neurodivergent children and young people in mainstream education and increase understanding of inclusion, Professor Karen Guldberg has also been appointed as Chair of a new "Neurodivergence Task and Finish Group" - a group of experts that will work alongside the Department to drive inclusive education

That's why the government has also confirmed that it will not enter any more of its Safety Valve agreements for councils in financial deficits, pending wider reform of the whole system to prioritise early intervention, properly supporting councils to bring their finances under control.

Chair of the Neurodivergence Task and Finish Group Professor Karen Guldberg said:

Everybody should have access to high quality education, regardless of their needs or background, but we face a crisis in the SEND system.

I feel honoured to be leading a group of experts who are all committed to supporting the development of a more inclusive education system. We are wholeheartedly committed to co-production with those with lived experience and we will be consulting widely.

Our focus will be to advise and make recommendations regarding the best ways to support and meet the educational needs of neurodivergent children and young people in mainstream settings.

Confederation of School Trusts Chief Executive Leora Cruddas CBE said:

There will always be a role for specialist schools, but very often pupils and families can benefit from high quality, effective support in a mainstream school, and increasing capacity for this will help children get the support they need more quickly.

There is consensus across trusts, local authorities, government, and, most importantly, families, that the current approach to SEND is not working. Fixing that will take time. This funding initiative has the potential to make a difference to children in our schools right now.



Actions

- Keep an eye out for developments in RISE teams.
- This will be covered in more detail in the [Autumn Headteacher & Senior Leader Briefings](#).



What's Next for RISE?

What are RISE Teams?

RISE teams will provide mandatory, targeted intervention for [schools](#) identified by Ofsted as needing to improve.

Initially, these teams will work with schools that have received multiple [Ofsted](#) judgements below 'Good' or equivalent. RISE advisers will engage with the identified schools to consider their specific improvement needs, based on the findings of their Ofsted inspections.

RISE teams will also offer a wider, universal service to help all schools to improve, especially by promoting collaboration and sharing learning. RISE teams will signpost schools to best practice, encourage peer-to-peer support, and bring schools together to share their knowledge and the ways they are overcoming challenges.

A new **RISE stakeholder group** is being set up to help shape how the programme is delivered.

The group will include voices from across the education sector to make sure the work of RISE reflects the **real experiences and needs of schools**.

Who will be involved?

Members will come from:

- Schools receiving support.
- As well as those providing it.

Representative bodies will be contacted shortly by DfE to nominate potential members.

What's Coming Next?

Further updates on the programme and wider school accountability reforms are expected later this year.

[🔗 RISE TEAMS: EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW](#)



Actions

Make sure all students are aware of the following resource:

[Childline Report and Remove Tool](#)

Urgent Guidance on AI-Generated Child Sexual Abuse Material (AI-CSAM)

The disturbing rise in the use of AI to create nude and sexual imagery of children has sparked the publication of urgent guidance for professionals, including school staff.

The Dual Nature of AI

Developments in artificial intelligence (AI) come with a range of benefits, including:

- Supporting learning
- Creativity
- Innovation

There is however growing concern for how AI can also be **misused** to create and share child sexual abuse material (CSAM), referred to as AI-CSAM. Under UK law, AI-CSAM is illegal. In their 2024 report, IWF observed a rapid increase in the number of AI CSAM reports, both on the **clear web and dark web forums**.

! Action for Schools

Make sure all students are aware of the following resource:

[CHILDLINE REPORT AND REMOVE TOOL](#)

Report Remove is here to help young people under 18 in the UK to confidentially report sexual images and videos of themselves and remove them from the internet.

[DEEPAKE AI CHILD ABUSE IMAGES SPARK URGENT GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS](#)



For further guidance on responding to incidents and reporting to statutory services, (including the police) visit: [sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#).



Actions

For your information.

Pressures of Inspection Driving Primary Staff to Leave the Profession

Findings from the DfE Working Lives of Teachers and Leaders 2024 Survey

According to further findings from the government's research into teachers' and leaders' working lives, primary teachers are **more likely to leave teaching due to the pressures of inspection**. The DfE has published the full research report of the [Working lives of teachers and leaders 2024](#) survey, after it released the summary version last year.

10,000 teachers were surveyed and key findings include:

- More LGBTQ+ staff reported bullying.
- LA Teachers feel more trusted by managers.
- Flexible working was more common among those working in smaller and medium-sized schools, primary schools, local authority-maintained schools and areas with a lower prevalence of pupils receiving free school meals.
- In 2024, teachers were more likely than leaders to feel that their work negatively affected their mental health - 63 per cent versus 55 per cent.
- Teachers and leaders in primary schools, were more likely to cite pressure relating to pupil outcomes or inspection as a reason for leaving the profession: 78 per cent versus 60 per cent in secondaries and 68 per cent in special schools, PRUs and other AP.
- The proportion of ECTs reporting that they had been well prepared to manage poor behaviour and disruption in class fell from 54 per cent in 2022 to 47 per cent in 2024.



Actions

For your information.

Nursery Teachers to Receive £4,500 to Work in Disadvantaged Areas



£1.5 Billion Best Start in Life Strategy Announced


The government said it would spend £1.5 billion on its **Best Start in Life strategy** – a plan to reform services for the youngest children in order to drive up education and health standards.

Also included in the package of reforms is a proposal to increase the number of Ofsted inspection nurseries undergo, including ensuring all new providers are assessed within 18 months.

Announcing the plans, Bridget Phillipson said...

“The best way of reducing inequalities is by tackling them early”

[!\[\]\(cf531ed27e91483460120fcc057b3901_img.jpg\) NURSERY TEACHERS TO GET £4,500 TO WORK IN DISADVANTAGED AREAS](#)



"This will help give our
youngest children the
very best start in life."

Bridget Phillipson, Education Secretary

Actions

- Read all amendments.
- Update your policy and share with all staff and Governors.
- Update your website with updated and dated policies.

[KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION 2025](#)

***Key Changes are on page 184.

KCSIE Updated!!!

The DfE has released the 2025 update of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). Below is a summary of the key changes:

1. Para 204 - We have added a note to say that we expect to publish the revised guidance on gender questioning children this summer. If published, we will signpost to this guidance in September 2025.
2. Para 205 - removal of 'spectrum' and 'disorder' to align with SEND code of practice.



Guidance to Be Signposted Later On

In KCSIE 2025, the DfE has confirmed that it "expects" to publish revised guidance on relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) and gender questioning children this summer... **If published, we will signpost to this guidance in September 2025**



Updated List of Safeguarding Harms

An updated list of online safeguarding harms from 2024 now includes misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories. As in the previous year, KCSIE states that it is... **essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.**



Statutory Attendance Guidance

Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance is statutory and is now noted in KCSiE, this was not specified in KCSIE 2024.



The Role of Virtual School Heads

The roles of virtual school heads includes a non-statutory responsibility to promote the educational achievement of all children in kinship care. Non-statutory responsibilities for virtual school heads were previously expanded in 2021 to include oversight of attendance, attainment and progress of children with a social worker.



Alternative Provision Guidance Clarified

KCSIE 2025 also includes updates to reflect existing guidance on alternative provision.

...Schools should obtain written information from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at their establishment (i.e., those checks that schools would otherwise perform on their own staff).

This includes written confirmation that the alternative provider will inform the commissioning school of any arrangements that may put the child at risk (i.e., staff changes), so that the commissioning school can ensure itself that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on new staff.

Schools should always know where a child is based during school hours, including having records of the address of the AP and any satellite sites that a child may attend.

Actions

For your information.



Shorter Teaching Apprenticeships Available from August 2025

From **Friday 1 August 2025**, the recommended duration of postgraduate teaching apprenticeships (PGTA) will be reduced to 9 months from 12, aligning with the school year.

The PGTA has seen a **58% growth in recent years**, showing how popular the route is. It gives participants the chance to:

- Earn while they learn
- Gain hands-on experience in the classroom

Government Teacher Recruitment Plans

The government aims to recruit 6,500 teachers, alongside the new degree level teacher apprenticeship and teaching assistant apprenticeships.

Search and apply for teacher training courses in England.

🔍 [Click here to search and apply →](#)

Find teacher training courses in England

Subject

City, town or postcode

Search

☐ Only show courses that offer visa sponsorship

▶ [Search by training provider](#)

Actions

Ensure some form of internal progress measures are used to show how pupil performance has risen.



SATs Results 2025

Attainment in all of reading, writing and maths (combined) has increased since 2024.

Combined Reading, Writing & Maths

✓ 62% of pupils met the expected standard, up from 61% in 2024.

In individual subjects, attainment increased in all subjects compared to 2024.

✓ In **reading**, 75% of pupils met the expected standard, up from 74% in 2024.

✓ In **maths**, 74% of pupils met the expected standard, up from 73% in 2024.

✓ In **writing**, 72% of pupils met the expected standard, an increase of 0.5 percentage points from 72% (rounded) in 2024.

✓ In **grammar, punctuation and spelling**, 73% of pupils met the expected standard, up from 72% in 2024.

✓ In **science**, 82% of pupils met the expected standard, up from 81% in 2024.

[2025 KEY STAGE 2 SCALED SCORE CONVERSION TABLES](#)

[KEY STAGE 2 ATTAINMENT: NATIONAL HEADLINES](#)

Just 0.07% of schools now fail safeguarding

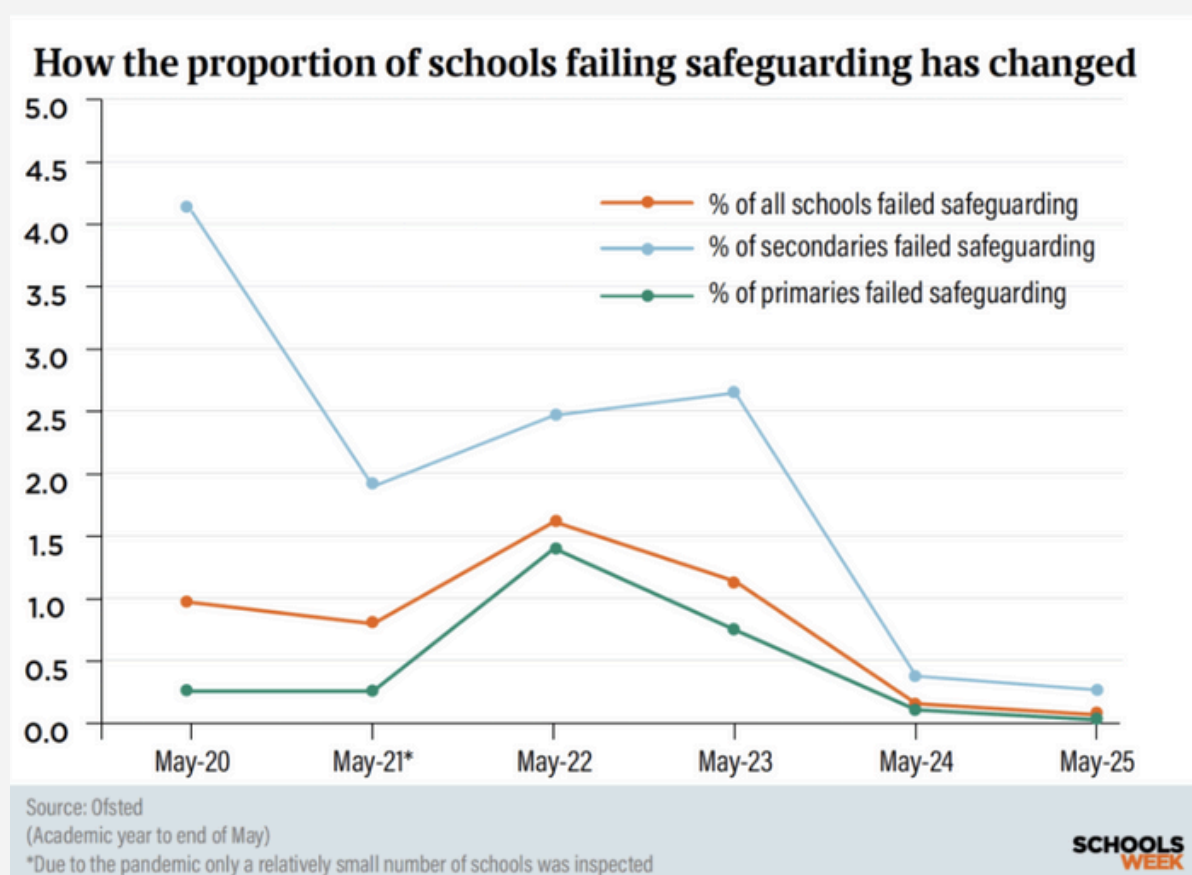


Actions

- Review the new Ofsted Safeguarding toolkit in September when published.
- Look out for new ECM inclusion reviews early in the autumn term. Training and reviews against new framework coming soon.

Ofsted Judgements on Safeguarding

The number failing to meet requirements has decreased markedly in recent years.



According to *SchoolsWeek*, the data shows that...



Twenty-seven schools out of more than 2,700 inspected in 2020 were judged to have safeguarding practices that were “not effective” (1 per cent).



After the pandemic, the proportion rose to about 1.6 per cent, last year dropping to 0.16 per cent and 0.07 this year.



Ofsted has inspected more than 3,370 primary schools this year, but only one has “not met” safeguarding requirements, equating to just 0.03 per cent.



In 2020, 4.1 per cent of secondaries failed safeguarding, falling to 2.65 per cent in 2023. So far this year, two of 731 secondaries inspected have failed safeguarding (0.27 per cent).

Actions

- Essential reading for leaders and SENDCO.

Five Principles of Promising Practice: Inclusion in Practice Report Published

Following a national call for evidence to find examples of effective inclusive practice in mainstream schools, Inclusion in Practice and ImpactEd Group have published an emerging insights report laying out five principles of promising practice.

The report highlights...

Five key emerging insights:

INSIGHT

1

Insight One: **Knowing children well, early and often**

The foundation of inclusive practice is balancing knowledge of individuals alongside knowledge of their barriers to learning. Schools are investing time in getting to know children early, particularly at points of transition, and being both anticipatory and reactive in planning support that will help them succeed.

INSIGHT

2

Insight Two: **High quality and evidence-informed teaching practice**

Inclusion starts with expert teaching. When this is embedded consistently and paired with early, targeted support for children, more learners stay in class and make progress.

INSIGHT

3

Insight Three: **Coherent and expert targeted support**

Expert and evidence-informed targeted support is organised in clear and structured systems so schools can ensure support is available when needed, and that responsibilities are well understood. Graduated models are enabling earlier, more coordinated responses across settings.

INSIGHT

4

Insight Four: **Strengthening inclusion through relationships and partnerships**

Inclusive schools do not work in isolation. Strong relationships based on trust with families, local authorities, and external services help create coherent and consistent support for children.

INSIGHT

5

Insight Five: **Inclusion as a strategic and shared responsibility**

Leaders see inclusion as a core priority and principle across their settings, not a separate system. When responsibility is shared and guided by a clear ethos, schools align planning, development, and accountability to drive consistent, inclusive practice.

Within the document, each of the insights is discussed with examples from schools.

[CALL FOR EVIDENCE: INCLUSION IN PRACTICE](#)

Good to know...

[TEACHER HANDBOOK: SEND EMBEDDING INCLUSIVE PRACTICE](#)



Actions

- For circulation and information.

One-Stop Family Hubs to Be Opened in All English Council Areas

Government announces £500m project to provide single point of access for health, education and wellbeing services.

According to Bridget Phillipson the hubs will provide...

A lifeline of consistent support across the nation, ensuring health, social care and education work in unison to ensure all children get the very best start in life.

It's the driving mission of this government to break the link between a child's background and what they go on to achieve – our new Best Start Family Hubs will put the first building blocks of better life chances in place for more children.

I saw first-hand how initiatives like Sure Start helped level the playing field in my own community, transforming the lives of children by putting in place family support in the earliest years of life, and as part of our Plan for Change, we're building on its legacy for the next generation of children.

[!\[\]\(faf942dc3e59ce8eb64b4ac481eca7e0_img.jpg\) ONE-STOP FAMILY HUBS TO BE OPENED IN ALL ENGLISH COUNCIL AREAS](#)



Actions

- For circulation and information.

A new data tool to help schools better understand and support development in Reception.

School Readiness Data Tool To Be Launched

The government has announced plans to:

1. **Launch a new data tool** to help schools better understand and support development in Reception.
2. Support councils and schools create ambitious local plans to reach record levels of school readiness by 2028.

[!\[\]\(de95854c7ee024cfadc48187bbb781b2_img.jpg\) SCHOOL-READINESS TARGETS 'MUST NOT BE A STICK TO BEAT SCHOOLS'](#)

The government has also announced that councils will have to agree targets to increase the number of children ready for school in their area.

The Department for Education said it was providing a clear direction to schools and councils to come together to...

“tackle the shocking reality that one in every three children start formal school at age 5 not yet ready to learn.”

The DfE stated that...

“comparison data against other similar schools has helped drive 3 million more days in school already this year compared to last.”



Actions

- Essential reading for leaders and Early Years and SENDCOs.
- Share with appropriate governors



Early Years Special Educational Needs Coordinator Training Programme

Evaluation Research Report – June 2025

Key Findings Included:

TRAINING REACH

7064 places on the training programme were taken up over two years (2022-2024). Trainees valued achieving an accreditation from the professional development opportunity. However, 22 per cent of trainees that registered went on to drop out, with a third citing capacity or time challenges as the reason.



TRAINING DESIGN AND CONTENT

There was positive feedback from trainees on the amount of pre-course information, the registration process, the online delivery and combination of taught modules and self-directed tasks. Trainees liked the networking elements and hearing new ideas shared by other SENCOs. The main challenge was the amount of work to complete in four months, which some trainees found demanding, particularly those that were unable to complete it during working hours.



TRAINING IMPLEMENTATION

There was good collaboration between BPN and DfE for the contract management, which supported an adaptive approach to programme delivery. However, there was mixed engagement from local authorities (LAs), which may have affected take up in different regions and the extent to which trainees were supported by the LA with follow-on training opportunities or tailored support after the training programme.



TRAINEE OUTCOMES

There was significant positive change on self-reported measures of knowledge, skills and confidence in the SENCO role, from before to after the training programme. Trainees attributed these changes to the training programme. There was also positive evidence after the training programme that trainees had a good understanding of the value of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and most trainees wanted to stay in the early years sector. However, it was less clear if any change in these areas was due to the training programme.



SETTING OUTCOMES

Trainees reported feeling motivated and equipped after the training programme to improve Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) monitoring processes, cascade learning to and improve capacity of staff in the setting. Trainees who made the most change in their setting were supported by management, worked in settings with high staff-to-child ratios, and could be released from the room, and had good existing relationships with external agencies. Low levels of SEND or good existing practice were reasons trainees made less changes in the settings.



CHILD OUTCOMES

There was promising evidence to suggest good outcomes for children with SEND as a result of the training programme. However, evidence in this area was limited in the evaluation due to no direct engagement with children, and a small sample size of parents and LA stakeholders reporting on children's outcomes.



[!\[\]\(dd161862f9164df98f62b726e9846241_img.jpg\) EARLY YEARS SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS
COORDINATOR TRAINING PROGRAMME EVALUATION](#)

That's a wrap!

We hope you've found these updates useful, thought-provoking, and relevant. As you know, these newsletters have been free of charge until now, but from September, we'll be moving to a subscription model to continue bringing you high-quality content.

Subscription details:

£6.00 + VAT for 6 months.
£5.00 + VAT for 5 months.
£4.00 + VAT for 4 months.
£3.00 + VAT for 3 months.
£2.00 + VAT for 2 months.
£1.00 + VAT for 1 month.



**ADDITIONAL EXCLUSIVE
BLOG POST BELOW!**

If you'd like to sign up, email Jayne on office3@ecm-educationconsultants.co.uk

We've really enjoyed creating these newsletters and appreciate the time you've spent reading them. Thank you for your support! **All that's left to say is, have a lovely, well-earned rest this summer – you deserve it!**

Actions

- Share with Assessment Leaders and Year 6 Teachers.

A blog post on KS2 interventions and booster programmes.

What does July 8th mean to you?

For many in primary schools, July 8th means the release of SATs results. Whatever the results are, schools will analyse, evaluate and be looking to next year's Year 6 with renewed hope and plans.

Is there a new team in Year 6 next year or have you got a tried and trusted unit with a proven track record? Whatever the case, interventions or boosters are going to feature quite heavily in your plans, more than likely. Many schools still rely heavily on these sessions to raise the attainment of those few children that are still struggling with many foundational concepts from KS2 and struggle to apply learning successfully.

Most Year 6 classes will be breathing a sigh of relief that SATs are done. They cannot change the scores and, along with thousands of 10- and 11-year-olds, are just looking forward to the end of term. Now is exactly the right time to be looking at those all-important sessions.

Key Questions

Key questions are often:

- Who will lead, plan and deliver the sessions?
- When will they take place and where?
- How will you baseline and track progress?
- Who will be responsible for this?

Who Delivers the Sessions?

Often boosters or SATs interventions are delivered by a TA, with guidance from a teacher who has prepared a worksheet or activity. They are delivered in the afternoon when foundation subjects are being taught and in any space in the school that is free – corridor, library or outside the classroom.

What's the Desired Outcome?

Looking at it another way, what do you want the outcome of a booster or intervention to be? The answer could be many things but primarily to fill gaps in knowledge and be able to apply that learning in a variety of required situations.



The barrier to learning could be complex. Is the right person delivering and formatively assessing as the teaching and learning happens? Are they able to ensure that the sessions are planned to progress confidence and learning with appropriate resources, and know when to draw back scaffolding and how far to challenge without losing confidence?

Are they skilled with questioning and do they draw upon evidence-based techniques and strategies to ensure that schemas are created to support the long-term memory? Or will the children be doing past papers and going over certain questions that they did not get right in a recent summative test?

Financial Implications

Any booster or intervention has financial implications. We need to make them effective and ensure that the learning is embedded. Is it time to take another look at how we plan, deliver and evaluate these sessions?

Baseline First

First, baseline. To know if any intervention or teaching is successful, we need to be confident in the starting point. Baselining can be summative testing but does need to take account of formative assessment.

A comprehensive baseline provides information for gaps in knowledge and can be an indicator of confidence. Remember, any summative test is the child on one day of their life. Use your judgement. Don't just look at QLA. Look at how the child approached a problem – did they stumble over the line or charge it with confidence?

Profile your children that are targeted for intervention and regularly assess. Let the data tell a story and act upon it. This stage is often rushed, and children are automatically chosen due to being seen as the lower attainers or strugglers. How are you selecting pupils for boosters and interventions? Is it OK to say they struggle with maths, so they are in the booster group?

Align Boosters with the Curriculum

Plan your boosters in line with your curriculum. I know this sounds obvious, but if you are teaching fractions in class and a child is struggling, how are you using boosters and interventions to prepare them to be successful in class, develop their confidence and their perception of a subject?

Your booster calendar needs to be in place early. If you know a group of children really struggle with fractions, why wait until the lesson to start building their confidence and skills?

Pre-teaching has a place, but this has to be targeted to a specific skill. Using it to develop the vocabulary needed to access the learning can have real impact. But also, spending time with a group of pupils who struggle to set out their maths work appropriately and have difficulty organising their thoughts on a page can be really insightful.



It may not be a misunderstanding of an algorithm but a lack of awareness of the importance of layout and being able to see that in their work, or do they need to go back to a true understanding of place value?

Take the time to pick it apart and progress will be faster than a generic session on a maths topic that half a dozen pupils struggle with. Don't be afraid to teach how to use a ruler, lay out a problem, set out a page. It was always the first lesson of my new Year 6 class. It gave me so much information about my new class. It was worth spending the time.

When and Where?

Time is short, space is limited. You want pupils to fully engage so a corridor with distractions is not the ideal place. Prioritise your booster interventions, make where they happen important.

Often the pupils that attend these sessions struggle to concentrate in class, so a corridor or a library with pupils coming and going won't improve that. Also, they know they need help. They are conscious of why they are in this group. Many of these pupils have become very capable at shielding themselves from failure. They don't have a go as they won't get it, so to put them in a place with coming and going and to ask them to fully commit to the session may be a bit too much.

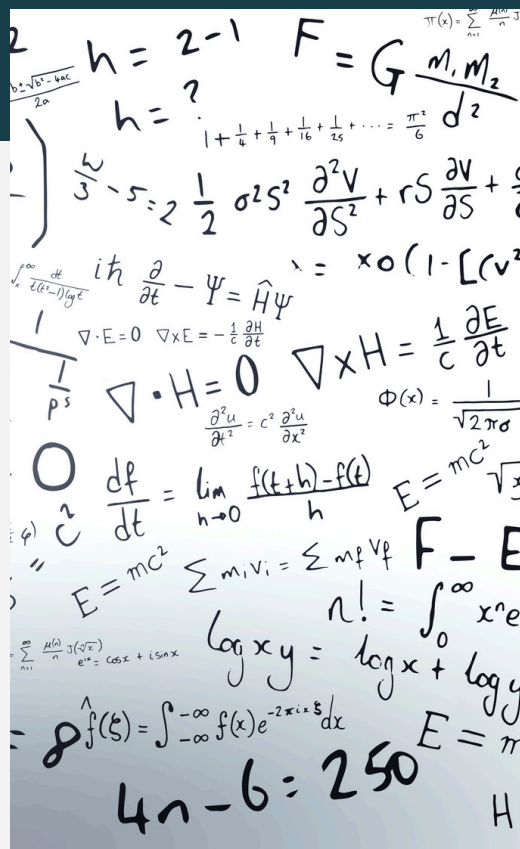
We need to know exactly where the barriers are and for that we need the children to be honest and open. That won't happen in a corridor. Half an hour in a private space where the group can fully engage and concentrate is worth more than that 45 minutes in the Year 6 corridor.

When Should They Happen?

Every child has a right to access a full curriculum. Should we be removing pupils from foundation subjects or science to attend maths or English boosters? What will be their investment in the session if the rest of the class are making hand buzzer games or learning about Shackleton?

We want pupils to commit so we need to make every effort to make this as easy as possible for them. If a session at 8 to 8.30 in the library when no one is using it before they start the fractions topic is the key to their success, make it happen. Be proactive, not reactive.

Enable them to not only access the topic but show the class they are successful, and their confidence and perception of the subject will improve. Explain adaptations and scaffolding up front. Discuss when they might have the scaffolding removed so they know the journey and where the learning is taking them. Create fun quizzes and self-assessment points so the children know they can do it before they leave the room.



Formative Assessment and Progression

Keep in mind the required formative assessment and progression. Where are they now, how far have they come and where are they going to?

- How are you showing this in your data?
- How are you actioning data?
- What's the story behind the data?
- How are you ensuring that this skill is being revisited and pupils have opportunities to practise it in a variety of situations, not just one session?

What is Different About This Session?

Pupils know their responsibilities in the learning in the classroom. They know if they struggle, and they usually know if they need help. Engagement is key, we all know that.

Breaking the cycle of lower attainers shielding themselves from failure, as they see it, is not easy. When we know that a group of learners will find a lesson or series of lessons challenging, and we plan adaptations, formatively assess and scaffold, but they have made little progress in learning, and then we put the intervention or booster in place, are we wasting learning time?

All those lessons that they could have made more progress in if only we fully understood their challenges to start with and put an intervention in place to support them accessing learning with their peers in class – would that be more beneficial?

Not just half an hour pre-teaching with a TA but dedicated time understanding what the barriers are before the lesson and enabling a student to have the confidence to know they are fully engaged in this lesson and will be successful.

We are constantly formatively assessing in class, but we have 30 children and often lower attainers in Year 6 have complex barriers to learning that really need unpicking.

Who Plans and Delivers?

Who plans and delivers a booster or intervention?
The question I would ask is who really has the skills? What key information will be gained from working with these children and how will it be used? Who will do this?

In Short



In Short

- **Plan your booster calendar with your curriculum.**

- **Baseline. Use the data, let it tell a story.**

Be clear in the data you gather and what you will use it for. Is it actionable? Profile your learners and spend time understanding why they are in Year 6 and have not grasped a concept. What are you going to do differently for their learning to support them?

- **Empower pupils with booster interventions.**

Don't reinforce that they cannot do but enable them to know they can do and set them up to succeed in class.

- **Think carefully about when they will take place.**

Are you giving children full opportunities to practise and apply in a variety of situations so the learning is embedded, or is it one-off learning where they now show they can answer a previous SATs question? Will they be able to do that tomorrow?

- **Are your boosters outcome or knowledge and skills focussed?**

Have you targeted end points clearly identified?

- **Where are they taking place?**

Is the learning environment focussed and sensitive to the needs of the pupils?

- **When are they taking place?**

Is it the optimum time for student engagement and concentration?

- **Who is planning, delivering and evaluating?**

Is this the most skilled member of the team who will have the most impact?

- **Are your booster interventions proactive as well as reactive?**

Don't see boosters as something to be done but as real opportunities to understand and unpick learning in a small, dedicated group and support those pupils to overcome those challenges. Be explicit in the pupils' achievements and how they can use the knowledge and skills in class to succeed.

Give them these opportunities to show their learning and really develop schemas and embed learning into their long-term memory. And remember, **little and often works every time!**

