

Education Supporter

Autumn 2026

The magazine from



6,000 calls and counting

Education Support helpline's
24/7, free essential support

The Staying Power

A look at the retention
crisis in education

Ofsted publication

Greater wellbeing focus under
new independent assessment

“WE MUST ENSURE WE’RE NOT MISSING ANYONE IN THE CORRIDORS”

A school leadership expert on why
keeping teachers in the classroom
starts with inclusive workplace culture



Welcome

to the Autumn magazine 2026
from Education Support

Education staff are the most important asset our education system has. And as we head into a new academic year, we're as committed as ever to making sure they feel heard and empowered.

Yet over a third of staff are at risk of clinical depression. September marks Suicide Prevention Month, and this edition shares some of the work we're doing to support teachers in crisis.

Thanks to our generous donors and supporters our helpline is open 24/7, our resources are free, and we are pushing for systemic change at a political level.

Despite all our best efforts, many in education still haven't heard of us or our resources so, tell a colleague or a friend about us, maybe leave a copy in the staffroom!

Thanks for reading.
Kindest regards,



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Sinéad Mc Brearty'.

Sinéad Mc Brearty
CEO, Education Support



Please note that there are themes within this magazine that some readers may find distressing.

If you are affected by any of the content in this magazine, please do not hesitate to call our free helpline, open 24/7 at **08000 562 561**.

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Over 6,000 calls, one promise

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Back to school, test your colleagues!

We've decided to have a little quiz this year to test your friends or colleagues, there's a question on every page with the answers on pg 10.

Keep in touch

Phone 020 7697 2766 (fundraising enquiries)

Helpline 08000 562 561 (free, confidential 24/7 helpline)

Email fundraising@edsupport.org.uk

Website educationsupport.org.uk



Registered charity
no. 1161436





“I am not alone”

Over 6,000 calls, one promise

Education Support’s free helpline is open 24/7, staffed by qualified counsellors who listen and offer support to education staff facing personal and professional challenges. Over the past year our counsellors have answered over 6,000 calls.

With clinical depression and suicide risk assessments on the rise, today our helpline is more crucial than ever.

September is Suicide Prevention Month, so we wanted to share why the helpline is such an integral part of our work, and why it matters so much right now.

“(It) Made me feel I am not alone; the support is there when I need it. Heard me, accepted me, calmed me down and encouraged me very gently.”

Helpline caller

“ Education Support holds a special place in our hearts as counsellors. The helpline is a rare space for teachers, teaching assistants, support staff and leaders to speak freely-no matter what the problem is. We aim to clarify with our callers their difficulties, their next steps, their available supportive people and moreover their hopes for the future.”

Grace, Counsellor on the Helpline



Our research shows that many teachers and education staff have considered leaving the profession due to pressures on their mental health and wellbeing. And sadly, in more serious cases, **9% of callers have been critically assessed as ‘at risk of suicide.’** We’re facing a mental health crisis among education staff. But because of our supporters,

the helpline is there, and teachers always have someone to turn to.

We can proudly say that **88% of callers felt that the call had a positive impact** on their wellbeing, and **95% say they would call the helpline again.**

We don’t take these results for granted and our aim is to improve these numbers year on year.

If you need someone to talk to, you can reach our helpline on 08000 562 561



The Staying Power



A look at the teacher retention crisis and how we're helping

In 2023-24, 1 in 11 qualified teachers left the English state school system. 91% left for reasons other than retirement. Understanding why, and offering practical solutions, has become a core part of our work.

A toolkit for school leaders

To help school leaders this academic year, we have produced a Retention Toolkit setting out the key drivers of a healthy workplace. It takes evidence-based research from De Neve's 'Work Wellbeing Playbook' and contextualises the findings for schools.

The culture staff work in every day protects mental health. An environment where people can thrive keeps teachers in the profession and shows colleagues that their wellbeing matters. Part of that is inclusion. Noticing who might be struggling and making sure nobody slips by unseen is one of the simplest things a leader can do.



Download the retention toolkit here



“ As headteachers and leaders, we often walk with our heads down because we’re so busy. I talk about let’s look up and out, and when we do, we ensure we’re not missing anyone in the corridors.”

Evelyn Forde MBE

Why toolkits alone aren’t enough

The impact of staff attrition reaches far beyond the classroom, and the burden shouldn’t fall on school leaders alone. Training the teachers who left in 2023/24 cost over £1bn. Add recruitment and cover, and the annual cost of attrition rises above £1.5bn.

The cost isn’t only financial. Higher turnover affects teaching quality and social equity, and hits pupils in the most deprived communities hardest.

Here’s how we’ve campaigned for change:

- We turn our research into policy pressure. Our Teacher Wellbeing Index and 2025 retention research give us the evidence to argue for change

in government inquiries across England and Wales.

- It’s making a difference. Our evidence to the Senedd’s inquiry on teacher retention was referenced 38 times in its final report this year.
- We bring teachers’ voices into the room. We’ve encouraged supporters to write to their MP, and we host events that put politicians and educators around the same table.

Keeping teachers in the profession takes every level, and we’ll keep working across the system.



Independent wellbeing impact assessment published by Ofsted

Ofsted has published an independent wellbeing assessment of the revised inspection framework by our CEO Sinéad Mc Brearty. This shows that our efforts to bring mental health and wellbeing to the forefront of discussions are gaining traction across the sector.



[View the report here](#)

Q6. Eurovision was held in Vienna this year, can you name the winning country?

Extra point if you can name that nation's capital city!

The Ofsted inspection framework has long been under scrutiny. The heartbreaking death of headteacher Ruth Perry, which a coroner concluded was a suicide contributed to by an Ofsted inspection, was the guiding “North Star” for the review. It underlined how urgently wellbeing needs to be prioritised in inspection policy.

The report sets out key recommendations for Ofsted, most notably reducing the isolation and individual responsibility borne by school leaders alongside developing clear protocols for individuals in acute distress or at risk of suicide. The report also mentions actions the Government can take to improve negative wellbeing such as increasing the personal support available to leaders who receive poor inspection outcomes.

The report received thoughtful coverage from the BBC and Schools Week and has since been referenced in ministerial and parliamentary discussions. It can be found on the GOV.UK website and Ofsted have since responded to its recommendations.

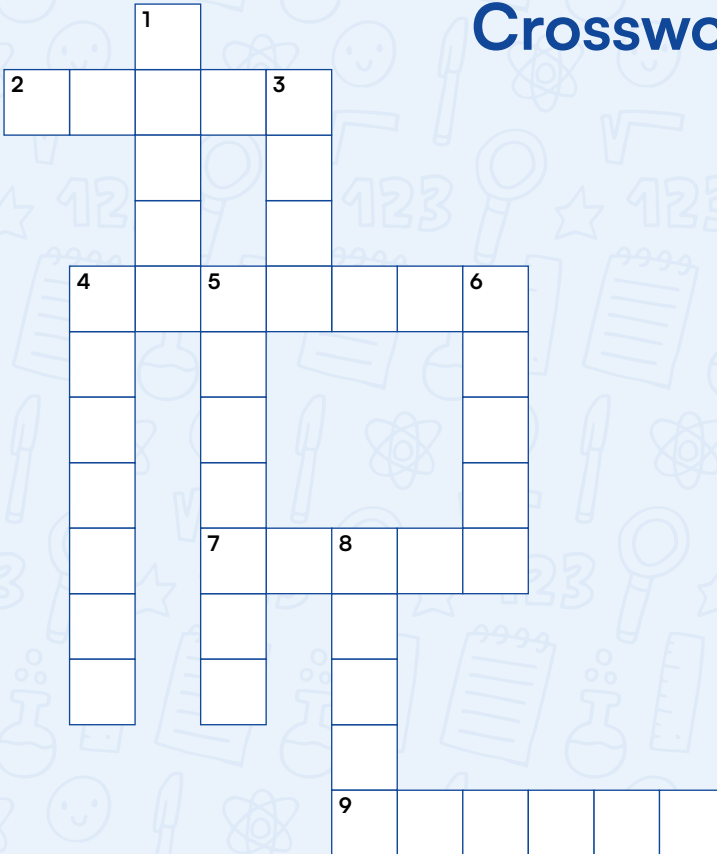
This milestone shouldn’t be overlooked. It follows a culmination of almost a decade’s worth of research through our annual Teacher Wellbeing Index into the mental health and wellbeing of education staff. This evidence has laid the foundation for our case: that wellbeing should shape education policy, not sit outside it.

Moving forward, we will continue to advocate for education staff and ensure that their wellbeing is prioritised including in the accountability system.

If you need someone to talk to, you can reach our helpline on 08000 562 561



Crossword



Across

2. Rodent, or the thing you click with (5)
4. Eight-armed sea creature, famously good at escaping tanks (7)
7. Rock bottom, the opposite of a zenith (5)
9. Element number eight on the periodic table (6)

Down

1. Mozart wrote it, Glastonbury plays it (5)
3. What you hear back when you shout in a canyon (4)
4. Japanese paper folding, most famously the crane (7)
5. Liner that struck an iceberg in 1912 (7)
6. The planet with the most visible rings (6)
8. Wild dog of the Australian outback (5)

Answers to quiz:

Q1. Tom Holland, Zendaya and Jon Bernthal, Q2. Ferran Torres, Q3. Viktor Orban, Q4. Archbishop of Canterbury, Q5. Solar Eclipse, Q6. Bulgaria (Sofia is the capital), Q7. Sir David Attenborough

Crossword answers

Across: 1. Mouse, 4. Octopus, 7. Nadir, 9. Oxygen
Down: 1. Music, 3. Echo, 4. Origami, 5. Titanic, 6. Saturn, 8. Dingo

Legacy giving

Leave a legacy behind
with Education Support!

The services we provide, like the helpline or the resources we share, exist because many of our donors chose to remember us in their Will. We cannot thank them enough for their generosity.

A huge source of our income comes from those who want to leave a gift for the causes they care about and we are truly grateful.

We want to make it easier for you to write yours. Through the National Free Wills Network, we are offering teachers and education staff a completely free, solicitor-written Will.

You will be supported by a qualified professional, and there is no cost to you and no obligation to leave us anything.

A Will is the only way to be certain your loved ones are provided for as you intend. It also lets you take care of family and friends first, and then, if you wish, leave something to a cause you believe in.

Should you choose to include us, even a small percentage of what remains would help us be there for the next generation of educators.

You can register and find out more:
educationsupport.org.uk/wills



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