

## SESLIP Education Network Update:

### September 6<sup>th</sup> 2025

#### From SESLIP:

- Welcome to the start of the academic year!
- From the SE19 SEND network about apprenticeships for officers working in EHCP coordination posts: a pilot will begin from 13 October 2025. Two online information sessions (29th Sept at 10am or 1st Oct at 2pm) are being run for you to find out more and please email Sonia Dayal, [sonia.dayal@sdsa.net](mailto:sonia.dayal@sdsa.net), if you wish to attend. An FAQ document is attached and more information can be found by contacting [Jo.mcsherrrie@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:Jo.mcsherrrie@surreycc.gov.uk).
- Also, I have had discussions with the SE19 lead and the first of two meetings next academic year that will be in London with the SEND Strategic Leads will be on **Wed Nov 19th** (replacing the current meeting date of 21st Nov). I will update the invite once the venue is confirmed.

#### In Today's Update:

- DfE: Attendance data for autumn 2024, guidance for school-based nursery capital grant applications, employing staff guidance for schools, overview of level 3 and level 2 results, responses to the consultation about RSHE and guidance for implementation from Sept 2026, findings of the 2023-24 behaviour in schools survey, preparation for terrorism guidance, evaluation of the extension of powers of VSH, voluntary standards for unregistered AP, data on progression to higher education (2023-24), education nature park schools.
- Reports: Exploring attainment gaps across England using 2024 data, use of social media, video, online and TV by children and young people in 2025.
- Research: Study exploring the impact of home environment and behaviours on achievement by children and young people, discussing about generative AI and learning flagging potential harmful impacts on learning.
- News: Analysis showing the importance of contextual data on GLD (especially month of birth), key trends in this year's GCSE results, early trends in this year's A-level and T-level results, 1 in 8 vapes confiscated at schools found to contain 'spice', 21 RISE behaviour and attendance hubs announced, national inclusion task force launched by IPPR and podcast, new NASUWT general secretary, support staff pay award agreed.

#### 1. DfE:

- Overall national attendance data for autumn 2024, shows improvements in attendance overall including a reduction in those persistently absent. However, severe absence continues to be challenging and the levels recorded in autumn 2024 were a little higher than in autumn 2023.  
<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england/2024-25-autumn-term>
- Capital grant guidance for school-based nursery development, including description of the criteria and the process and the timeline. Schools and nurseries in phase 1 are not eligible for this round. There are grants of up to £150,000 available for up to 300 schools / providers and bids must involve consultation with and support from the LA as well as being able to deliver an increased number of childcare places by September 2027. An intention is expressed to work with LAs to develop a phase 3 of grants that will be for multi-year grants in local areas. There are also links to case studies where schools have developed their early years provision, including in partnership with PVIs.  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-based-nursery-capital-grant-2025-to-2026>
- Staffing and employment advice and guidance for schools, including academies and free schools. The document aims to provide a consistent overview of the advice guidance for employing and managing staff, from headteachers through to support staff and trainees.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68b836c9cc8356c3c882aa13/Staffing\\_and\\_employment\\_guidance\\_for\\_schools\\_-\\_Sept\\_2025.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68b836c9cc8356c3c882aa13/Staffing_and_employment_guidance_for_schools_-_Sept_2025.pdf)

- Ofqual's overall summary of level 3 and level 2 results for England in 2025.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/qualification-results-in-england-summer-2025/qualification-results-in-england-summer-2025-accessible>
- Summary findings from the consultation about changes to Relationships, Health and Sex Education guidance. The report includes the government's response to each finding and there is a link to the updated guidance for implementation from September 2026, together with recommended materials and advice about what must be addressed in the school's RSHE policy and how parents are to be consulted about the policy. <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/review-of-the-rshe-statutory-guidance>
- Findings from the National Pupil Behaviour Survey for 2023-24. Whilst there is a large majority of both staff and students are positive about understanding what their school's behaviour standards and expectations are, there is more negative reporting by students of feeling safe, numbers of behaviour incidents and consultation about behaviour standards than by staff. There is some evidence both of a decrease in numbers of students feeling safe every day and of staff reporting their school being calm and orderly every day / most days, from the previous year's survey.  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68a5ec7b8e2cb87576994d6f/National\\_behaviour\\_survey\\_AY\\_2023\\_2024\\_August\\_2025.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68a5ec7b8e2cb87576994d6f/National_behaviour_survey_AY_2023_2024_August_2025.pdf)
- Guidance for schools and LAs about duties under Martyn's Law, regarding preparedness should there be a terrorism incident on site or nearby. Guidance applies to all school settings and allows for 2 years for work on and publication of a compliant preparedness plan.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/martyns-law-for-education-settings/how-martyns-law-will-affect-education-settings>
- Final report evaluating the extension of responsibilities for virtual school headteachers (VSH). Findings include that there has been an increased focus on attendance and playing an active part in LA challenge to schools about suspensions and exclusions. The report found no evidence of impact on attainment and progress, as yet. Recommendations include: the value of a single identifier for children and young people, better and more consistent recording of children known to social work by schools, and to pull together national guidance about VSHs in a single document.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-the-virtual-school-heads-extension-and-the-pupil-premium-plus-post-16-pilot>
- Voluntary standards guidance for unregistered AP to inform schools of best practice and support oversight and QA by LAs. Themes addressed include safeguarding, health & safety, admissions procedures and quality of education. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/non-school-alternative-provision-voluntary-national-standards>
- Statistics on the progression of 19 year olds into higher education show that the rate of progression has continued to reduce overall. However, the gap between those eligible for FSM in KS4 and their peers has closed slightly, but the proportions of students eligible for FSMs moving to HE varies across the country: from about 50% in London to less than 1 in 5 in the South-west. <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/widening-participation-in-higher-education/2023-24>
- A list attached of schools eligible for funding for National Education Nature Parks for 2025-26.

## **2. Reports:**

- Exploring attainment in English schools, based on analysis of data from 2024. With a focus on the disadvantage gap, the report reminds us this has grown since the pandemic and, with the exception of, London is not significantly closing. Disadvantaged pupils in London attain markedly better than those in all other regions, and those in the South-east are among the lower performing compared to other regions. However, the profile by individual LA varies significantly, whilst there is some evidence that in

schools in LAs with higher proportions of disadvantaged pupils the performance of these pupils is relatively higher. [https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/2025-08/Educational-outcomes-across-england\\_0.pdf](https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/2025-08/Educational-outcomes-across-england_0.pdf)

- Ofcom's 2025 report about phone, media and TV use by children and parental attitudes towards this. Very young children's use of social media: almost four in ten (37%) report using social media. Over a third (36%) of parents of these 3-5 year olds use it on their child's behalf, whilst four in ten (42%) say they use these sites or apps with their child. Yet seven out of ten parents of 3-17s do not think the benefits outweigh the risks of their child being on these apps (social media, messaging and video-sharing). Half of children say they use artificial intelligence (AI) tools, and most are using these tools for learning and/or schoolwork.

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/siteassets/resources/documents/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/children/childrens-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2025/childrens-media-literacy-report-2025.pdf>

### **3. Research**

- Research, funded by the DfE, exploring wider home environment and demographic impacts on learning and attainment. Using cohort study data, the findings reinforce current views that the home environment, relationship with parents, parental involvement with homework and parental level of education are significant factors in increasing the odds of a child's achievements and level 2 and 3.
- Discussion paper about the use of generative AI within education and early research. The paper raises some alarm about potentially negative effects on learning through an over-reliance upon AI with AI becoming a 'metacognitive crutch'. It also flags that the research is at an early stage and should be supported, because education is too important to just be left to 'see what happens'.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68b1b830d723ba6f74dba81f/The\\_home\\_learning\\_environment\\_and\\_attainment\\_research\\_report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68b1b830d723ba6f74dba81f/The_home_learning_environment_and_attainment_research_report.pdf)

<https://www.smf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/EducAltion-educAltion-educAltion-Sept-2025.pdf>

### **4. News:**

- Very helpful analysis of contextual factors that directly impact on children being assessed as achieving a good level of development (GLD) by the end of the EYFS. Age, sex and FSM-status all play in directly meaning that about one third of August-born boys on FSMs achieve GLD, compared to nearly 90% of Sept born girls. Analysis must take into account the age profile of pupils if nothing else. <https://ffteducationdatalab.org.uk/2025/09/dfe-will-need-to-take-account-of-age-when-comparing-schools-rates-of-pupils-achieving-a-good-level-of-development/>
- Key trends in this summer's GCSE results. The trend is one of plateau-ing, with a small increase in passes at 5 or above, compared to last year, but a small reduction in 5 and above passes in English and maths for the same period. <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/gcse-results-2025-8-key-trends-in-englands-data/>
- Trends in the A-level results 2025: a small increase in both proportion at C or above and A/A\*, with boys slightly out-performing girls for the first time since before the pandemic. <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/a-level-results-2025-8-key-trends-in-englands-data/> The direction with T-levels shows increasing numbers of students completing T-levels and of passes being achieved, however the drop-out rate was about a third of those who started T-levels in 2023. <https://feweeek.co.uk/vtq-and-t-level-results-2025-7-key-trends/>
- A team from the university of Bath raise concerns about vapes used by young people containing synthetic spice, which is seen as more addictive and harmful than cannabis. They analysed nearly 2,000 vapes sourced from those confiscated by schools from across England and found overall that 13% contained spice (compared to 1.2% that contained THC or cannabis derivatives). The vapes are

widely marketed on social media platforms such as TikTok and Facebook.

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/announcements/up-to-1-in-4-vapes-confiscated-in-schools-contains-spice-and-these-are-pushed-on-social-media/>

- The first 21 RISE behaviour and attendance hubs have been announced by the DfE, led by schools with a strong track record in positive behaviour and good attendance. It is estimated that up to 800 schools will have links to support from the hub schools. <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/government-names-first-21-new-behaviour-and-attendance-hubs/>
- The IPPR think tank has launched an Inclusion Taskforce and announced it will be chaired by Geoff Barton, formerly general secretary of ASCL. The panel will highlight solutions to key challenges across the SEND system and is expected to report in mid-October 2025. <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/taskforce-launched-to-reform-broken-send-system/>
- As part of this initiative, the IPPR has launched its own 'talking inclusion' podcast. Episodes can be found here: <https://www.ippr.org/the-ippr-inclusion-taskforce/the-ippr-inclusion-taskforce-podcast>
- Matt Wrack elected as NASUWT general secretary following disputes over his earlier appointment. <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/matt-wrack-wins-nasuwt-leadership-election/>
- A 3.2 per cent pay rise for school support staff has been agreed by two of the three unions, with council representatives welcoming the agreement. <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/3-2-pay-rise-for-school-support-staff-agreed/>
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