



Department  
for Education

# 6,500 additional teachers delivery plan





Government of the United Kingdom  
Department for Education

# 6,500 additional teachers delivery plan

Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Education  
by Command of His Majesty

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# Executive summary

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The government is committed to recruiting 6,500 (henceforth '6.5k') new expert teachers as part of our [Plan for Change](#) because high-quality teaching is the biggest in-school and college factor that contributes to better student outcomes. We will target shortage subjects, support areas that face recruitment challenges, and tackle retention issues. This will be central to delivering high and rising standards and delivering our mission to break the link between background and success.

We are deliberately seeking to recruit these additional teachers where the need is greatest. Changing student demographics means our greatest needs are in mainstream secondary schools, special schools and further education (FE) colleges, so we are focusing on these sectors.

Whilst our primary metric is the overall stock of teachers in these sectors, we will focus our investment on subjects with acute shortages and getting expert teachers into areas of higher deprivation to maximise the impact on children and young peoples' outcomes and opportunities.

This pledge will be delivered over the course of this Parliament, and annual data publications will be used to both monitor progress and optimise delivery in response to sector need. This pledge follows years of missed recruitment targets and thousands of teachers leaving the profession each year. From 2013 to 2014 to 2023 to 2024 the secondary postgraduate initial teacher training (PGITT) target was only hit once – during the COVID-19 pandemic. Teaching, a profession crucial to the future of this country, has become less attractive as a result of high workload and poor wellbeing. We also know teachers want more professional development training to empower them to meet more needs confidently in the classroom.

Despite the challenging financial context, we are getting on and delivering. Over £330m has been invested in financial incentives to both attract and keep expert teachers across sectors; we have supported access to flexible working without impacting pupils' education hours and tackled unfairness in Teaching and Learning Responsibility payments. School teacher pay has been increased by almost 10% since this government took power, and over £590m has been invested for colleges and other 16 to 19 providers in the 2025 to 2026 financial year to support critical priorities such as recruitment and retention.

Our approach is already starting to pay-off – the secondary and special school workforce has grown by 2,346 teachers between 2023 to 2024 and 2024 to 2025, and recent data is showing similar positive trends in FE colleges. Teacher vacancies have fallen to their lowest level for five years in secondary schools and school trainee recruitment is on the up, with around 17,000 new postgraduate entrants beginning training as secondary teachers in 2025 to 2026, an 11% increase compared to last year. Across all STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) subjects, new teacher trainees are up 21% compared to last year, meaning that the STEM PGITT target was met for the first time since its introduction (see [Initial Teacher Training Census, Academic year 2025/26 – Explore education statistics](#) for more information).

Central to the delivery of our pledge is to ensure high-quality teachers are retained and our initial interventions have helped school teacher leaver rates fall to 9%, the lowest leaver rate since 2010 (other than during the COVID pandemic). Also, more teachers are returning to state schools than at any point in the last ten years – the latest data showed 17,274 teachers returned to the classroom.

To keep delivery on track, and with a continued emphasis on high-quality teaching, we will focus on 3 interdependent areas over the Parliament:

- **Attract: We will optimise routes into teaching** to better support a diverse range of high-quality candidates to successfully start their careers in teaching.
- **Retain: We will improve teaching experience and boost retention** by increasing access and awareness of flexible working, promoting best practice in workload and wellbeing management, supporting teachers and leaders to harness the benefits of technology, and ensuring fair pay across the sector – helping to sustain a thriving and resilient workforce.
- **Develop: We will expand career-long development opportunities** to further support teachers in deepening their expertise and pursuing specialisms, including moving into leadership.

## Defining the pledge

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Over the course of this Parliament, data indicates secondary student numbers will plateau at approximately 3.2 million in 2026 and the 16 to 18-year-old population will be approximately 8% higher by 2028 to 2029 compared to 2023 to 2024. Six children in every classroom are being identified with additional needs. We will therefore target workforce growth in mainstream secondary schools, special schools and FE colleges

Primary pupil numbers, by contrast, peaked at 4.7 million in 2018 to 2019, and have fallen by 172,000 since. Primary pupil numbers are expected to continue falling until at least 2030. By 2028 to 2029, pupil numbers are expected to fall by 310,000 (6.8%) compared to 2023 to 2024. In this context – with primary schools not needing to grow teacher numbers and having comparatively healthier historical recruitment than secondary, [including overrecruitment \(126%\) against the primary PGITT target for 2025 to 2026](#) – primary schools have not been included in the pledge.

Our delivery approach will be to focus on overall stock of teachers. That is to say, our ambition is for there to be at least 6,500 more teachers working in our secondary, special schools and colleges at the end of this Parliament, than at the start. This approach means we can grow the workforce in a sustainable, quality-focused way. The focus on teacher numbers sits alongside our focus on ensuring all teachers have the skills and knowledge to deliver high-quality teaching.

Even though the early years and primary workforces are not in scope of the 6.5k teachers pledge, these sectors remain a priority for the government, with our strategy to give every child the ‘[Best Start in Life](#)’ encompassing raising the status of early years educators and ensuring that there are more highly qualified early years staff where they are needed most. The government is also committed to supporting primary teachers through enhancing teachers’ in-school experience, competitive teacher pay and providing strong career-long development opportunities.

[The Further Education Workforce in England](#) (next due to be updated in May 2026) and [School Workforce Census](#) (next due to be updated in June 2026) publications are the main data sources that monitor workforce changes across mainstream secondary and special schools, and FE, and as such are how we will report on delivery progress.

The baseline for the pledge is therefore the full-time equivalent (FTE) data from both datasets for academic year (AY) 2023 to 2024. In schools, the School Workforce Census (AY 2023 to 2024) reported 245,805 FTE in mainstream secondary, special, and pupil referral unit (PRU) schools<sup>1</sup>. In FE, the Further Education Workforce in England publication (AY 2023 to 2024) reported 38,821 FTE teachers<sup>2</sup>. This includes teachers in general further

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<sup>1</sup> This number is subject to change as previously published information is revised each year. While the School Workforce Census data does not get updated, other data sources do (for example the Database of Qualified Teachers). Updates allow for better identification of teachers between years, retention in service figures, exit from service figures, deduplication of teacher data and reduction of missing information.

<sup>2</sup> FTE is only collected for staff on permanent or fixed term contracts. It is not collected for staff on zero-hour, variable hour or other contract types because staff on these contracts will not ordinarily work a regular number of hours per week.

education colleges, sixth-form colleges, and schools-based providers<sup>3</sup>. For communications purposes, the baseline from AY 2023 to 2024 is therefore 284,626 FTE teachers in secondary, special and FE colleges<sup>4</sup>.

We will continue to utilise additional government publications (such as the Working Lives of School Teachers and Leaders (WLTL) survey), as well as relevant independent analyses and ongoing stakeholder engagement, to monitor trends.

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<sup>3</sup> [The Government Response to the Committee of Public Accounts on the Thirty-Fifth to the Forty-Second reports from Session 2024-25](#) previously reported the baseline figure for FE (36,576 FTE teachers). The baseline has been revised to ensure that teachers in settings such as 16–19 academies that have converted from Sixth Form Colleges, and similar, are consistently counted towards the 6.5k count. The schools-provider group from the FEWDC has therefore been added to the FE baseline, and the baseline figures adjusted. This provider-group includes: 16-19 Academy Convertors, 16-19 Free Schools, Academy-Converter, Academy-Sponsor Led, Academy 16-19 Converter, Academy Special Converter, Free School-16-19, Free School-UTC, School-Community, School-Community Special, School-Voluntary aided, Pupil Referral Unit, and Free School.

<sup>4</sup> The baseline combines total FTE teachers from the School Workforce Census (SWC) for AY 2023/24 (245,805 FTE) and the Further Education Workforce in England (FEWDC) publication for AY 2023/24 (38,821 FTE). However, the two data sources differ in important ways. The SWC is a November point-in-time snapshot that is subsequently validated and published later in the academic year. In contrast, the FEWDC covers only permanent and fixed-term contracts and provides a retrospective, full-year view rather than a snapshot. It also reflects the varied start dates and durations of FE provision, as well as the profile of FE teachers, many of whom are dual professionals and may not remain for a full academic year.

# Delivery is on track

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Since July 2024 this government has taken targeted action to boost teacher supply. This work started with our reset of the relationship with the sector, to re-establish teaching as an attractive profession – making it one that existing teachers want to remain in, former teachers want to return to, and new graduates wish to join. This reset has been supplemented by investment of around £700m across a broad suite of interventions, including:

**Reflecting the importance of teachers with a pay rise for school teachers and leaders of nearly 10%** since this government took power. FE received funding in parallel to support key priorities such as recruitment and retention.

**Attracting and retaining teachers in key subjects with bursaries, scholarships and salary grants worth up to £31,000 tax-free** to encourage more talented people to train to teach in the coming year; plus the Teacher Mentoring Programme (TMP) and [Taking Teaching Further](#) (TTF) initiatives in FE.

**Increased targeted retention incentives (TRIs) for teachers in shortage subjects worth up to £6,000 after tax.** TRIs were extended to eligible FE teachers in 2024 to 2025, targeting early career teachers of courses in maths, chemistry, physics, construction, digital, early years, engineering and manufacturing.

**Support for teachers to work flexibly**, including the clarification that teachers can undertake Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time remotely, and extending the government's Flexible Working Ambassador Programme until March 2026 to support more schools across the country.

**Improvements to teachers' conditions through resources made available to teachers and leaders**, such as the Improve Workload and Wellbeing service and Oak National Academy optional teaching resources.

**Funded initiatives to drive forward AI adoption in schools**, working closely with the sector and their representatives to develop evidence-based interventions to tackle workload and support teacher retention.

**Making apprenticeships easier to deliver for teacher training providers.** We have aligned the duration of the Postgraduate Teaching Apprenticeship (PGTA) with the academic year and streamlined complex assessment processes to make apprenticeships easier to deliver and help providers to meet the growing year-on-year demand for this Initial Teacher Training (ITT) route.

**Improvements to our digital services for candidates, trainees and teachers**, including launching the Find a Candidate feature, allowing providers to access a pool of eligible candidates who have not yet secured an ITT place, but still possess the skills and qualifications to do so.

Our data shows our approach is delivering and we are on track to deliver 6,500 more teachers by the end of this Parliament. School trainee teacher recruitment is improving, and the secondary and special school workforce grew by 2,346 FTE between 2023 to

2024 and 2024 to 2025. In FE, the FTE of teaching staff on permanent and fixed term contracts in the statutory sector and schools-based providers has increased by 2% from 38,067 in 2022 to 2023 to 38,821 in 2023 to 2024. The data for AY 2024 to 2025, showing progress in FE against our target, will be published in May 2026.

Our future school teacher pipeline is also growing. In 2025 to 2026, we recruited over 26,600 new postgraduate trainee teachers, a 10% rise compared to 2024 to 2025.

New entrants for postgraduate school teacher training courses in the 2025 to 2026 academic year have increased in 16 of 18 secondary subjects, with computing (+44%) and physics (+36%) seeing the largest increases. Across all STEM subjects, postgraduate trainee numbers are up 21% compared to last year (see [Initial Teacher Training Census, academic year 2025/26 for more information](#)).

In FE we are also seeing positive signs with almost 6,000 teachers receiving a [targeted retention incentive payment](#) in the first year, the majority in subjects critical to our Plan for Change, such as construction (1,715), mathematics (1,369), and engineering (1,195).

## Actions from here

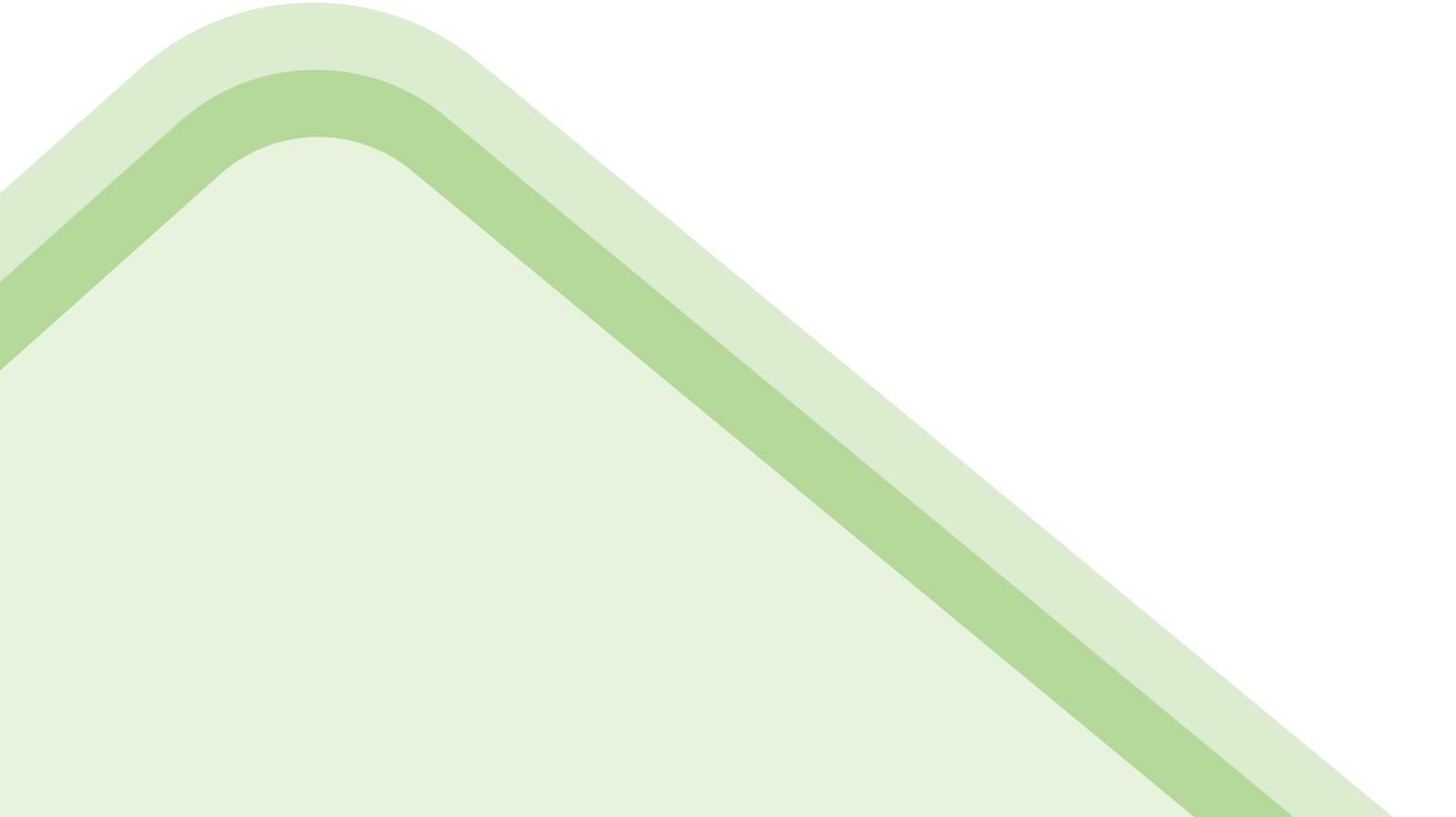
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Building on the work to reset the relationship with the sector, we have identified a core set of interventions to boost recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers, improve working conditions, and ensure teaching remains a desirable, high-status profession.

We will focus delivery across three key themes, which will work together to drive recruitment and retention and respond to needs across the system:

- **Attract: We will optimise routes into teaching** to better support a diverse range of high-quality candidates to successfully start their careers in teaching.
- **Retain: We will improve teaching experience and boost retention** by increasing access and awareness of flexible working, promoting best practice in workload and wellbeing management, supporting teachers and leaders to harness the benefits of technology, and ensuring fair pay across the sector – helping to sustain a thriving and resilient workforce.
- **Develop: We will expand career-long development opportunities** to further support teachers in deepening their expertise and pursuing specialisms, including moving into leadership.

We are also maintaining a strong focus on the wider factors that impact the day-to-day experience of the teaching workforce, including but not limited to pressures on children's lives beyond school including child poverty, instability at home and mental wellbeing, attendance and behaviour, the curriculum, and SEND reform as outlined in both the Schools White Paper and the Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper.



# Attract: We will optimise routes into teaching

We want to optimise routes into school and FE teaching so that a broader range of high-quality candidates are attracted to a teaching career; can find a path into the profession that suits them; and receive evidence-backed training and mentoring to set them up for success in the classroom. We will not only improve teacher supply but diversify it, so that the workforce better reflects the communities they serve. In recent years, key subjects have struggled to recruit the teachers they need, and too many recruits have left in the early years of their career, a trend that is particularly worse for applicants from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Taken together, the measures outlined within this delivery plan create a joined-up offer that supports teachers and leaders throughout their careers. By optimising routes into teaching, [boosting retention](#) and [expanding access to development opportunities](#), we will build a clear pathway for staff to grow, excel and progress into leadership.

## Actions we are taking

**Recruitment incentives to boost the workforce in the subjects where they are needed most**, with significant ongoing investment in tax-free teacher training bursaries of up to £31,000 for school and college teachers, targeted at the subjects where additional teachers are needed most.

**Reforming apprenticeships to enable candidates to earn while training.** For schools, we have shortened the duration of the Post Graduate Teaching Apprenticeship (PGTA) to 9 months to make it more accessible and attractive to employers, providers and candidates and we will continue to invest in grant funding to support the rollout of the Teacher Degree Apprenticeship (TDA) maths pilot, drawing on insights from this year's trainee cohort to inform improvements. In FE, the Level 5 teaching apprenticeship supports those currently teaching in a post-16 setting to upskill.

**Our High Potential Initial Teacher Training (HPITT) programme**, currently delivered by Teach First, makes a valuable contribution by helping schools serving low-income communities with high numbers of disadvantaged and low attaining pupils to recruit the teachers they need so pupils in these schools benefit from excellent teaching. We believe that the key principles behind the HPITT programme are also relevant for teaching in the FE sector, particularly the focus on high-quality teaching as a valuable tool for narrowing the attainment gap for disadvantaged students. We are exploring how the future HPITT programme could provide opportunities for participants to gain experience in FE settings and engage with teachers and leaders from the FE sector.

**Targeted action to ensure the teaching workforce reflects the diversity of our communities.** Our approach here is multi-faceted and includes working in partnership with a range of organisations (including with veterans' organisations and [The Professional Footballers Association \(PFA\)](#)) to promote teaching to people who may not previously have considered it. We are also increasing transparency by publishing more recruitment data, piloting anonymised applications, and improving how we collect information on ethnicity and disability in schools so we can better monitor and address disparities. Alongside this, we will utilise targeted retention incentives to help keep teachers in schools and colleges serving disadvantaged areas during the early stages of their careers.

The [Office for Equality and Opportunity](#), through the Race Equality Unit, will undertake research on improving the recruitment, retention and progression of the ethnic minority teaching workforce. We will also provide new resources to support school leaders in creating inclusive environments.

**Actively communicating the value of teaching.** We will continue to invest in our recruitment marketing campaigns for schools and FE which play a crucial role in communicating the benefits of a career in teaching and attracting prospective teachers into the profession.

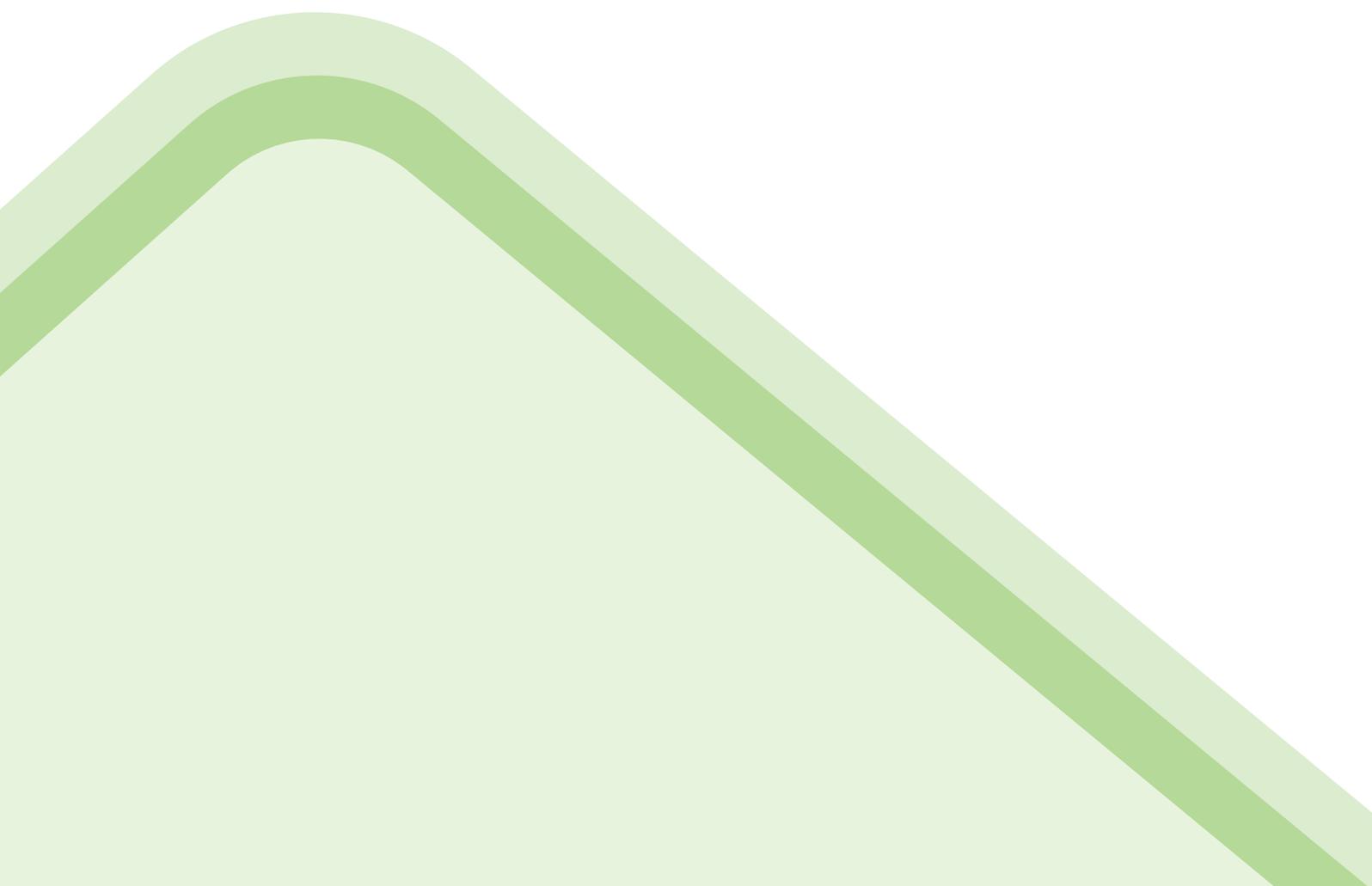
**Converting more candidates into teachers.** Our in-house digital recruitment services will continue to support eligible candidates to find and secure training opportunities. These digital services have been tested and co-designed with a diverse range of potential applicants to ensure they help remove barriers to great teachers applying for ITT courses. Data and insight from these services will shape our personalised support offer to candidates, including career changers, throughout the ITT application journey. The Find a Candidate feature is now available, allowing ITT providers to access an anonymised pool of candidates who have not yet secured an offer but may have the potential to do so. To support school involvement in ITT, we launched the Find Placement Schools service in November 2025, allowing schools to express an interest in hosting trainees, and supporting ITT providers to find suitable placements. We are also enhancing the [Teaching Vacancies](#) service with dedicated trainee support, making it simpler for providers and candidates to connect. Looking ahead, we plan to extend the Teacher Vacancies service to include FE roles, making it easier for providers and candidates to connect with opportunities.

**Supporting former teachers to return to the profession.** We have improved support for returners by supplementing the '[Get support returning to teaching advisory service](#)' with a step-by-step guide to help former teachers return. This includes advice on preparing for applications and interviews, finding classroom experience and updates on changes in the profession to help returners feel confident and prepared. The service receives excellent feedback from users on providing valued guidance, support, and renewed confidence, including positive feedback from parents who have taken a longer break from the classroom after having children. The service will also support former school teachers into further education roles, where appropriate.

### **Strengthening high-quality school and college teacher training**

- **Delivering from September 2025, an ITT and Early Career Framework (ITTECF) with refreshed content for trainees**, including on how teachers support pupils with SEND, and this will be reviewed again in 2027. Criteria for ITT leading to Schools QTS includes robust quality requirements, to improve the quality of teacher training and increase support for trainees. To ensure teachers can benefit from the professional training they need to be successful in their role, we are legislating so that all new primary and secondary teachers will be required to have or be working towards QTS, unless they are working under an approved exemption.
- **Reforming Initial Teacher Education (ITE) for FE to drive consistency and raise quality across the FE sector.** If regulations which were laid before Parliament on 22 January 2026 are approved by parliament, new statutory guidance will set clear expectations for delivery standards and curriculum

content from the academic year 2026 to 2027. Providers will also be required to register with the Department for Education and submit data on their ITE provision, improving our understanding of the shape and size of the system and how well it is meeting the demand for new FE teachers. We will also work closely with the sector to review how professional status is achieved, awarded, and maintained – supporting our commitment to embed evidence and quality throughout our professional development offer. As part of this review, we will consider how professional status can better align with wider ITE and professional development reforms.

- **Attracting talented people from industry to teach in FE.** To address ongoing recruitment challenges in FE, the teacher training offer will be tailored to further attract industry professionals – who already bring invaluable expertise into many colleges. We will continue investing in the [Taking Teaching Further programme](#) to help recruit and retrain those with industry experience, and in the Teacher Mentoring Programme to build FE mentoring capacity. Professionals who wish to transition from industry into teaching will be supported through a new pilot training programme in partnership with Edge Hill University and colleges. We are also investing £20 million to support building and construction professionals become full or part time teachers.
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# Retain: We will improve teaching experience and boost retention

Better retention of teachers and leaders keeps the skills and expertise they have developed in classrooms, underpinning high quality education for every child. At the minute, too many find teaching to be a difficult and unsustainable career. We will promote best practice in workload and wellbeing management, including flexible working opportunities, and tackle the external pressures where schools are filling the gaps. We also recognise the important role which pay and financial reward play in attracting and retaining teachers, reflected through targeted retention incentives for the subjects and areas with greatest need and above inflation increases over the last two pay rounds where we accepted the School Teachers' Review Body recommendation of a nearly 10% award for school teachers and leaders.

This approach will also grow the overall number of teachers in the system: improving retention among the 20% of secondary teachers most likely to leave by just one percentage point could keep around 420 more teachers in the classroom each year.

## Actions we are taking

**Tackling wider pressures on children and families so teachers across schools and colleges can focus on high-quality teaching that helps every learner to achieve and thrive.** The [Child Poverty Strategy](#), the introduction of our strategy for [Giving every child the best start in life](#), reform to children's social care, and the expansion of access to specialist mental health professionals will enhance teachers' day-to-day experience and strengthen their ability to deliver. By lifting over half a million children out of poverty and strengthening early childhood development, we can ensure far more pupils arrive at school ready to learn. That means less pressure on teachers and a more supportive, effective learning environment for every child. Expanding mental health support teams to every school and college will ensure teachers have expert support to meet pupils' wellbeing needs, rather than feel they are carrying that responsibility alone.

**Targeted support to help retain female leaders, teachers and support staff, especially those aged 30 to 39.** More women aged 30 to 39 leave teaching than any other group.<sup>5</sup> As a first step we are reducing the financial pressure that teachers on maternity leave face by addressing the comparatively low level of maternity pay relative to other parts of the public sector. We will fund schools to improve maternity pay, doubling the period of full pay from the current offer of 4 weeks to 8 weeks for school teachers and leaders. We will provide equivalent funding for school support staff and will remit the [School Support Staff Negotiating Body \(SSSNB\)](#) – to negotiate improved maternity pay for support staff in its first year of operation. We will also provide commensurate funding to FE so colleges can enhance the maternity offer for their staff.

**Targeted retention incentives (TRIs) in schools and colleges to retain excellent teachers** in the disadvantaged areas where they are most needed. We will focus on priority subjects like physics and mathematics to remain in teaching, directly addressing high attrition rates in the first five years of a teacher's career.

<sup>5</sup> Women in the 30–39 age group form the largest single group within the school teaching workforce

**Further reform to teacher pay and conditions.** Following final passage of the [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill](#), we will remove the ceiling on pay and build additional flexibility into the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document, empowering schools to attract and reward the best teachers. In addition to this, we have also remitted the STRB to consider lifting the ban on non-consolidated payments.

**Raising standards of student behaviour.** We will establish up to 90 new regional improvement for standards and excellence 'Attendance and Behaviour Hubs', enabling schools to exchange best practice and pairing schools to access more intensive 1:1 support.

**Harnessing the power of technology to empower teachers.** The EdTech Impact Testbed programme (FY 2026 to 2030) will identify and test EdTech products in real education settings, schools and colleges, to generate evidence of impact. Priority areas for testing include tools that support with reducing workload, improving learner outcomes and inclusivity. DfE's Call for Evidence on AI use indicated the potential for AI tools to 'give teachers back their weekends', and surveys show the majority of teachers report technology reducing their workload. The evidence generated aims to support schools and colleges to make more evidence-informed tech purchasing decisions. Scaling up adoption of impactful tech solutions and products will create efficiencies and benefits across the system. Through departmental funding for [Oak National Academy's AI-powered lesson assistant 'Aila'](#), we will also deliver bespoke lesson planning support for teachers.

**Building on the great practice that some schools already showcase, and the success of our flexible working ambassador programme (2023 to 2026),** to support experienced teachers stay and thrive we will also invest in a new programme that provides training, resources and peer support to help schools learn from each other, to normalise flexible working and manageable workloads, without impacting pupils' education hours. The programme will be aligned to the wider school improvement strategy and promoted through RISE. We will showcase how schools are supporting a wide range of flexible working practice, including enabling teachers to use PPA time remotely, building on the clarification we made to guidance last year. We will also ensure that the programme supports different groups of teachers at different phases of their careers, such as a specific focus on those returning from maternity leave. In the FE sector, there are a range of strong flexible working practices that already exist; we are working with the Improving Education Together (IET) partnership to promote and scale this best practice.

**Fairer reward for part-time workers.** From September 2026, [Teaching and Learning Responsibility payments](#) will be based on the proportion of responsibility teachers undertake, rather than their contracted hours, creating greater equality of opportunity for part-time workers to enhance their career.

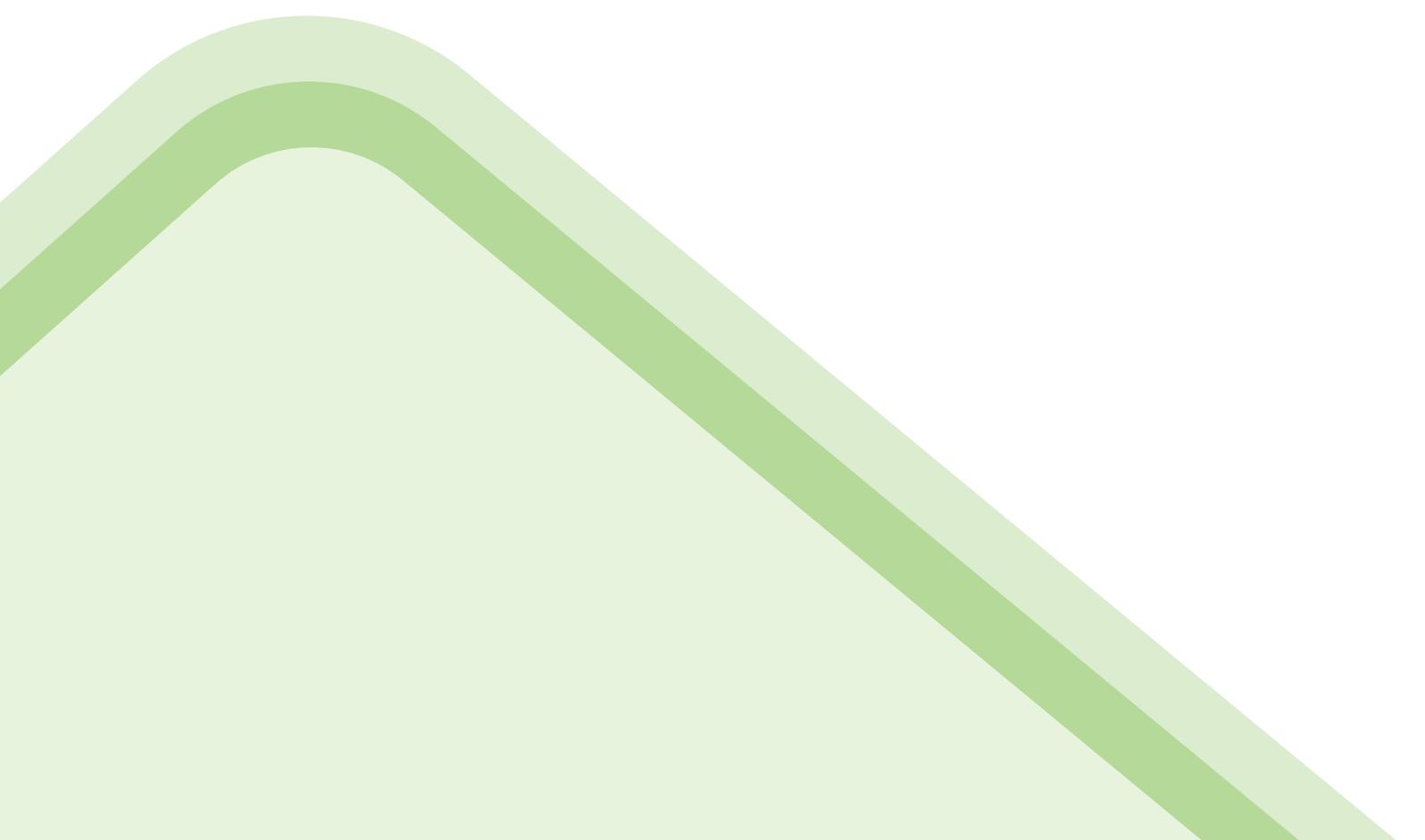
**Strengthening support for school and college leaders.** To alleviate pressure on leaders, we will deliver a new offer to enable heads to access support from mentors and each other in support networks. This will include a new framework of evidence on mentoring for school leaders and supporting local mentoring connections. We will invest £1m additional funding each year for wellbeing support, providing up to 2,500 leaders annually with a safe and confidential space to develop new strategies to manage their resilience and capacity to thrive in their role.

**Supporting positive wellbeing cultures in schools and colleges.** Staff wellbeing is crucial to our commitment to recruit and retain more teachers and support teacher quality. We are committed to taking a whole-school and college approach to mental health and wellbeing, and to ensuring that staff wellbeing policy is integrated within this. We encourage schools and colleges to sign up to the Education Staff Wellbeing Charter to build a shared commitment to promoting staff wellbeing.

**A simplified and clear complaints process that reduces unnecessary workload and stress.** This will be delivered through a new digital solution for handling complaints, mutual expectations for complaints handling and by working with the sector and parents to strengthen the independence of complaint panels.

**Investment to alleviate workforce pressures in FE.** We will provide £1.2 billion of additional investment per year in skills by 2028 to 2029, supporting 1.3 million learners each year and enabling colleges and other FE providers to invest in recruiting and retaining expert teachers in high priority subject areas.

**Collaborating with key partners to support innovative practice.** We are working with employers and unions, through the IET partnership, to identify changes that will improve the day-to-day experiences of leaders, teachers and support staff. We have already collectively identified early interventions that can help across schools and colleges such as publishing a conversation guide for school leaders on supporting staff workload and wellbeing and sharing best practice for using tech and AI to reduce workload.



# Develop: We will expand career-long development opportunities

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Improving standards and making schools and colleges more inclusive for all students requires a highly skilled and continually learning profession. High-quality development opportunities support teaching quality and improved student outcomes, and there is growing evidence showing that high-quality teacher development is linked to improved retention and teaching quality, particularly in the early years of a teacher's career. We know teachers want more professional development training to empower them to meet more needs confidently in the classroom and that leaders want more support to expand and nurture their practice when delivering school improvement.

## Actions we are taking

**Launching the new Teacher Training Entitlement (TTE).** This will provide every school with access to high-quality continuous professional development (CPD) opportunities. An evidence-based and impactful CPD offer is also being established for FE. The TTE will:

- **Strengthen the existing national offer of professional development.** We will embed the new [Early career teacher entitlement](#) that started delivery in September this year, and reform National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) for school leaders to better reflect the training needs of today. This will include new content on supporting pupils with SEND and people leadership skills as well as reviewing NPQ training to help more teachers from underrepresented groups step into senior roles. The review of NPQs is already underway, followed by a further review of the Early Career Teacher Entitlement in 2027.
- **Establish an enhanced early headship coaching offer** backed by additional investment of £500,000 each year to reach approximately 500 headteachers, particularly those in disadvantaged areas.
- **Extend the national offer so there is training at every stage by introducing new professional development programmes for experienced teachers and leaders.** We will develop new models of CPD programmes that complement the ECTE and NPQs, starting with:
  - New inclusive teaching and inclusive leadership programmes, to help teachers and leaders meet all children's needs and lead schools that are inclusive by design
  - New training for reception classroom teachers to help ensure every child gets the best possible foundation in their first year of school.
- **Ensure development opportunities are clear and accessible to all teachers and leaders.** Our first steps will involve working with Universal RISE, alongside Teaching School Hubs, to ensure all schools know how to access high-quality professional development within their communities.

- **Support strong development cultures in schools**, by supporting and better promoting research on implementing effective CPD, ensuring NPQs reflect this. This includes work underway with the National Institute of Teaching on their recently launched CPD portal and developing a promising Teacher Education Dataset to help dig into what makes teaching impactful.

**In FE, the offer will be rooted in evidence-based professional development** to support high-quality, career-long learning from initial training to leadership, aligned with sector priorities and evolving industry needs. We will:

- **Fund FE providers to cover the cost of teacher training and wider early career support**; delivered via the [Taking Teaching Further programme](#) (TTF) programme which is aimed at teachers delivering across the fifteen technical routes (such as construction, care services, engineering and manufacturing), as well as core and specialist subjects.
- **Elevate our existing professional development programmes to better support early career teachers and meet sector needs**. Building on the foundations of TTF and TMP, we will work with the sector to embed evidence-based models of early career support for FE teachers – such as structured mentoring and targeted guidance – that deliver meaningful support and improve retention.
- **Expand our in-service professional development offer**. Reflecting the specialist expertise required in FE, we will strengthen our offer to teachers and leaders in technical teaching and post-16 English and maths. Working with Technical Excellence Colleges, we will embed industry exchange into in-service professional development to keep teaching practice current, applied and evidence led. NPQs will also play an increased role in strengthening teaching expertise and leadership across the sector.
- **Build an evidence-based and impactful professional development offer for colleges**. Drawing on research from the [Education Endowment Foundation \(EEF\)](#), as well as expertise from the [The Gatsby Charitable Foundation](#), Technical Excellence Colleges, [WorldSkills UK](#), and other expert bodies, we will ensure teachers and leaders understand the range of offers at every stage of their career in a comprehensive professional development pathway. EEF will also drive effective practice through sharing what works in post-16 professional development.
- **Drive effective practice through collaboration and peer support**. The FE Commissioner will continue to provide tailored support through [National leaders of further education](#), fostering a collaborative network of peer-led mentoring and strategic support, whilst spreading best practice and strengthening sector performance.

# Conclusion

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This delivery plan sets out a focused and ambitious approach to strengthen the teaching workforce across our schools and colleges.

We will achieve this by promoting high-quality routes into teaching, which will support a diverse pool of talented teachers who are ready to make a lasting difference, alongside financial incentives for trainees proven to attract more teachers into subjects where recruitment has been historically more difficult.

In addition to optimising routes into teaching, this delivery plan recognises that recruitment must go hand-in-hand with retention. We will deploy programmes focused on enhancing the teacher experience with tools to drive down workload, support to raise standards of student behaviour, and practical help for teachers to harness the benefits of technology.

We will expand development opportunities to support teachers to deepen their expertise through our Teacher Training Entitlement, which not only helps keep more teachers in the profession, but also supports the future pipeline of high-quality leaders.

We recognise that pay and conditions are central to making teaching an attractive and sustainable career. We have already demonstrated our commitment to fair and competitive pay through above-inflation increases in the last two pay rounds. By accepting the STRB's recommendations, teachers and leaders have received pay rises totalling almost 10% over two years since this government took office. Alongside this, we have continued to invest significantly to support teacher recruitment and retention in FE, underlining our commitment to a prestigious and high-quality FE sector which drives growth.

Working in partnership with committed teachers, leaders and the wider sector across our schools and colleges, we will deliver a system that attracts, supports and retains exceptional teachers for every classroom, ensuring that all learners can benefit from expert teaching and set them on the path to success, regardless of their background.





