

School Leaders Survey results Summer 2025

Survey shows growing dissatisfaction with government policy amidst financial uncertainty

02 July 2025

This week we've published the latest findings from our biannual School Leaders Survey (Summer 2025), which provides valuable insight on a range of key policy issues as well as challenges and priorities of the day.

Research for this survey was carried out during May 2025 and nearly 200 school leaders responded, representing over 1,700 schools, collectively responsible for nearly 1 million pupils from across all regions of England.

School leaders' changing views on government policy

During the government's first year in office, we've had draft legislation, announcements on funding and on SEND reform. The clear sense from this summer's survey is that school leaders' views on the impact of government policy has shifted from neutrality to dissatisfaction.

Our survey has always reported concerns around funding but now, more than ever, the financial backdrop seems to permeate throughout.

Prioritising financial sustainability

The majority of the school leaders who responded expressed significant concerns relating to their organisation's financial prospects for the next three years.

As such, financial stability has become the top operational priority for leaders, who are now having to focus their time on unenviable decisions around reviewing staffing and other cuts, with other strategic priorities, including staff wellbeing, inevitably taking a back seat in the meantime.

It will have been disappointing to many that the education budget did not make the top five departmental spending increases in percentage terms in the recent spending review. There is a palpable sense that the pace and ambition of change must accelerate.

Exclusions, suspensions and pupil behaviour

In this edition we've taken a deeper dive into schools' experience managing [pupil exclusions](#) in the long shadow of the pandemic's impact. The majority reported behaviour has worsened and have seen an increase in suspensions and exclusions as a result.

We consider alternative provision and the key challenge schools are grappling with such as the balance between addressing behavioural challenges whilst being inclusive.

Early years school readiness

We also explore school leaders' views on early years provision, in the wake of the Secretary of State making this a key investment area. We establish the level of confidence in this initiative and gain insight into the appetite for developing schools-based nurseries to capitalise on this opportunity.

Download the findings now

No doubt these findings will provide leaders with areas for reflection when considering priorities for the next academic year. Download the full report to learn more.

Download the report →

<https://www.brownejacobson-updates.com/178/4830/landing-pages/school-leaders-survey-page.asp>

As always, we're grateful to all the school leaders who gave their time generously to participate in this survey. To participate in the next edition of the survey and be among the first to receive these reports, [please get in touch](#) and we'll include you on our mailing list.

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