

Schools white paper 2022: summary

Last reviewed on 27 May 2022

[See updates](#)

School types: All · School phases: All

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Find out about upcoming policy changes and what they mean for your school. Plans include new attainment targets in literacy and numeracy, an academy-led education system and a drive to increase attendance.

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There has been no change to current legislation

[Opportunities for All: Strong Schools with Great Teachers for Your Child](#) ('the white paper') is **not statutory guidance**. It's a document setting out the DfE's policy plans over a period of several years.

[Implementing school system reform in 2022 to 2023](#) outlines how the DfE plans to put the first stages of the white paper into practice. It is **not statutory guidance** either, but recommends that schools and academy trusts take steps to prepare for reforms. See these next steps in the first section below.

Read our summary below to get prepared and find out about the upcoming changes that may affect your school. We'll update this article as more guidance is released and consultations open.

Plans for an academy-led system

By 2030, all schools will be part of a multi-academy trust (MAT) or will have plans to join or form one.

There are no current measures to force well-performing schools to become academies.

What do I need to do now?

Maintained school governors:

- Check if you are in an Education Investment Area (EIA), because these areas will be prioritised for MAT development
- Schools in EIAs: look out for a local prospectus setting out MAT development targets from early autumn 2022 (see the 'area-based approach' section below)
- Talk with your senior leadership team about how your school improvement strategy can be achieved by joining or establishing a trust

See the sections below for more details on plans to move maintained schools into strong multi-academy trusts.

Find out [how academy governance works](#), and what questions you should ask if your school is planning to [join an existing MAT](#) or [form a new one](#).

New statutory interventions for schools consistently rated less than 'good'

From **September 2022**, maintained schools and academies with 2 or more consecutive Ofsted ratings below 'good' will be in the scope of intervention powers to join an academy trust or change trusts. These powers will initially focus on EIAs, though the plan is that they'll apply nationally.

This plan is still subject to parliamentary approval and the results of a [consultation](#). The consultation has now closed, but you can still read about the details of the proposed changes.

'Area-based approach' from early autumn 2022

The government's implementation plan for the 2022/23 academic year sets out plans to begin this process through an area-based approach, starting in the 55 EIAs set out in the [Levelling Up white paper](#). The Department for Education (DfE) will work with local partners to agree a set of local priorities, and publish a prospectus for each EIA in **early autumn 2022**.

Existing trusts, faith bodies, and groups of schools will then be able to submit proposals that respond to these priorities. Keep an eye out for the publication in your area, as it will set out the priorities and strategies for MAT development.

The DfE recommends that schools with consecutive Ofsted ratings of less than 'good' who are in EIAs 'engage early' with regional teams in the DfE to discuss which trusts will best support your school. Talk to your school leaders about what your priorities are.

LA-led trusts

Local authorities (LAs) will have the power to 'request' that a school joins a trust.

LAs will also have the power to launch a new MAT, but this will be limited to areas with a shortage of existing 'strong' trusts.

From **early autumn 2022**, the DfE will work with a small number of LAs to establish new MATs in a 'test and learn' approach. This will **not** be limited to EIAs.

New attainment targets

There will be no changes to the National Curriculum until at least 2024.

The white paper sets out new attainment targets, aimed to help pupils across the country achieve in school. It highlights literacy and numeracy as key tenets of achievement.

Primary schools

Secondary schools

Check out our [governors' guide to attainment and progress](#) to get up to speed.

The white paper sets out a series of attainment interventions and resources to help schools achieve these targets.

Attainment interventions

'Parent pledge' requirements

Schools will be required to inform parents if their child is falling behind in English and maths, and detail the progress they're making. This will be monitored by Ofsted.

Your school is expected to provide 'evidence-based support' when pupils fall behind. Teachers should:

- Monitor pupils' progress in English and maths using robust assessment
- Have a response system, including adjusting classroom practice and providing additional support for children who need it

Targeted support for all pupils should complement support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

See page 37 of the white paper for more information on the parent pledge.

Find out more about how you can [monitor pupil progress](#).

Pupil premium spending

The DfE is developing a 'menu' of approaches for [pupil premium](#) spending. This is designed to help your school make decisions about how best to support pupils, especially with numeracy and literacy skills.

We'll update this article with details of this menu, along with further guidance on targeted support and assessment from the DfE and Ofsted when they're available.

Tutoring to continue as a central intervention

Schools will be expected to use tutoring as a 'staple offer' for intervention and are expected to make tutoring available to every pupil who needs it.

Tutoring will be a 'core academic option' that schools can spend pupil premium funding on.

New curriculum resources

A new 'arms-length' curriculum body is to be established. Schools will be able to access a digital curriculum and online resources for every subject. The resources are designed to reduce workload, so teachers 'can concentrate on delivering lessons' and spend less time creating new resources.

The curriculum body will work with Ofsted and the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) to ensure high quality and relevant resources.

It will also provide resources that go beyond the National Curriculum to help your school stretch more able students.

See page 27 of the white paper and read about how to [monitor the curriculum](#). Once we know more about how the new curriculum body will work and the nature of resources that will be available, prepare questions to ask the senior leadership team (SLT) and subject leaders, such as:

- How will you use the new curriculum body to work towards school improvement targets?
- How will you adapt these resources to help you deliver the school's vision?
- How much support do these resources provide, and what other support do you still need?

Ofsted inspections

All schools will receive a full inspection under the [2019 Ofsted inspection framework](#) by the end of the summer term 2025. This includes 'outstanding' schools.

If your school hasn't been inspected since September 2019, expect an inspection in this timeframe and start to prepare.

Check out The Key's resources for more support:

- [Be ready for Ofsted: checklists](#)
- [Providing governing board minutes for inspection](#)
- [How Ofsted inspects 'quality of education'](#)
- [School policies: what Ofsted is looking for](#)

Schools that have received a judgement of less than 'good' for at least 2 consecutive inspections may be moved into a strong trust. See the section 'Plans for an academy-led system', for more information.

New expectations on attendance

Schools expected to provide a 32.5 hour school week

This applies to mainstream state-funded schools. It's not a statutory requirement, although Ofsted will consider it as part of its 'quality of education' judgement.

Schools are encouraged to provide 2 'substantive' sessions each school day. It's likely this is a requirement for hours on the school site rather than learning hours, and therefore the time can be spent in break or form time or on extra-curricular activities, although this won't include after-hours activities. We'll update this information as soon as we have more details.

Your school is expected to meet these hours from your existing budget by September 2023 at the latest. However, it's likely you already provide these hours and most schools won't have to make any changes to meet these requirements.

Special education settings are exempt

Special schools, pupil referral units (PRUs), and alternative provision (AP) providers are not expected to meet this measure.

However, your school should work towards 'extending and enriching the school week', where appropriate.

New attendance guidance

The DfE has published new guidance on [working together to improve attendance](#), applicable from September 2022, to help meet these targets.

It sets out the responsibilities of governors, schools, LAs and parents to support absent pupils and boost attendance.

The governing board is expected to take an active role in attendance improvement, including regularly reviewing attendance data and helping school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.

Changes to behaviour guidance

Look out for revisions to the following guidance:

- Behaviour in Schools
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion (statutory guidance)

These changes may affect how you monitor [behaviour](#) and [exclusions](#) in your school.

The DfE will also launch a new 'national behaviour' survey for school staff, pupils and parents.

Early intervention in AP settings

The [SEND review](#) sets out plans to prioritise early intervention to help pupils manage challenging behaviour at a younger age.

Take a look at our [summary of the Green Paper](#) for more details.

CPD and leadership opportunities

New national professional qualifications (NPQs) are to be introduced for:

- Leading literacy
- Early years leadership
- Behaviour and culture
- SENCOs (to replace the National Award in SEN Co-ordination, pending a consultation)

Every teacher and leader in a state-funded school will be able to apply for a funded scholarship to pursue these NPQs. We're awaiting information about how this will work and will update this article when we know more.

Talk with your headteacher about these development opportunities for staff, and what training would be beneficial in line with your school improvement plan.

Academy governance: changes

All trusts should have local governance arrangements

Page 48 sets out the aim that every trust will have a local governing body (LGB) so that schools can be responsive to their local communities.

There are currently no details about how this will be implemented. We'll update this article when we know more.

Admissions

A new statutory framework will change the academy admissions system.

None of these changes are in place yet, and your school doesn't need to take any immediate action. However, be aware that the white paper sets out plans that:

- Trusts will have a new statutory obligation to follow the School Admissions Code
- Trusts will have a new statutory duty to co-operate with local partners and other trusts, including on admissions
- LAs will have ultimate responsibility in making sure every child is allocated an appropriate school place

- LAs will take on responsibility for all in-year admissions
- LAs will receive 'backstop powers' to force trusts to take on pupils and to object to a school's published admissions plan (subject to a consultation, details yet to be released)

This process, including the role of LGBs, has not been fully set out by the DfE. We will update this article when more details are released.

See page 57 of the white paper for further details on these new obligations.

The DfE is considering plans to allow 'good' schools to move between trusts in 'exceptional circumstances'. Your school would be able to request that the regulator agrees to move you to a stronger trust. This is set out on page 50 of the white paper.

There'll be a consultation on this issue. We'll update this article with more details when the consultation opens.

Other upcoming changes:

- Trusts will have to meet a new definition of 'trust strength', including a measure for strong strategic governance (see page 49)
- New 'regions groups', formed from existing regional schools commissioners, will have new oversight over academy governance
- Local safeguarding partners will be able to conduct 'safeguarding audits' over individual academies and trusts
- A review of trust accountability, which will consider if whole trusts can be inspected

Article updates

27 May 2022

We updated this section to include new details from the [DfE's Implementing school system reform in 2022 to 2023](#) policy paper.

[Go to section](#)

Read next

- > [A governor's guide to attainment and progress](#)
- > [Monitoring pupil progress](#)
- > [Academy conversion: step-by-step process](#)

Also in 'Government policies & legislation'

- > [Changes in education 2022/2023](#) **UPDATED**
- > [Clerk's quick guide to governance legislation](#)
- > [Coronavirus: latest updates](#)
- > [Gender pay gap reporting: requirements](#)
- > [Governance Handbook 2020: summary of changes](#)
- > [SEND green paper 2022: summary](#)

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