



Governors Newsletter



Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 becomes law

The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 is now law. It gives the government the power to introduce new requirements. The new legislation aims to better protect children and raise standards in education. This newsletter summarises some of the new expectations coming up for schools.

Your school does not need to make any changes today – some of the guidance is still being consulted on or finalised.

Some of the key changes to come include:

Allergy safety

Your school will be required to comply with Benedict's Law from September 2026 and forthcoming DfE statutory guidance (to be finalised once the current consultation closes). When published, the guidance will set out requirements around how to manage allergies in school.

You can still have your say on the details of the proposed draft guidance – the [consultation](#) closes on 15 May 2026.

Ban on smartphones in schools

The current non-statutory [guidance](#) will become statutory.

Under the statutory guidance, the government will expect schools to have a policy that prohibits the use and possession of smartphones by pupils during the school day (with exemptions for sixth form pupils, boarding schools and medical devices).

Social media restrictions

The government will have legal powers to act swiftly to impose restrictions on social media use for under-16s, after the [consultation](#) closes.

You can still have your say on the details – the consultation closes on 26 May 2026.

School uniform

Updates to statutory [cost of school uniforms guidance](#) are on the way. The draft updates set out how, from September 2026:

- Schools should limit the number of compulsory branded items of uniform and PE kit to **3 or fewer** – secondary and middle schools can have a 4th item if it is a tie.

As a reminder, the DfE has advised schools to take the draft guidance into account now to account for timelines with updating policies and communicating with parents/carers.

Breakfast club provision

- Free breakfast clubs will be required in all state-funded primary schools – targeted at all pupils (not just disadvantaged pupils).
- The government has already begun rolling these out in some schools – more schools will be added over time.
- There are certain requirements on what free breakfast clubs should look like, as set out in the [guidance](#).

New expectations for academies to align with the maintained sector

- New teachers in academies will be required to have (or be working towards) qualified teacher status (QTS).
- Early career teachers (ECTs) in academies will be required to undertake a statutory induction period.
- Academies will be required to follow national minimum pay levels for teachers.
- Academies will be required to teach the national curriculum.

Academy trust-wide inspection

- The act has established the legal framework for trust-wide Ofsted inspection.
- No changes have been implemented yet, and it is likely that Ofsted will consult with stakeholders before announcing a framework for inspection, along with timescales for its implementation.