Government to crackdown on bad behaviour and boost attendance

31 August 2025



Education Secretary makes back-to-school call for parents to ensure children are in the classroom ready to learn

Hundreds of thousands of children will benefit from improved attendance, calmer classrooms and government support as the Education Secretary tells parents to join a united effort to get children at their desks and ready to learn.

Bridget Phillipson is starting the new school year by calling time on bad behaviour as shocking new data shows seven out of every 30 classroom minutes are lost to kids kicking off.

The Department for Education has today (Sunday 31 August 2025) unveiled a game-changing package of support for schools to help tackle the behaviour and attendance crisis, but the Education Secretary warns “when it comes to getting kids in and behaving – this includes mums, dads and carers too”.

It’s part of the government’s Plan for Change mission to break the link between background and success through education, which is already turning the tide on attendance with five million more days in the classroom and 140,000 fewer pupils persistently absent last year.

This signals the biggest year-on-year improvement in attendance in a decade, equivalent to 1,000 classes of children learning full time for a year – estimated to protect over £2 billion in pupils' future earnings.

This new school term the Education Secretary is determined that mums and dads also need to do more as the scale of this government's inheritance has been laid bare. The latest behaviour survey, covering the 2023/24 academic year shows a staggering majority (78%) of teachers reported that poor behaviour had a negative impact on their health and wellbeing.

Further action to tackle this will begin from the start of the new term, as 800 schools – responsible for around 600,000 pupils – will benefit from new RISE Attendance and Behaviour Hubs.

Across the whole programme, 5,000 schools are set to benefit, with 500 of those in most need receiving intensive, targeted help.

Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson said:

> *I am calling on parents, schools and families to join us in playing their part to get children in class and ready to learn for the start of the new school term.*
>
> *We have already made progress with five million more days in school this year and are backing parents and supporting schools through our Plan for Change. But we all need to do more, and when it comes to getting kids in and behaving – this includes mums, dads and carers too.*
>
> *We know what works – strong leadership, consistent attendance and schools standing shoulder to shoulder with families. That's why we're investing in proven expertise so that schools facing the biggest challenges can get the support they need.*

The programme will share proven strategies from school leaders that have successfully turned attendance and behaviour around.

This work will be supported by Tom Bennett and Jayne Lowe, announced today as new Attendance and Behaviour Ambassadors to play a key role in ensuring the sector's voice is reflected in shaping the programme.

DfE Attendance and Behaviour Ambassador Tom Bennett, said:

> *Every child deserves a school that is safe and calm, where they can be treated with dignity- and so do all school staff.*
>
> *We're drawing on the professional experience of some of the best schools in England that have successfully created exactly that.*
>
> *By helping to build relationships between these schools and their peers, we'll be building a national network of expertise that can change the futures for generations of children.*

DfE Attendance and Behaviour Ambassador Jayne Lowe:

> *This role is a real privilege, and I can't wait to work with colleagues across the sector to ensure every child feels connected, supported, and inspired in school.*
>
> *All children deserve to belong in school, and I am committed to helping schools create safe, inclusive environments where they can thrive.*
>
> *It is vital that schools hit the ground running in September. I urge school and MAT leaders to prioritise culture-setting with pupils and families.*

The Department for Education's forthcoming schools white paper will set out plans to crack down on bad behaviour – giving schools support and continued accountability while recognising the vital role that parents and families have to play.

This government's mission is to give every child – from early years to leaving school – the Best Start in Life.

That is why we are delivering free breakfast clubs across the country, expanding mental health support in schools, investing £1.4 billion to fix the crumbling state of classrooms increased pupil premium funding so that every child has the opportunity to achieve and thrive.