



Secondary Update



Spring 2026 – Contents

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Editorial



Welcome to the spring edition of the *Secondary Update*. This edition aims to equip you with timely insights and practical advice, helping to support school improvement across the county.

Subject adviser reflections

This publication features detailed subject summaries from all the secondary HIAS advisers, sharing their reflections on individual subject performance across the county. These overviews provide valuable perspectives on strengths, areas for development, and practical strategies to help raise attainment in each subject. We urge you to read these summaries closely, using the advice to inform departmental planning and targeted interventions and where possible support your curriculum leaders in joining the subject network events.

Raising attendance and tackling persistent absence

Improving school attendance remains a top priority for us all in Hampshire. Over the past two years our collective efforts, guided by schools'

effective use of data and a relentless focus on inclusion are bringing about significant improvements in attendance. The inclusion and educational engagement (attendance) hubs offer a collaborative space to share best practices, access expert input, and explore strategies that support children's return to and engagement in education. We thank leaders for your commitment in supporting these. In this edition find two articles exploring reflections from The Wavell School and The Burgate School and Sixth Form over the impact of their attendance strategies.

Health and safety

As leaders we recognise that health and safety is not merely a statutory obligation; it is a foundation for creating and ensuring thriving school communities. Gary Westbrook, Chief Executive of Hampshire County Council, recently affirmed, "*A culture of robust health and safety is a hallmark of any outstanding organisation*" (December 2025). We encourage every school leader to ensure that health and safety remains at the heart of your strategic planning and daily operations. Do see the article by Richard Wilson which promotes health and safety in secondary science.

Stepping into senior leadership

Learn more about how new senior leaders and those aspiring to step up are currently immersed in our five-session programme: Stepping with Confidence into Secondary Senior Leadership. This dynamic course is giving participants the tools, confidence, and insight to thrive in one of education's most demanding roles. As an alternative to the National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership (NPQSL) this course aims to deal with the realities of school leadership and give participants a wide understanding of the varied responsibilities of a senior leader.

Op Moksha

Op Moksha was a targeted intervention programme delivered at Lift New Forest (LNF) Academy. Sergeant Christine Plascott designed the project to support vulnerable students in Years 8-10 who faced challenges with mainstream school integration and were at high risk of exclusion and suspension. The initiative responded to a concerning rise in school suspensions across Hampshire, aiming to reduce exclusion rates and prevent young people's involvement in crime, exploitation, and anti-social behaviour. Through the article explore the impact of this intervention. 14 students participated in weekly sessions covering topics such as online safety, police powers, healthy relationships, knife crime (with first aid training), county lines, and anti-social behaviour. The programme was delivered by Hub staff at LNF, local police, parish youth services, and emergency first aid trainers, with pre- and post-programme surveys used to measure impact.

As leaders, your commitment to continuous improvement and curriculum innovation makes a tangible difference to young people across Hampshire. We hope this edition of the *Secondary Update* can be shared with your senior and middle leaders. Due to this we have included a summary overview for all the dates of the subject leader networks. As always please reach out to your HIAS school improvement manager or relevant adviser if we can be of any further support. Wishing you and your teams a successful term ahead.

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Art and photography

2025 review and strategic priorities for 2026

Art and photography remain cornerstone subjects in developing creativity and critical thinking across our schools. This year, entries have held steady, with art maintaining strong engagement and photography attracting over 1,600 students, clear evidence that these subjects continue to inspire and motivate learners.

There is much to celebrate. Outcomes for students with special educational needs (SEN) have improved, with a three percent rise in art and a one percent increase in photography compared to last year. High-attaining students in photography achieved an impressive average point score of 6.2, reflecting both the dedication of teachers and the impact of targeted professional development. Schools engaging with continuing professional development (CPD) and network sessions are seeing measurable improvements, underlining the value of collaboration and shared expertise. Art also continues to offer a diverse curriculum, from fine art and textiles to three-dimensional work, graphics, and art, craft and design, providing breadth and choice for students.

Looking ahead, there are some key pupil groups to focus on: boys, students with SEN, and those eligible for pupil premium funding continue to underperform relative to their peers, making targeted intervention essential. Strengthening delivery to ensure **robust evidence for assessment objectives** is a priority. This means supporting students to analyse and develop ideas, experiment confidently with techniques, record observations effectively, and plan outcomes with precision. Continued dialogue with exam boards remains critical to secure clarity on marking and moderation. Attendance at standardisation meetings and active participation in Hampshire's secondary art and photography networks, alongside the annual conference, will be vital in driving improvement.

Our priorities for the coming year are clear: raise attainment at grades 4+, 5+, and 7+, close gaps for key groups, and sustain the popularity and quality of art and photography. With strong leadership, strategic CPD, and a commitment to sharing best practice, these subjects will continue to thrive and equip students with the skills and confidence they need for success.

Actions/areas of consideration

- Engage with CPD and networks: prioritise attendance at subject networks and moderation sessions as these are proven to raise standards.
- Celebrate success: showcase effective practice within your school and across networks to inspire others.
- Target support where it's needed: use data to identify gaps for boys, SEN, and pupil premium students, and implement focused interventions.
- Maintain professional dialogue: book maintenance visits (management partnership) with HIAS (Jayne Stillman) to stay ahead of changes, strengthen moderation, and secure consistency.

Upcoming network meetings

For upcoming networks please see the [Courses](#) section of this edition.

Jayne Stillman,

County Inspector/Adviser for Visual Art, HIAS

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Computing

2025 review and strategic priorities for 2026

Narrowing the gap

Hampshire school computing departments are to be congratulated on narrowing the gap between the national average GCSE grades and Hampshire pupils' progress. At grade 4 the gap has reduced by 4% from 2024 data. This is the first time since Covid measures that progress has moved in the right direction. Whilst there is still work to be done, schools that added to this trend in their data should be proud of this improvement.

Overall Hampshire attainment in computing

From 2024 to 2025, Hampshire improved on every headline attainment measure shown:

- average point score rose from 4.3 to 4.5
- grade 4+ rose from 59% to 63%
- grade 5+ rose from 46% to 50%
- grade 7+ rose from 21% to 23%
- grade 1+ rose from 94% to 95%.

EAL pupils perform well in computing

Pupils whose first language is not English show strong positive progress; their grade 4+ was +7%.

Priorities for 2026 onwards: narrowing the gap even further

Progress by Hampshire schools is still below the national average and supporting our pupils to achieve at grades 4+ remains key.

Specific pupil groups to focus on in Hampshire

- Free school meal (FSM) pupils in the last six years show negative progress in computing compared to pupils who are not in receipt of FSM.
- Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) support show negative progress compare to non-SEND support pupils.
- Girls still outperform boys but are still far less represented in the overall numbers taking GCSE.

OAP in computing

With these focus areas in mind in Hampshire, we encourage schools to prioritise ordinarily available provision (OAP) in computing. We can support you in this area through OAP-focused learning walks/observations and OAP focussed discussions in 2026. (The spring edition of *Computing/ICT User Friendly* explores OAP in the computing classroom in depth.)

Secondary network group

I am delighted to be relaunching the secondary computing network. Alongside our work to support continued improvement in computing attainment we explore the coming changes to our subject in the National Curriculum review. Please contact me for further information:

phil.bagge@hants.gov.uk.

Phil Bagge

Inspector/Adviser for Computing, HIAS

2025 review and strategic priorities for 2026

As we look back over the past year, it is clear that design and technology (D&T) continues to play a vital role in preparing our young people for the future. In Hampshire, we know how important this subject is for developing creativity, problem-solving, and technical skills that link directly to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) careers and local industry needs.

What is going well

I have seen some fantastic practice across our schools. Where practical design and making are at the heart of the curriculum, engagement is high and students are producing impressive work. More schools are embedding CAD/CAM and digital tools, which is great to see as this really helps students understand the relevance of D&T in modern industry. Collaboration between D&T and food preparation and nutrition is also growing, creating richer learning experiences.

Curriculum Review

Our recent review of D&T and food highlighted the importance of sequencing knowledge and skills carefully. Building design thinking and iterative processes early in Key Stage 3 is key, alongside strengthening technical knowledge in materials, systems, and nutrition. We also need to make sure assessment captures creativity and problem-solving, not just the final product.

GCSE trends

Entries for D&T GCSE in Hampshire remain steady, though still below pre-pandemic levels. Food preparation and nutrition continues to attract strong numbers, and performance is broadly in line with national averages.

Gender balance in D&T remains a challenge therefore engaging girls earlier in Key Stage 3 will be crucial. Schools that integrate digital tools and real-world contexts are seeing the best outcomes.

National updates

The Design and Technology Association (DATA) has launched the Inspired by Industry project with Mamas & Papas, which is a brilliant opportunity to bring real-world design into Key Stage 3 classrooms. They have also updated their health and safety training and accreditation, which is essential for anyone working in workshops. The Food Teachers Centre reports that over 105,000 students sat food-related exams in 2025, with GCSE pass rates rising nationally. Find useful guidance available on non-exam assessment (NEA) moderation and improving outcomes signposted via the Moodle.

Health and safety and accreditation

Looking ahead to the summer term, DATA health and safety courses will be running, including core and specialist training for staff and technicians. These courses lead to nationally recognised accreditation and are a great way to ensure compliance and confidence in workshop safety. If you have not booked yet, I would strongly recommend planning this into your CPD schedule.

Actions for leaders

Senior leaders: support curriculum time for D&T and food, and prioritise investment in equipment and accredited training.

Heads of department: review curriculum sequencing, strengthen assessment strategies, and encourage staff to complete DATA accreditation. Engagement and strategies to improve gender balance should remain high on the agenda.

Join our networks

Our Hampshire D&T networks are a fantastic way to share ideas and keep up to date. Upcoming sessions will focus on GCSE trends, curriculum planning, and health and safety training.

Hampshire D&T Moodle

Don't forget that our Hampshire D&T Moodle is your go-to hub for resources, updates, and network information. You will find curriculum planning tools, assessment guidance, and links to CPD opportunities, including health and safety training.

Access the Moodle here:

<https://designandtechnology.hias.hants.gov.uk/>.

Get in touch:

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2025 review and strategic priorities for 2026

English Language

English Language remains at the heart of the secondary curriculum, shaping students' ability to communicate, think critically, and succeed across subjects, which is of ever-increasing importance against a national and international backdrop of decreasing patterns of reading and writing amongst young people outside of schools.

The 2025 data for Hampshire paints a picture of stability in English Language as outcomes have held steady at the three headline points for three years. Hampshire outcomes are largely in line with national outcomes except at grade 7+, where stable Hampshire outcomes compare with an improving national trend.

In Hampshire, 70% of students achieved grade 4+, in line with the national outcome; 53% of students achieved grade 5+ and 17% achieved grade 7+. Girls continue to outperform boys at all grade thresholds, and the average point score for girls (5.0) and boys (4.4) show that girls, on average, outperform boys by more than half a grade in English Language.

What is going well?

- Despite challenges at grade 7+, attainment and progress for **higher prior attainers** have significantly improved this year and now show a three-year improving trend.
- Attainment and progress for **lower prior attainers** has bounced back after a dip in 2024 and is improving well, closing the gap with national outcomes for this pupil group.
- Excellent outcomes achieved by **students whose first language is not English** are significantly above outcomes for similar students nationally, and are, in fact, above outcomes for students whose first language is English at all grade thresholds.

Priorities and concerns

The **disadvantage gap** remains stark and is not narrowing, with outcomes for students who have ever accessed free school meals achieving outcomes 30% lower than their non-disadvantaged peers at grade 4+ and grade 5+. Outcomes for both disadvantaged students in Hampshire and **students with SEND** are significantly below outcomes for similar students nationally.

The attainment of **middle prior attainers** continues to be a concern and remains significantly below national at grades 5+ and 7+, although attainment for this group has risen sharply this year and narrowed the gap with national outcomes.

Areas to focus on

- There have been changes to the form of questions across the AQA English Language GCSE papers, included in final exams for the first time in 2026 – ensure that students are well prepared and confident in what is expected for the new-style tasks.
- Building strong progression in writing across both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 and providing plenty of opportunities to practise in order to secure the written element of the GCSE at a strong level; pay particular attention to improving transactional writing. Students need explicit teaching at sentence and paragraph level to reach higher standards in writing.
- The Curriculum and Assessment Review heralds far-reaching changes to the English curriculum, including a greater emphasis on oracy, spoken language and drama, as well as critical thinking and media literacy and the introduction of Year 8 reading fluency and comprehension tests. Heads of English must ensure they stay informed and begin to take steps to prepare themselves and their departments for changes as these are published.

Senior leaders and subject leaders

- Ensure that GCSE preparation includes a fair proportion of revision focusing on English Language, particularly independent, extended writing, in the final push towards GCSE success.
- Use data to monitor progress and target support for students, particularly checking the progress and intervening as needed for middle prior attaining students and vulnerable groups.
- Access training and resources focusing on improving outcomes at grade 7+.
- Keep abreast of upcoming curriculum and assessment changes.

Sign up for the [Hampshire Secondary English Network](#) for CPD, exam board support, networking and sharing successful approaches and resources with colleagues and keep up to date with the upcoming changes.

English Literature

Although headline figures are higher for Literature than for Language, with 72% achieving grade 4+ and 55% at grade 5+, outcomes in Hampshire for GCSE English Literature are below national at all grade thresholds and there is most significant underperformance at grade 7+.

Improving outcomes in English Literature and maintaining the profile and student value for the subject are a priority, particularly in light of changes in reading habits and enjoyment over recent years. The National Literacy Trust's annual survey of reading habits shows that enjoyment reading is in significant decline for children and young people aged 8-18: between 2005 and 2016, the percentage of young people who said that they liked reading hovered around and just above 50%; since then (coinciding with, although not necessarily caused by, the introduction of the current Key Stage 2 reading test, the current GCSE specifications and the introduction to the UK of TikTok), enjoyment of reading among children and young people has declined year on year to just 32.7% in 2025.

Currently, only one in five children and young people say they read daily.

These changes in reading habits mean that English teaching teams are working ever harder to ensure that students maintain their capacity to read, absorb and keep track of challenging texts, as well as developing their ability to respond to them effectively in writing.

Areas to celebrate

- Although overall outcomes have remained steady over three years in Hampshire, there are signs of positive movement, with improvements in outcomes at all grade thresholds for middle prior attainers and lower prior attainers.
- Outcomes at grade 5+ show a three-year rising trend, particularly among middle attaining students.
- As in English Language, outcomes for students whose first language is not English are significantly above national.

Areas to focus on

Priorities are clear: improve outcomes across the board, particularly at **grade 7+**, and support **disadvantaged students** and **students with SEND** to higher attainment.

Subject leaders frequently identify **poetry** as the area where students are least confident and most likely to skip questions in the exam – with the anthology poetry and unseen poetry together, poetry accounts for approximately 40% of the available marks within GCSE Literature, so developing knowledge and confidence with poetry is crucial to success.

Because of the heavy emphasis on **extended essay writing** in GCSE Literature, middle and lower prior attaining students frequently find it challenging to move beyond the scaffolds for written responses to texts, relying heavily on the teacher's input in lessons and struggling to move to independent tasks, so ensuring that students have **sentence and paragraph level practice** to build their confidence to respond in independent writing.

Structured revision, both in lessons and in additional revision sessions and assigned home study tasks, is critical to success in English Literature as students need to have secure knowledge of all their texts. However, online revision packages can only take students so far and quizzing, while helpful, can create false confidence: **writing is revision** and students must have enough opportunities across spring and summer term preparation to write full responses on all of their set texts.

Questions for leaders to ask

- How is your curriculum structured to balance the content of Language and Literature, ensuring that texts are covered in good time and allowing time for revision coverage?
- Which text do students find most challenging to write about? How do you respond to this in your teaching?
- How often are pupils asked to respond to unseen poetry? What is your departmental approach to this type of task?
- Which aspects of literature essay writing are the most challenging for students in your target groups? How are you building confidence and competence in these aspects?
- How frequently are students writing full-length practice exam answers?
- What will be the focuses of the final three-four lessons on each text? How have you planned these to ensure students are effectively prepared for the exams?

If you would like support or advice with any aspects of English curriculum, pedagogy and resources – language or literature – get in touch:

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2025 review and strategic priorities for 2026

Geography continues to be a popular and successful choice for Hampshire students.

This year, entries have grown again by 1.8% and the subject remains the sixth most popular in the county for uptake. It is pleasing to share that Hampshire's results for the subject are consistently above the national average, with 68% of students achieving a grade 4 or better, and 25% reaching grade 7+. Girls continue to outperform boys, but the gap is narrowing.

What is working well?

- **Strong results:** Hampshire students continue to outperform national averages at every grade threshold.
- **Rising numbers:** more students are choosing geography, bucking the national trend of falling entries in other subjects.
- **Exam board performance:** there are 52 AQA centres in Hampshire and grades at 4+ did rise with this board. The other boards have fewer entries, but it is notable that schools following OCR B and Edexcel B specifications had a narrower gap in attainment between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils when compared to the average for AQA departments.

Areas to focus on

- **Disadvantaged and SEND gaps:** these have widened this year. The disadvantaged gap by 1% and SEND gap by 3%. Leaders should prioritise embedding OAP and really keep an eye on the progress of your mid-prior attaining pupils here.

- **Geographical literacy and extended writing:** students need more support with understanding command words, interpreting figures, and developing chains of reasoning, especially for higher-mark questions.
- **Avoid the *geography of anywhere*.** This is something picked up by all the exam boards as high and mid attainment students failed to secure more than mid-tier marks for longer mark questions due to the vagueness of case studies and places used in their writing.
- **Non-specialist teaching:** some schools are reporting a rise in the number of non-specialist teaching geography. In the summer term we will be establishing a course for non-specialists to help develop confidence and delivery of the curriculum.
- **Curriculum progression:** ensure Key Stage 3 builds the right foundations for Key Stage 4, especially in areas like the UK economy (Paper 2 AQA) and case study knowledge.
- **Fieldwork:** purposeful fieldwork remains a national and local priority. It is crucial for developing enquiry skills and exam confidence.

For senior leader line managers and heads of department

- Review how OAP is embedded in geography lessons.
- Monitor progress for middle attainers and vulnerable groups.
- Support staff with examiner feedback and best practice resources.
- Encourage collaboration with mathematics and English departments to strengthen data skills and critical writing.

Join your subject network! The Hampshire Geography Network is a great way to share ideas, access resources, and hear from exam boards. Upcoming meetings will focus on closing gaps, improving literacy, developing school grounds fieldwork and curriculum review.

Need support or advice? If you would like to discuss your school's geography provision, access resources, or arrange a visit, please get in touch:

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History

2025 review and strategic priorities for 2026

History remains the **most popular non-core subject in Hampshire**, with 51% of the cohort opting for it at GCSE. Hampshire's performance is stable but still trails the national average: in 2025, 64.2% of students nationally achieved grade 4+, compared to 61.7% locally, and at grade 7+, Hampshire dipped to 25.2% against 26.2% nationally. Gender gaps narrowed at grade 4+, boys improved at top grades, while girls' results stayed steady, but the **disadvantaged gap remains a key concern**, only 37% of disadvantaged pupils in Hampshire achieved grade 4+, compared to 46% nationally.

What is working well?

- **Popularity and engagement:** history continues to be the most chosen non-core subject in Hampshire, reflecting strong student interest.
- **Stable performance:** despite national fluctuations, Hampshire results have held steady overall.
- **Curriculum innovation:** leading departments are embedding:
 - **adopting a lean Key Stage 4 approach** driven by overarching enquiries, introducing contextual complexity through narrative, and embedding regular retrieval and argument-building around essential fingertip knowledge
 - **building disciplinary knowledge** by showing how particular historians work with specific evidence to construct interpretations and claims
 - **broadening perspectives** through more local, diverse, and environmental narratives, including depth studies that enrich students' understanding of the past and possible futures.

Areas to focus on

- **Closing the disadvantaged gap:** at 37% (grade 4+), Hampshire's disadvantaged pupils lag behind the national figure of 46%. Leaders should prioritise embedding **OAP** and adaptive practices, monitoring progress for vulnerable groups
- **SEND provision:** ensure learning aims are precise with adaptive teaching strategies consistently applied well to support SEND learners
- **Curriculum breadth and inclusivity:** respond to national issues, historical scholarship and subject developments by integrating **environmental history, global narratives, and local/diverse histories** into Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4
- **Extended writing and argumentation:** students need more support in shaping historical knowledge into coherent explanations and arguments from Key Stage 3 and particularly for higher-mark questions through the exam board lens at GCSE
- **Exam board awareness:** Edexcel remains dominant in Hampshire, with AQA close behind. Ensure staff are familiar with specification nuances, exam board specification-based language and examiner feedback.

For senior leader line managers and heads of department

- Review how **OAP** and **adaptive teaching** is embedded in history lessons. See examples in the spring edition of the history curriculum update, *History Matters*. Department training is available from the History Inspector/ Adviser, Sarah Herryty.

- Monitor progress for groups at risk of underperforming such as **higher attainers, middle attainers and disadvantaged/SEND groups**.
- Consider whether the culture and pedagogical approaches in history/your school actively support both **gender groups** to achieve highly and **close any remaining gaps**.
- Support staff with **examiner feedback** and best practice resources, including access to the November GCSE History Network session featuring exam board adviser feedback. Consider how are the department applying the examiners report/analysis to future planning.
- Encourage collaboration with **English departments** and attendance at the **History Leadership Conference** to strengthen extended writing and argumentation skills.
- Ensure your department have access to best practice found in the case studies within the *History Matters* HIAS Curriculum Update.

Need history support, advice or training please get in touch to arrange a visit.

Sarah Herrity

General Inspector/Adviser (Secondary History Lead)

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Join the subject network and attend the History Leadership Conference!

The **Hampshire Secondary History Network** offers opportunities to share ideas, access resources, and hear from national experts. Details about the upcoming network and conference can be found in the [Courses](#) section of this publication.

Mathematics

2025 review and strategic priorities for 2026

The summer 2025 GCSE results for mathematics in Hampshire are slightly above the national figure after appeals. Nationally, grade 4+ stands at 72%, with Hampshire at 73%. For grade 5, the national figure is 52%, with Hampshire at 53%. For grade 7+ the national figure is 21%, with Hampshire at 20% (Source FFT). Hampshire's performance remains close to the national figures, which is to be celebrated and built upon.

Key messages

- Consistency is a strength: Hampshire schools have maintained stable outcomes despite recent challenges. We have a strong professional networks support resource sharing best practice and the majority of schools have avoided significant declines in mathematics results.
- Incremental improvements in grade 7+ reflect effective challenge strategies and with top grades rising nationally, it is important that we continue to stretch and challenge higher prior attainers in maths.
- A plateauing of outcomes at grade 4+ suggest a need for renewed emphasis on foundational skills.
- Narrowing the attainment gap remains a core focus. Disadvantaged learners and those with SEN continue to perform less well than their peers.

Actions and considerations for senior leaders and line managers

- Use data-driven insights to identify trends and target interventions.
- Embed mathematics-specific evaluation in leadership reviews.
- Strengthen accountability through regular progress checks.

Actions and considerations for heads of department

- Prioritise fluency in fundamentals with regular recall activities and high-quality teaching when gaps in knowledge become evident.
- Continue to develop mathematical reasoning and problem-solving.
- Focus on adaptive teaching to ensure access and success for all learners.
- Elevate CPD and peer coaching for sustained improvement.

Join our Mathematics Subject Leader Network

Secondary Mathematics Network – for sharing data, strategies and resources at local and national level. An opportunity to network with colleagues and develop CPD for department teachers and leaders. Further details can be found in the [Courses](#) section of this publication.

Hampshire's secondary mathematics provision remains strong and stable. With targeted interventions and collaborative leadership, we can address isolated dips in standard passes, attainment gaps for vulnerable groups and continue to raise achievement for all. The mathematics head of department network group and targeted in-school support are here to support you.

For in-school targeted support, resources, or to join our networks: email: jo.lees@hants.gov.uk

Jo Lees

Lead Secondary Inspector/Adviser for Mathematics, HIAS

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2025 review and strategic priorities for 2026

There were many successes across schools in Hampshire in MFL:

- French results at all benchmarks were significantly stronger than the national average
- Spanish is now more popular than French (2391 versus 2101 entries)
- results in Spanish were in line with national results
- the achievement of disadvantaged pupils in French improved greatly from 2024 to 2025
- boys were particularly successful in French compared to their peers nationally.

Areas for development

Achievement in Spanish at 5+ and 7+, particularly for pupil premium and SEND pupils requires improvement across the county.

German results are also behind the national average, especially at the higher grades.

The number of disadvantaged and SEND pupils entering a language at GCSE is significantly below that of other English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects such as geography and history.

Considerations for schools

The current Year 11 will be sitting the new MFL GCSE in summer 2026. It is paramount that all Key Stage 4 MFL teachers have attended CPD on the exam changes, especially for the speaking component. This has undergone significant change, and pupils will be severely disadvantaged if teachers are not properly prepared for conducting the exam and teaching the appropriate skills. CPD is readily available online from both AQA and Edexcel and department CPD time should be dedicated to this. HIAS network meetings have been well attended

and particularly useful for MFL heads of department to share ideas and resources. It is worth noting that grade boundaries are not yet available for the new specifications, resulting in uncertainty with predicted grades.

Success in speaking also leads to success in writing and therefore, speaking should be prioritised throughout Key Stage 4. In order to prepare pupils for the new speaking examination, languages departments will need to run practice speaking exams in Years 10 and 11. This will ensure pupils are ready for the final exams in the summer term. The preparation time has been extended to 15 minutes, so timings will be longer than previous years.

The curriculum content in the new GCSE is more accessible and relevant for all pupils, including pupil premium and those with SEND. This message needs to be communicated clearly throughout the options process, as all pupils can achieve success in MFL. An adapted Key Stage 3 curriculum with clear progression and opportunities for cultural and careers input also plays a key role in preparing pupils for Key Stage 4. The emphasis on phonics has increased, whilst the amount of vocabulary has been reduced. Ensuring that new schemes of learning reflect this is key.

HIAS support

Our autumn conference and network meetings are well attended and the perfect opportunity to ensure heads of department are up to date with curriculum developments and exam specifications. We have also focused on raising uptake and achievement and will be considering raising achievement at 7+, as well as supporting boys, SEND and pupil premium pupils. On school visits, we can facilitate departmental CPD and speaking exam training and moderation of practice exams. For more information, please contact:

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2025 review and strategic priorities for 2026



Hampshire
County Council

Music Service

Music remains a vital subject in shaping creativity, collaboration, confidence and wellbeing across our schools. The recent Curriculum and Assessment Review highlighted the transformative potential of our subject, and the National Plan for Music Education states that:

“Excellent music education opens opportunities... It gives children and young people an opportunity to express themselves, to explore their creativity, to work hard at something, persevere and shine. These experiences and achievements stay with them and shape their lives. That is why music is an essential part of a broad and ambitious curriculum for all pupils”

([https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62bc1242d3bf7f292040d364/The Power of Music to Change Lives.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62bc1242d3bf7f292040d364/The_Power_of_Music_to_Change_Lives.pdf))

This year, Hampshire saw its first increase in GCSE music entries for several years, a welcome contrast to the national trend of declining participation. This reflects the hard work of teachers, widening curricular opportunities in many schools, and renewed commitment to maintaining breadth at Key Stage 4.

There is much to celebrate. GCSE outcomes remain close to national averages, and gender balance in entries is even, with girls achieving above national levels. Uptake across vocational qualifications continues to rise, offering students a broader range of musical pathways.

NCFE music technology remains a particular strength in Hampshire: long established, well delivered and consistently performing above national averages. Schools engaging actively in CPD, moderation and network activity are seeing improvements in the quality of composition teaching, assessment confidence, and curriculum sequencing.

At the same time, the challenges highlighted in the national Curriculum and Assessment Review (November 2025) are visible in our county, where persistent inequities shape young people's musical journeys. The review emphasises the need for clearer progression from Key Stage 1-3, improved musical literacy, and stronger foundations in notation, aural skills and instrumental technique – areas echoed in Hampshire's Key Stage 4 data. Pupil premium and SEN gaps widened again this year, despite encouraging growth in pupil premium participation (from 12% to 16%). SEN outcomes at grade 4+ remain steady at 57%, but the average point score (APS) gap has increased, underlining the need for targeted sequencing and intervention. Vocational outcomes are mixed: while music technology remains strong, BTEC music practice results declined, with the increasing written demands of the qualification reducing its accessibility for some learners.

Music must not be the preserve of the privileged few. Music should be planned and taught as robustly as any other foundation curriculum subject, as exemplified in the Model Music Curriculum. Nationally and locally, a consistent message emerges: progression at Key Stage 3 is pivotal. Schools where Year 7-9 provision builds cumulatively across the technical, constructive and expressive pillars see more equitable access to Key Stage 4 and stronger outcomes. Where Key Stage 3 remains a disconnected series of topics or genres, students struggle to develop the musical fluency and understanding needed for confident composition, performance and appraising at GCSE.

Actions/areas of consideration

School leaders and heads of department play a crucial role in driving improvement. Key actions now include:

- strengthen Key Stage 3 progression: ensure learning builds systematically across the technical, constructive and expressive pillars
- target support for pupil premium, SEN and lower attainers: use data to identify gaps and expand access to instrumental/vocal learning
- prioritise composition teaching: embed modelling, structured listening and regular formative assessment to raise standards
- engage with CPD and networks: attend moderation, curriculum sessions and the *From Spark to Score* series to build consistency and confidence
- review Key Stage 4 pathways: ensuring music remains a viable, visible option at Key Stage 4, and ensure that GCSE music technology, and vocational options are inclusive and clearly communicated to pupils and parents.

Our Secondary Music Networks support schools through collaborative professional development, focusing on inclusive curriculum design, composition, moderation, and improving outcomes across GCSE and vocational routes. All heads of music are warmly encouraged to attend.



- Spring and Summer 2026 Music Network sessions (*dates via Music Hub website*)
- Composition CPD series: *From Spark to Score* (in partnership with Barton Peveril Sixth Form College) – five twilight sessions exploring progression from Key Stage 3 into GCSE coursework.

For booking information, visit: <https://hantsmusichub.org.uk/>.

Yvonne Postlethwaite

Strategic Lead for Schools and Curriculum,
Hampshire Music Service

Email: yvonne.postlethwaite@hants.gov.uk

Curriculum support

Hampshire Music Service is dedicated to providing high-quality musical opportunities for all children and young people across the county. Working with partners locally, regionally and nationally, we ensure pupils can learn about music and through music in rich and inclusive ways. Our offer includes instrumental and vocal tuition, whole class and ensemble teaching, instrument hire, curriculum teaching and advice, staff training, and a wide range of events and enrichment opportunities.

2025 review and strategic priorities for 2026

Headline successes

- The uptake for the subject continues to increase.
- Some schools are diversifying their offer very successfully, using both GCSE and non-GCSE as tools to support their students in achieving their best outcomes.
- Females continue to perform above the national average.
- The gap between the national average and Hampshire results is closing in non-GCSE PE courses.
- Disadvantaged students continue to have improved outcomes in non-GCSE PE courses, and are closing the gap to national outcomes of the same group.

Areas for development

- Closing the gap to national average at GCSE PE – this has been getting bigger over the last few years.
- Increasing female uptake into the subject – the male to female ratio is three to one.
- Continue to review the course offer – this needs to be student-focused to ensure that they have the tools to access the qualification and assessment that they are completing.
- Closing the gap in GCSE PE for disadvantaged and SEN support students.
- Supporting students in accessing the questions – structuring long answer questions.

Actions/areas of consideration

As senior leaders and heads of department, this is a great opportunity to be reflective over your current offer, as well as the delivery of this to ensure that student potential is being achieved.

Review your offer – it is important to be reflective as to whether your offer is appropriate for your current cohort of students. GCSE PE is reliant on students excelling physically in three different sports, as well as having a sound understanding of science. Non-GCSE options are less reliant on this and offers different non-exam assessment opportunities. This will vary with different cohorts, and it is important to acknowledge this, and where possible be agile to change!

Review your delivery structure – some units will need to be taught in specified orders, but it might be that you are able to balance theory and practical differently, and in a way that embeds learning, recall and application. We know that females out-perform males, so consider how this could be used to enhance overall performance of the whole cohort.

Reflect on your Key Stage 3 offer – does your Key Stage 3 PE offer inspire students to take up examination PE? Are you attracting the right students to the different courses? What is female engagement like at Key Stage 3, and does that encourage them to take it as an option at GCSE? The curriculum review findings are a great opportunity to look at the wholistic offer.

Educate parents – examination PE courses have evolved so much over time, and it is important that assumptions on what course their child *should* be taking is explored fully. If they do not have broad physical competence, then GCSE PE might not be the option for them! Equally, if their child does take GCSE PE, then they may be required to film them competing, therefore it is imperative that they understand what they need to capture, as it could alter final grades!

Specialist support

We offer one-to-one support with heads of department/examination leads, making this bespoke to the school's needs.

Our annual PE conference offers a great opportunity to keep up-to-date with curriculum developments and work with national specialists. *2026 date TBC.*

We are looking to expand networking and CPD opportunities throughout the year. If you are not already on the Secondary PE Network mailing list, then please email PEandsport@hants.gov.uk to be added.

Jo Hayes

Senior PE Adviser

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2025 review and strategic priorities for 2026

Across Hampshire, religious education continues to make **steady improvements**, with notable gains in several key performance areas. While **attainment remains below national averages**, the gap has **narrowed again this year** across all major grade boundaries.

Key successes across Hampshire

- **Improved outcomes** at all benchmarks (4+, 5+, 7+), with gaps to national narrowing.
- **Higher-level outcomes (7+)** increased by 1% after a previous drop, in contrast to national figures, which remained stable.
- **SEND outcomes showed improvement**, including +3% at 4+; +5% at 5+; +3% at 7+. These increases outpaced national improvements.

Areas for development

Despite improvements, several important areas require continued focus:

- **pupil premium outcomes remain significantly below national averages**, and the gap is widening (now 13% at 4+)
- **educational, health and care plan (EHCP) outcomes have slipped below national figures**, at 4+ reversing a positive trend last year, although at 7+ results have increased to match national outcomes
- **gender patterns**: while boys remain the lower performing group overall, **the gap with national data is greater for girls** at every grade boundary
- **curriculum time, specialist teaching and exam expertise** remain inconsistent across schools
- **entries into GCSE RS have dropped** by 7.44% (from 3185 to 2948), returning to 2023 levels. Although there has been a national decline (-2.3%), it is greater in Hampshire.

Considerations for schools

Key actions that will support continued improvement include, **adaptive, responsive teaching** which remains central for meeting the needs of SEND and pupil premium students. This approach has contributed to this year's SEND gains and must continue to be strengthened. Continuing CPD is needed to ensure the exam requirements are clearly understood and the range of pedagogies and strategies that can enact these requirements. Alongside this, schools should review **curriculum time allocations** and ensure that subject specialists are deployed strategically within Key Stage 4 classes so that these strategies have maximum impact. Longer term, **curriculum planning at Key Stage 3** should more intentionally build towards GCSE cognitive and textual demands, including challenge, extended writing and critical thinking.

HIAS support

HIAS continues to provide targeted support for schools aiming to raise standards and strengthen curriculum and assessment practice in RE. This includes **exam board training and webinars** through school visits and SACRE, focusing on assessment literacy and improving consistency in GCSE delivery. **CPD on adaptive responsive teaching**, drawing on cross subject expertise (particularly work developed by the History Adviser). **Support for improvement in SEND and pupil premium outcomes**, is continuing, including the identification of high performing departments, case studies, and best practice dissemination through *e-news* and *RE Secondary News*. **Key Stage 3 curriculum development support**, including best practice visits, steering group input, and exemplification materials via the HIAS Moodle are ongoing, particularly where support is required for teachers with other specialisms.

For further information or school based support, please contact:

Chris May

Teaching and Learning Adviser for Secondary RE, HIAS

Email: chris.may@hants.gov.uk

2025 review and strategic priorities for 2026

Curriculum and Assessment Review: Triple science

- All schools will need to offer students the opportunity to follow the separate science courses from September 2028 with first examination in 2030 (current Year 7).
- All students must still study either combined science or all three separate sciences up to Key Stage 4. However, it is not compulsory that all students **do** separate sciences.
- In recent years some maintained schools have entered whole cohorts for separate sciences. In most cases the outcomes were not as strong as for combined science leading to most schools switching back. It is essential that school leaders consider the best approach to get the best outcomes for students in their school.

Attainment and progress

- Overall outcomes for science courses were above the national averages at 9-5 and 9-4 benchmarks.
- The proportion of students achieving grades 7-9 in combined continues to be lower than other core GCSEs. In most cases this is because the most able scientists follow the separate science course.

- A greater proportion of Hampshire students study separate sciences than the national average. Outcomes at grade 7 and above are below average for all three separate sciences and lowest for Chemistry. This suggests that some students may be better off doing the combined science course to access two higher grades instead of three lower grades.

Science networks

- **Moving more students to grade 44 or higher:** around 12% of students are awarded grade 34 in combined science. Despite the awarding of a grade 4, this does not count as a standard pass in 9-4 basics reporting. HIAS networks are working on specific content and skills to move more students from 33 and 34 to 44.
- **Increasing the number of 7-9 grades in all courses.** In content heavy subjects such as science, it is essential that students are taught revision techniques throughout the course and that they are given frequent, low stakes testing to check their level of understanding.

Additional notes for senior leaders

- **Practical work:** purposeful practical and confidence of teachers in its effective delivery are cornerstones of effective science teaching. Look out for our working scientifically skills progression grids from Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) through to Key Stage 4 on Moodle+ to developing enquiry skills and exam confidence.

Upcoming network dates

Make sure your science lead or another teacher in the science team attends these essential meetings. Meetings take place face-to-face one afternoon per half-term. Each face-to-face meeting is followed by an online catchup which takes place after school hours.

Further details about our networks can be found in the [Courses](#) section of this publication.

Need support or advice? If you would like to discuss your school's science provision, access resources, or arrange a visit, please get in touch:

Richard Wilson

Leadership and Learning Partner and Secondary Science Subject Adviser, HIAS

Email: richard.wilson2@hants.gov.uk

Attendance

The Wavell School – the story so far



At Easter 2025 the DfE Regional Director (RD) identified 10 secondary maintained schools across Hampshire that they were interested in, around attendance, in terms of the support the local authority were offering them. The Wavell School were one of the 10 schools. Inclusion Support Service (ISS) met with the 10 schools to discuss possible support. This included the targeting support meetings, banding analysis training and the termly Inclusion and Educational Engagement Hubs, where schools share good practice and various agencies give input (Children's Services, CAHMS, Stop Domestic Abuse, Virtual School, SEN, HIAS).

Emma Wright, Headteacher at The Wavell School, welcomed the additional support and was pro-active in raising awareness of the importance of attendance at her school. When she joined The Wavell School in September 2023, overall attendance stood at 89%. It was clear from the outset to Emma that this was an urgent priority.

At that time, there was no senior leader with responsibility for attendance, and although an education welfare officer (EWO) was employed, data was not being monitored or tracked robustly enough.

Emma had already produced an attendance strategy which had been successful, and attendance had already improved from 89% in 22/23 to 91% in 23/24. Rather than viewing this identification from the RD as a setback, she embraced it as an opportunity to drive rapid improvement. Her approach was rooted in culture change, strategic investment, and a commitment to nurturing rather than punitive systems. She was delighted to finish the academic year 24/25 on 92.8% and so far this year attendance data is close to 95% with promising week on week comparisons. HIAS and ISS delivered a joint session at an in-service training (INSET) day around attendance for all of the staff with a particular focus on disadvantaged linked to their new unlocking potential strategy.

The senior leadership team (SLT) strategically used view your education data and banding analysis to monitor attendance trends and identify students requiring intervention. Attendance data is reviewed fortnightly by SLT and shared with heads of year for timely action. Attendance is also a standing item at termly governors' meetings, highlighting its strategic priority. To strengthen data literacy, SLT and pastoral staff received in-person training from ISS on interpreting banding data. This analysis is now embedded in the school improvement plan to ensure alignment with whole-school priorities.

The key findings, during the summer term, included:

- 27% of students fall within the 5-10% absence band
- overrepresentation of FSM, pupil premium, and service children
- 7% are both SEN and FSM, with all also eligible for pupil premium.

There was a strategic investment in support and belonging, including a restructuring of SLT to prioritise attendance. Emma removed the role of EWO and instead appointed a family liaison officer and student services manager who now runs a new student reception area, giving attendance a visible, central presence in the school.

Emma also identified that there was a lack of any type of nurture space within the school for those students who were struggling with anxiety and attendance. She therefore created a new student support officer role and repurposed the old caretaker's bungalow into *The Link*. This became a dedicated nurture space for students experiencing anxiety-related barriers to attendance. It is now also the home to Dudley the Dog whose impact has been joyous!



Analysis of the data continued to highlight though that attendance of their students with SEN was also a challenge and so *The Hub* was created. *The Hub* sits within their learning support zone. Staffed by a learning coach, it became a space where students could regulate and receive tailored support.

These initiatives shifted the school away from a punitive model and towards a culture of belonging, care, and encouragement. By September 2024, both *The Link* and *The Hub* were fully operational. Their impact has been significant.

In September 2025, and with a new attendance team in place it became apparent that processes to tackle non-attendance were not robust enough. To strengthen early intervention and reduce persistent absence, the school implemented a series of robust measures

designed to act swiftly and proactively. Daily monitoring was enhanced by ensuring absence texts were sent by 9.15am, followed by first day calls for all non-respondents by afternoon registration. The team introduced automated threshold alerts at 95%, 90%, and 85% to flag emerging concerns early, enabling timely action. For students showing declining attendance, we developed a mentoring plan and used personalised attendance action plans for those at risk of persistent absence. Patterns were monitored closely to allow rapid response to any negative trends. Additionally, they created individual attendance plans for pupils with SEND or medical needs, ensuring tailored support was in place to remove barriers and promote consistent attendance.

Emma recognised that previous approaches had sometimes been perceived as overly uncaring, which had affected relationships with parents. The school launched campaigns such as *Every Lesson*, *Every Day* and *Moments Matter* across social media, sending personalised letters when attendance thresholds are met, and using automated alerts to keep families informed. They also made it easier for parents to contact the school through dedicated phone and email channels, providing positive updates rather than only contacting when issues arise, and involving parents in creating attendance action plans where needed. By building trust through regular engagement and offering tailored support, they had an aim to remove barriers and work collaboratively with families to improve attendance outcomes for every child.

To drive improvements in attendance, they implemented a range of innovative and incentivised strategies. These include the highly successful *streak challenge*, which encouraged students to maintain consecutive days of attendance, and the *presence for presents* initiative at Christmas – controversial at first, but ultimately effective in boosting engagement. The school invested in proactive measures such as personalised phone calls to students on the first day back after holidays and ahead of mock exams, ensuring a strong start and sustained attendance during key periods. Analysis of historic data has helped them identify calendar days where attendance typically dips – such as the Christmas pantomime, sports day, and

rewards trips – and this year they will adapt provision (eg live-streaming the pantomime from a quiet room) and use student voice to understand and address barriers on these days, ensuring our approach remains responsive and inclusive.

As a result, in July, when the RD returned by way of a follow up, attendance improved from 89% (2023) to 91% (2024), to 92.9% (July 2025). Year 11 mock attendance was up by 15%. Through the *streak challenge*, 81-93% of students improved their attendance. FSM and SEN attendance moved to above national averages. And at the moment, they are teetering at just under 95%.

In November, Emma received the following email from the DfE:

“Your school has been recognised as a higher performer within your group.

Your attendance outcomes are amongst the strongest compared to your group of similar schools in overall attendance or persistent absence.

This means your school is listed as a higher performer in today’s release of the similar schools’ reports, compared with other schools in your group. Other schools will now see your school’s name in their reports and may contact you to learn from your approach.”

A huge congratulations to Emma, her team and the students at The Wavell School.

Jenny Burn

Senior Adviser, Inclusion Support Service

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The Burgate School: embedding a culture of belonging

In October 2023, prior to the release of the Department for Education's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance*, the ImpactEd group published its inaugural report on attendance, highlighting the significant role that fostering a sense of belonging plays in encouraging pupils to attend school. Since that time, ImpactEd and other leading educational research has continued to reinforce the importance of nurturing a culture of belonging and *anchoring* pupils within our school communities.

At The Burgate School, senior leaders have embraced this focus, recognising that a strong sense of belonging is fundamental to both attendance and overall pupil wellbeing. In July 2024, the headteacher invited the district school improvement manager for a half-day visit to support leaders in evaluating the impact of the school's attendance strategy. 18 months on, Deputy Headteacher Heidi Shering reflected on how the theme of belonging remains deeply embedded in the school's approach to attendance and sits firmly at the heart of their safeguarding strategy. She explained that the safeguarding priorities for 2025/26 revolve around three core values:

- staying safe (kindness): by developing a comprehensive action plan to educate all stakeholders across the school community
- showing respect (ambition): through embedding a curriculum that explicitly teaches the use of respectful and accurate language when discussing individuals with protected characteristics
- being ready to learn (curiosity): by gaining a deeper understanding of families experiencing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and trauma and nurturing a greater sense of belonging for all pupils.

Heidi described how these three values are woven into the fabric of daily school life. She emphasised that the cornerstone of the school's ethos is engagement – building positive

relationships so that every pupil has a trusted adult they can approach and ensuring that every child is given the opportunity to achieve and experience success.

The Burgate HERO

This academic year, leaders have launched the *Burgate HERO: Here Every day Ready On time* campaign, which is proving highly effective in emphasising the importance of daily attendance. Heidi reported that 68 Year 11 students, well over a third of the cohort have achieved attendance rates exceeding 98% by December. (The attendance figures for this year group are notably above both county and national averages at the time of review.) Heidi attributes this success in part to carefully considered incentives, such as discounted prom tickets, as well as transparent communication highlighting the strong correlation between attendance and GCSE outcomes.



The School Logo complete with hero cape.

Senior leaders are also making strategic use of DfE View your education data, ensuring attendance remains a standing item on all pastoral meeting agendas. There is a clear focus on celebrating progress and improvement, rather than simply monitoring figures. This robust, data-driven approach, which incorporates both attendance and wellbeing trackers overseen by the attendance officer and year leaders, ensures that support is targeted precisely where it is most needed. It should also be noted that attendance is a standing item on all pastoral and academic agendas. During the visit, the Year 8 leader demonstrated the use of a bespoke attendance tracker, kept up to date by the year leader and

attendance officer which allows for efficient filtering by student group and RAG rating. Tutors also play an active and positive role, making wellbeing calls on the second and third day of absence to students and their families, aiming to promptly identify and overcome any barriers to attendance. This reintegration-focused approach helps reinforce students' sense of belonging and ensures that every pupil feels supported by key adults, forming a vital part of the school's wider wellbeing strategy.

Celebration assemblies and community building events are central to highlighting attendance achievements, fostering a genuine sense of teamwork and mutual support throughout the school. Staff are encouraged to engage positively with students regarding attendance, making it clear that every absence is noticed and every return is warmly welcomed. The school's ongoing commitment to nurturing belonging is further reflected in a diverse range of supportive interventions. For instance, both the school counsellor and the Salvation Army work with small groups of pupils, equipping them with valuable life skills and coping strategies. *This is me* cards, which pupils can show to staff, empower students to manage anxiety by sharing their identifying triggers and suggesting solutions, while mentoring in the learning hub and activities such as the gardening club offer further opportunities for connection and personal growth.

The overriding message at the school is consistent and clear: strong attendance underpins both academic achievement and safeguarding. The school actively involves parents and trustees, sharing regular updates, hosting welcome evenings, and celebrating their *Burgate heroes* through emails and personalised messages for those who achieve or demonstrate significant improvement in attendance. This consistent approach to branding and communication not only reinforces a collective identity but also instils a strong sense of pride and belonging across the whole school community.

What next?

Looking ahead, Heidi described how the team will be using insights from DfE attendance reports to direct work in 2026 on further improving Year 9, Year 10, and Wednesday

attendance. She also explained how this year, they have also introduced recognition trips (experiences such as theatre and cinema outings) aligned with the school values of kindness, respect, and ambition, ensuring that vulnerable pupil groups are included. These trips, utilising the school minibus reward and reinforce the school values in action.

As Heidi summarised during the meeting: *"There is no one answer and there is no magic wand to attendance, but you have to keep trying something different as there is a child at the centre. That is what we are good at here, championing a child."*

With thanks to Heidi Shering Deputy Headteacher and Bex Price Head of Year for their support in reflecting and sharing the school's effective work in further improving attendance.

Kate Broadribb

School Improvement Manager, for Eastleigh, New Forest and Test Valley, Secondary Inspector/Adviser and Subject Lead for Geography, HIAS

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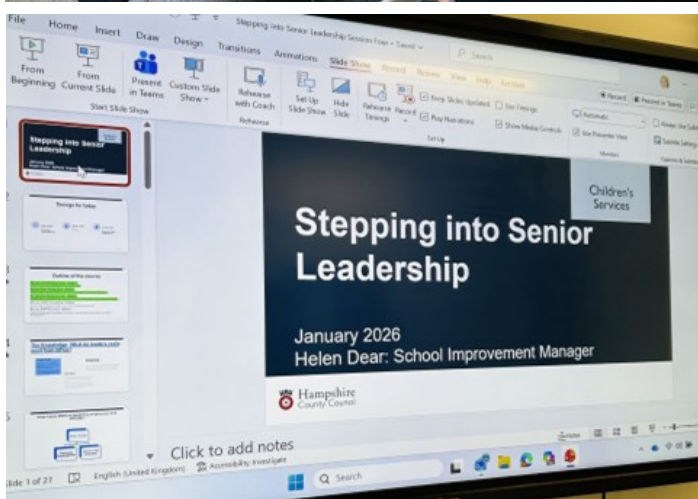
Sources

- www.impactgroup.uk/research-campaigns-and-resources/understanding-attendance-4e8e8
- www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance.

Leadership

Stepping into senior leadership: Hampshire's future leaders in action

Across Hampshire, new senior leaders and those aspiring to step up are currently immersed in our five-session programme: *Stepping with Confidence into Senior Leadership*. This dynamic course is giving participants the tools, confidence, and insight to thrive in one of education's most demanding roles. As an alternative to the NPQSL this course aims to deal with the realities of school leadership and give participants a wide understanding of the varied responsibilities of a senior leader.



From the programme

What is happening on the course?

- **Curriculum leadership** – participants are exploring how to shape a coherent, ambitious curriculum that drives standards and reflects their school's vision.
- **Behavior and culture** – leaders are reviewing different approaches to creating a positive, respectful environment where high expectations are the norm.
- **Personal development** – the group is considering how to embed opportunities for pupils' character, resilience, and wellbeing – aligned with the latest Ofsted framework.
- **Practicalities and realities of senior leadership** – conversations are tackling the day-to-day realities of leadership: managing workload, navigating complex decisions, and balancing strategic priorities.
- **Leading with impact** – participants are learning how to influence whole-school improvement, build strong teams, and communicate effectively with staff, students, and stakeholders.

What have participants found useful from this course so far?

"There have been lots of valuable opportunities to discuss issues and ask specific questions based on our own context, building useful knowledge that can be put into practice the next day. This makes the content relevant and useful."

Assistant Headteacher.

"Thinking about leadership more broadly has been enormously helpful. School life is so busy we so rarely get the time to think about the big picture. If you are considering applying or looking for a leadership role this has been a valuable course to clarify your thoughts around your next steps."

Middle Leader .

"The behaviour session was very useful, recognising what my own approach is and how that fits into the school's strategy. I've also taken on the concept of 'eat the frog' and it's made a real difference!"

Assistant Headteacher.

"The insight the leader of the course is able to give us on each section and the delivery style has helped to draw out meaningful discussions."

Assistant Headteacher.

"In a time of a busy workplace the course provided an opportunity and space to talk about topics with other leaders led by an excellent practitioner."

Middle Leader.

Why it matters

Senior leadership shapes the future of education. By investing in emerging leaders now, Hampshire ensures excellence for every pupil. If you are interested in being a part of the 2026/27 cohort then please email helen.dear@hants.gov.uk. There will also be information regarding next year's course on the Learning Zone.

Helen Dear

School Improvement Manager and Secondary Inspector/Adviser for RSHE, HIAS

Health and safety in science

Key priorities for secondary schools

Introduction

Science lessons bring learning to life in many ways, including through the use of practical experiments. Children and young people gain much from these activities and often cite these as their most memorable aspects of learning science. It is our responsibility to ensure that these are always conducted in a safe manner and that all risks are assessed and mitigations put in place to avoid incidents. Creating a safe environment is essential for inspiring curiosity without compromising wellbeing. This article outlines key priorities, audit insights, and governance responsibilities to help schools maintain high standards of safety.

Why it matters

Health and safety is more than a compliance requirement, it is a fundamental responsibility for all. We mirror this as it is the cornerstone of our organisational excellence at Hampshire County Council. As emphasised by our Chief Executive, Gary Westbook, creating a safe and healthy environment enables every member of our team to perform at their best. When we prioritise wellbeing, we foster trust, resilience, and a culture where people feel valued and supported. This foundation ensures that high standards are maintained across all operations, driving continuous improvement and delivering outstanding outcomes for the communities we serve. By embedding health and safety into everything we do, we set the stage for sustainable success and excellence. This is the same in schools and colleges.

Key priorities for schools

Health and safety in science education is essential for safeguarding students and staff while enabling high-quality practical learning. Schools and trusts have statutory responsibilities under **Health and Safety Executive (HSE) regulations, DfE requirements, and the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974**. CLEAPSS guidance provides practical support and resources to help schools meet these duties effectively.

CLEAPSS membership

A current CLEAPSS membership is essential to keep up to date with any changes in specific activity, equipment or chemical risk assessments: www.cleapss.org.uk.

All Hampshire County Council maintained schools currently hold CLEAPSS membership. Non-maintained HCC schools are strongly advised to have their own membership to ensure access to vital health and safety guidance for practical science and technology activities. If your school does not have CLEAPSS membership, this should be considered a priority.

Schools must follow HSE backed regulations including:

- Appointment of a *competent person to advise on health and safety compliance*. Hampshire maintained schools' can seek advice for all practical subjects through their CLEAPSS membership.
- Development and maintenance of a health and safety policy, reviewed regularly and embedded in school culture. Model policies are available through CLEAPSS.

DfE Curriculum and Assessment Review

The recent review highlights the importance of practical science as a core part of the learning experience for children and young people. Safe practical work is integral to delivering a broad and balanced curriculum. Providing a safe environment for both indoor and outdoor practical science activities is an essential part of the process. The onus is on schools to ensure the following are in place:

Risk assessments

Ensure all practical activities have **up-to-date** risk assessments aligned with CLEAPSS guidance.

We emphasise that if there are schemes of learning/learning journeys for topics that are being retaught, that a risk assessment must be reviewed in light of any new CLEAPSS guidance. In small schools this responsibility may be held with a subject leader and/or be given dedicated time for review at the start of each term for the schemes being taught in that period.

Safe storage

Chemicals and equipment must be securely stored with clear labelling and restricted access. Inventory must be regularly reviewed and advice sought in a timely manner for any concerns.

PPE and emergency procedures

Provide eye protection, gloves, and laboratory coats if deemed appropriate. Provide regular refreshers for staff and students on emergency protocols for spills, chemical splashes, burns, and fire safety.

Equipment checks

Regular inspections of fume cupboards, gas taps, Bunsen Burner tubing and electrical apparatus (including annual PAT testing) are essential.

Accidents and near misses

Accidents must be reported following in-school processes with all follow up completed. This may also include logging near misses.

Practice and rehearsal

Science teachers, and especially those new to teaching, must ensure that they are familiar with a demonstration or practical tasks before teaching it. This could involve:

- observation of an experienced teacher performing the activity with a class
- discussion with an experienced teacher or mentor
- rehearsal in either the classroom or a prep room
- use of an additional adult for large classes, eg science technician or teaching assistant
- careful assessment of the risks associated with carrying out the activity in the room intended, eg bag storage, trip hazards, access to equipment etc.

Insights from health and safety audits

Recent audits highlight common issues that can be resolved:

- outdated risk assessments – these must be updated
- inconsistent signage and labelling – check the most recent labelling protocols from CLEAPSS and follow these to mitigate risks
- ensure teachers and technicians are trained appropriately so that students can experience practical lessons on a regular basis
- schools should use the Hampshire annual audit tool (summer term) and act promptly on recommendations to maintain compliance.

Radiation protection

Schools must have a named radiation protection supervisor (RPS) with recent training from CLEAPSS. Hampshire schools follow excellent practice when managing radioactive sources. This facilitates real-life demonstration rather than video or animation providing a memorable excellent learning experience for Key Stage 4 and A-Level courses.

For schools using radioactive sources:

- maintain secure storage and accurate record-keeping
- provide annual staff refresher training on handling
- seek advice from CLEAPSS if any source requires disposal.
- Hampshire has two trained Radiation Protection Officers (RPO):
richard.wilson2@hants.gov.uk or
emma.cooper3@hants.gov.uk

Hampshire has two trained Radiation Protection Officers (RPO): richard.wilson2@hants.gov.uk or emma.cooper3@hants.gov.uk.

Governors' and trustees' responsibilities

- Oversee health and safety policy implementation.
- Ensure funding for safety equipment and staff training.
- Monitor compliance through reports and audits.

Supporting non-specialist teachers

Increasingly, non-specialists are required to teach science and need support. All students deserve to have access to practical science lessons so non-specialists will need additional support in delivering practical lessons safely. Schools using non-specialists to teach science should:

- provide clear, accessible risk assessments for low-risk practicals
- offer training or mentoring from science specialists
- use CLEAPSS resources and model risk assessments
- involve technicians, additional adults or team teaching where possible.

It is essential that students take part in practical activities and hence non-specialist teachers are able to lead lessons with confidence. Please contact Richard Wilson if you would like to arrange bespoke training for non-specialist teachers: richard.wilson2@hants.gov.uk.

Next steps for schools

- Review health and safety policies and audits.
- Plan CPD for staff, including non-specialists.
- Access CLEAPSS guidance: www.cleapss.org.uk.
- Check DfE requirements: www.gov.uk.

Executive summary for governors/trustees

Health and safety in science – key governance points

- Strategic oversight: ensure policies comply with CLEAPSS and DfE guidance.
- Funding: allocate resources for safety equipment and staff training.
- Monitoring: review the annual health and safety in science audit and challenge gaps in compliance.
- Culture of safety: promote safe practice across all science teaching, including support for non-specialists.

Action for governors:

- Request annual health and safety audit reports.
- Confirm RPO arrangements for radioactive sources.
- Ensure CPD plans include technicians as well as new and non-specialist teachers.

Richard Wilson

Leadership and Learning Partner and Secondary Science Subject Adviser, HIAS

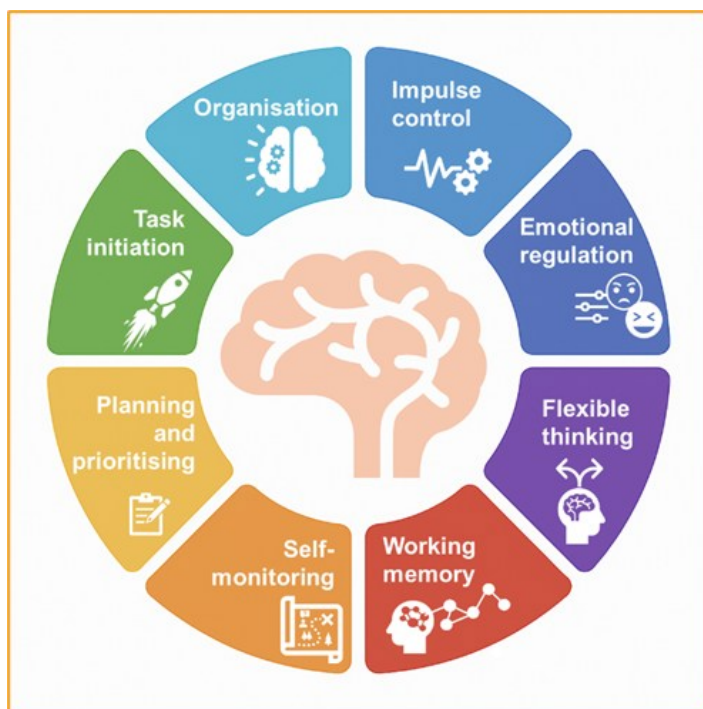
Virtual School

Supporting children with a social worker in schools: a promising executive functioning project

An action-research project initiated by Hampshire's Virtual School about supporting children with a social worker (CWSW) in school has become an exciting collaboration between Hampshire and school teams that shows very promising impact.

The project at Park Community School via the Virtual School in collaboration with HIAS, SEND and Inclusion teams, and Park Community School staff, set out to tackle a critical challenge: how to help some of the most vulnerable students thrive in education.

Children with a social worker often face complex circumstances – ranging from trauma and poverty to family breakdown – that can disrupt the development of **executive functioning skills** such as planning, organisation, emotional regulation, and impulse control. These skills are essential for success in school, yet research shows they can be delayed or impaired by adverse childhood experiences.



Executive functioning wheel graphic adapted from <https://advantageslearningcenter.com/executive-functioning/>

The project's goal was simple but ambitious: equip students with strategies to strengthen executive functioning and empower teachers with practical tools to support them.

Tamsin Austoni, Deputy Headteacher of Hampshire's Virtual School, set up the project with a view to developing straightforward classroom practice that is beneficial for all students without placing undue demands on teachers, and provides the support which the most vulnerable students need the most.

What made this project stand out?

Rather than focusing solely on individual interventions, Park Community School embedded executive functioning awareness into its whole-school culture. Staff received research driven CPD designed by the HIAS team in collaboration with the project leaders in school that aligned with their values and the practical daily demands of school life, ensuring strategies were practical and workload-friendly. Key Stage 3 students engaged in dedicated lessons on skills like emotional control, flexible thinking, and organisation, while the most vulnerable learners received bespoke one-to-one support. These sessions were strengths-based, tapping into students' interests and fostering self-awareness.

The approach shows promising impact

Attendance across the school rose by 1%, with Year 7 improving by 3.7%. Suspensions were cut almost in half, and disruptive behaviour incidents fell significantly. Students receiving individual intervention were effectively supported to develop crucial skills and coping strategies empowering them to thrive in school: improved organisation, better emotional regulation, and a renewed sense of independence.

“I feel more independent and more grown up... I have started to understand myself and why I do things.”

The success of the project at Park Community School lies in its holistic approach: connecting trauma-informed practice, inclusive teaching, and executive functioning strategies into everyday school life. It demonstrates that when schools invest in understanding and supporting executive function, they do not just help vulnerable learners – they create a culture where every student can succeed.

Key takeaway: pro-executive functioning strategies are not an add-on; they are a powerful, sustainable way to improve engagement, behaviour, and wellbeing for all students.

Find out more

For more information about this project and about executive functioning development, see the **Supporting Learning** folder in the **Key Information and Resources** area on the [Virtual School's Moodle site](#) or contact a member of the project team:

Tamsin Austoni

Deputy Headteacher, Hampshire Virtual School

Email: tamsin.austoni@hants.gov.uk

Joanna Kenyon

English Inspector/Adviser Primary and Secondary, HIAS

Email: joanna.kenyon@hants.gov.uk

Marie Mullins

SEN Teaching and Learning Adviser, HIAS

Email: marie.mullins@hants.gov.uk

Di Lowth

General Inspector/Adviser, HIAS

Email: diana.lowth@hants.gov.uk



The Climate Unity Conference 2026

On Wednesday 28 January 2026, over 4,000 children attended the Hampshire Climate Unity Virtual Conference from 74 schools across Hampshire. During the conference, children from Years 5-8 participated in a range of engaging, practical workshops and explored sustainability initiatives locally and globally.

Our first presentation came from the wonderful Eco Team at The Burgate School. Team members shared the story of their sustainability journey and showcased their inspiring ideas for making the school site more environmentally friendly. It was also encouraging to hear how the school has partnered with the wider community, gaining support from local businesses and taking part in meaningful projects with local charities.



Members of the Eco Team at The Burgate School showcased the fantastic work they have been doing at school including the development of their kitchen garden.

Next, the children participated in a film and stills safari from the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation in the African Savannah. The children loved meeting Wilton, a ranger from Painted Dog Conservation in Zimbabwe and were able to ask him questions about his work. The workshop received enthusiastic feedback from both children and teachers including:

“Wilton, you have inspired the whole class thank you!”

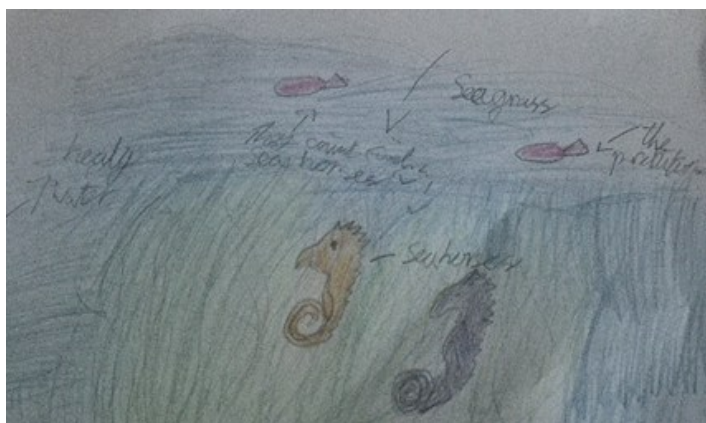
“You’re my best inspiration to save the wildlife!”

Following this, the children saw the amazing artwork from the *Small Worlds: Little things* make a big difference exhibition. The children saw samples of work created by 38 Hampshire schools including two-dimensional artwork, textile banners and 3D globe installations. All pieces were created using sustainable and repurposed materials. Later, in the teacher space part of the conference, the teachers were told about an upcoming 2026 Climate Unity art project in partnership with the Hampshire Music Service.

I then had the privilege of running a workshop on the conservation of seahorses in The Solent using resources from the Final Straw Foundation. The children learned about the habitats that seahorses rely on in our local waters and explored why seagrass plays such an important role in their survival.

We talked about the risks facing seahorses in The Solent including boat mooring, dredging, pollution and climate change.

The children were then challenged to either design a seahorse habitat or explore causes and possible solutions using a set of challenge cards. We ended the session by sharing ideas about how these threats could be reduced. It was inspiring to hear the thoughtful solutions the children suggested. Their ideas included reducing litter to prevent plastics reaching the ocean, choosing organic produce to help limit pesticide use and creating boat free zones across parts of The Solent.



Many children designed their own seahorse habitat using what they had discovered about the local species.

See later in this article for ideas on how this topic could be incorporated into the Key Stage 3 curriculum.

The next workshop was delivered by The Ministry of Eco Education and focused on how Forest Green Rovers has become the most sustainable football club in the world. Using football as an engaging hook, the session introduced children to the club's sustainable initiatives which include renewable energy, eco-friendly clothing, plant-based food and environmentally conscious pitch maintenance. The children were encouraged to think about their own energy use and food choices at home and at school. They also explored what their school uniforms are made from and learned more about sustainable materials.

To close the conference, teachers took part in a dedicated session designed to support them on their sustainability journey. They heard from Climate Ambassadors, *Let's Go Zero*, the Ministry of Eco Education and Pupil's Profit, each sharing the guidance and practical help they offer to schools. The teachers were also introduced to the new Climate Unity Moodle and the HIAS sustainability support available for schools: <https://hias-moodle.mylearningapp.com/course/index.php?categoryid=106>.

The conference was a real success and it was wonderful to see such positive comments from the children and teachers. Thank you to everyone that was involved:

"Thank you for a brilliant morning!"

"Thank you so much for all the links and information. My students left with so many ideas today, and now I feel like I can support them in future projects."

As HIAS Subject Inspector/Adviser specialising in geography, I am always looking for opportunities to make strong links with the geography curriculum. The conference offered a range of topics that can be explored further by students back in the classroom. Sustainability is a key geographical concept and is often considered when evaluating places and when exploring social, economic and environmental factors. Topics such as animal conservation in Africa and understanding the human impact on our Solent seahorses can be developed further in geography lessons and can support meaningful geographical enquiry. If you would like further advice on how these topics can be embedded within the Key Stage 3 curriculum, please get in touch at: emma.groves@hants.gov.uk.

Emma Groves

Subject Inspector/Adviser, HIAS

Email: emma.groves@hants.gov.uk



Op Moksha Evaluation

Introduction

Op Moksha was developed to engage with a group of students within the Inclusion Hub at New Forest Lift, initially with a plan to reduce suspensions/exclusions. In Hampshire it was identified that over the 2022-23 academic year, school suspensions reached the highest recorded and continued to increase during the 2023-24 academic year. As a result, suspended young people may be at risk of involvement in crime/exploitation and ASB. The Hub is a setting within the Main School site where students attend instead of attending the mainstream lessons. The identified students had difficulties integrating with mainstream school due to vulnerabilities and/or poor behaviour. If these students were not educated in the Hub then there would be a high risk of exclusion and suspensions.

Method

There was a cohort of 14 students between Years 8 – 10 (aged 12-15) with varying degrees of engagement and attendance. The students within the Hub also all had RMS records prior to the programme commencing.

This was a planned programme of engagements and presentations over a 7 week period, starting on 4th June 2025 and ending on 16th July 2025. The sessions were on the same day (Wednesday) and at the same time each week, leading into the summer break. The set programme is below:

- Week 1 – Introduction, rapport building, course contents and expectations
- Week 2 – Staying Safe – Online and personal safety input
- Week 3 – Stop & Search and Police Powers and consequences of crime
- Week 4 – Stalking/Healthy relationships
- Week 5 – Knife Crime and associated First Aid Input
- Week 6 – CCE/County Lines
- Week 7 – ASB – lead by local Youth Services



The programme involved at least 2 members of staff at all times, who work within the Hub full time. Police were present throughout each session, along with a member of the local Parish Youth Services, who was already familiar with most of the students. Also, 2 members of the Emergency First Aid training team attended week 5 to deliver basic First Aid, in relation to knife crime.

The students were given surveys before the programme to establish knowledge and opinions around policing and the contents of the programme, including the levels of trust of police. They were also given post-programme surveys once the programme had concluded.

Impact - RMS Occurrences

The students' prior RMS records were for varying reasons, largely due to concerns around the Home but also some are attached to minor ASB/Crime incidents. Only two had been suspects in formal investigations, when out in the community.

In the 12 months prior to the programme, there had been 12 recorded occurrences involving the students; 4 recorded occurrences where the students were victims, and 7 where they had been suspects. Of these, two aggrieved occurrences (harassment and assault with injury) and the subject occurrence (burglary) were in the 16 weeks prior to the programme.

RMS Occurrences Pre-Programme Start



In the 16 weeks since the programme ended, there has only been one new RMS occurrence for these students, an assault with injury occurrence where the student was a subject. Otherwise, this group has not come to the attention of the police.

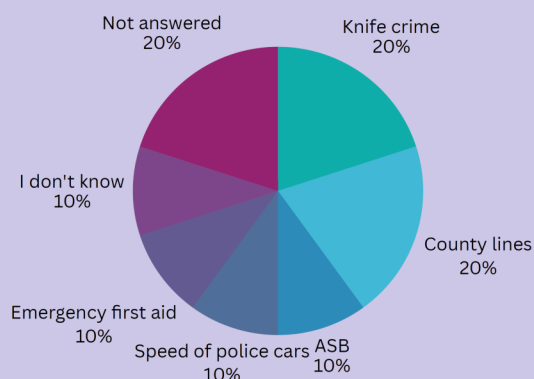
Impact - Knowledge and opinions around policing

Qualitative responses were collected using pre and post-programme surveys for the students to determine any change around their knowledge and opinions on policing including trust in the police.

The pre-programme survey asked students what they hoped to learn or get from the course. Of those who provided an answer (70%, 7), topics included knife crime (20%, 2) and county lines (20%, 2).

By the end of the course 100% of students (10) reported that they knew how to report a crime and how to do so anonymously, compared to 70% (7) and 80% (8) respectively prior to the programme.

How much do you know about the following topics?



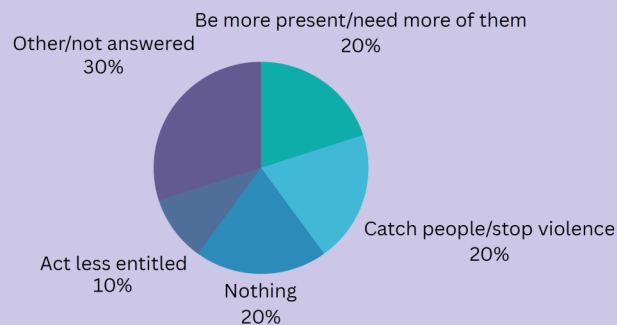
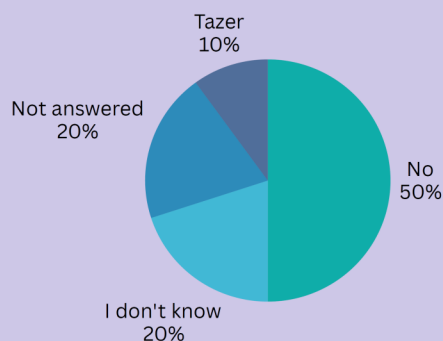
Students were asked to give a Likert scale response to check their knowledge on certain topics. The majority of students rated their knowledge as 'good' for all topics apart from basic first aid, which most rated their knowledge as 'okay' (40%, 4).

How much do you know about the following topics now?



Once the programme was complete, all students reported an improvement in their knowledge of the topics. The majority of students (55%-77%, 5-7 students) rated their understanding as 'very good' for all topics, with none reporting they knew 'nothing' or 'a little'.

Regarding their opinions on the police, half of the responses included things the police could do better where the students live. These included the themes of visibility (20%, 2), preventing crimes (20%, 2) and the way police officers conduct themselves (10%, 1).

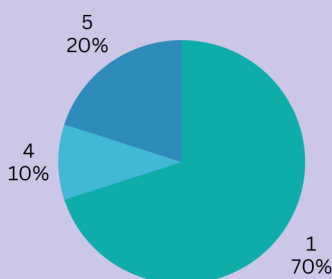


Following this, students were asked if there was anything the police could do to make them feel safer at school. The majority (50%, 5) responded with 'No'.

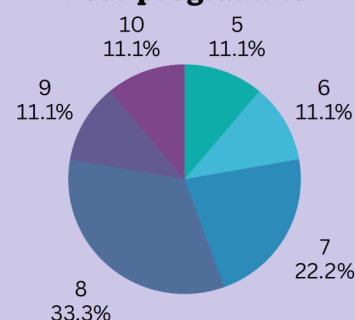
Finally, the students were asked about their level of trust in the police and 70% (7) responded with 1 (I don't trust them at all). No students responded higher than a 5 meaning that overall the students had a lack of trust in the police.

When asked again after the programme had finished, all students reported higher levels of trust in the police. All selected 5 or higher on the Likert scale, with the majority selecting 7 (22%, 2) or 8 (33%, 3) suggesting a good level of trust.

Pre-programme



Post-programme



Impact - Staff feedback

- Practical sessions (i.e. knife crime with first aid) were far more beneficial than those sessions which were more power point based.
- Topic content was very good.
- Being visible in the school, and consistently, helped to reduce the fear factor students have in respect of police.

Future Considerations

- 1 hour was too long for this cohort and 45 minutes would be the maximum period for them.
- Could consider reducing the sessions from 6 to 4 weeks if needed.
- Consider running the course earlier in the academic year as students were mentally drained just before the summer.
- Not to start sessions soon after a break time as students took time to regulate after breaks.

Conclusions

- Involved staff reported that the students' engagement increased throughout the programme.
- Students reported improved knowledge of programme topics and greater trust in the police after the programme compared to before.
- There has only been one RMS occurrence recorded since the programme ended, involving a single student as the subject.

Sixth form provision

The Burgate School: fostering beyond the curriculum to develop a thriving

The Burgate School, situated in Fordingbridge, is among a small number of county secondary schools to have a sixth form provision. In December, I had the opportunity to visit the school and engage with senior leaders, reflecting on the ongoing journey of school improvement and gaining valuable insight into the sixth form.



Each year, the sixth form comprises a cohort of approximately 200-250 students across Years 12 and 13. Operating from two purpose-built buildings on site, students benefit from a degree of independence whilst remaining firmly supported by the robust structures of the broader school community. Leaders take pride in offering a diverse range of 27 subjects, spanning A-level options and vocational pathways, such as PE

CTEC, BTEC performing arts, and, from September 2026, health and social care. The most sought-after choices continue to be in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines, notably mathematics and physics, both of which have experienced significant growth. Nevertheless, psychology remains the most popular subject amongst students.

Provision beyond the curriculum

The Associate Headteacher and Sixth Form Leader shared that a significant emphasis has been placed on broadening provision beyond the curriculum. All sixth formers are assigned to dedicated tutor groups and participate in thrice weekly sessions covering careers guidance, UCAS advice, and personal development. The extra-curricular offer continues to flourish, with opportunities such as debating club, Amnesty International, and a developing creative arts programme including the sixth form band and regular performance events.

Enrichment is recognised as a cornerstone of the school's provision. Sixth form students mentor younger pupils in reading and contribute to the development of a peer reading scheme. The sixth form leader has established a calendar of social activities, from seasonal festivities to the July Enrichment Week. Each half-term features a dedicated tutor-led social event, strengthening the sense of community. Examples include a Halloween cookie decorating competition, an Easter egg hunt, and a Christmas quiz. The summer term's enrichment week for Year 12 is a major event, offering activities focused on wellbeing, life skills, traditional themed sports day, and a barbecue, designed to foster community and prepare students for progression into Year 13. This inclusive atmosphere is particularly beneficial for pupils joining from other schools, ensuring that all students experience a nurturing environment.



During my visit, leaders noted continued improvement in Key Stage 5 outcomes. Last year, a strategic emphasis was placed on boosting sixth form enrolment and raising attainment for high prior attainers. The average point score (APS) has reached 34.08 – one of the highest in the school's history – and the value added score stands at +0.2. Attendance remains a key area of focus, with refined procedures to support student accountability and parental engagement. Measures include a reward system tied to attendance whilst weekly tutor discussions and termly parent communications reinforce high standards.

Careers guidance continues to be a priority. All students are offered meetings with a qualified adviser, with the school attuned to trends such as a decrease in immediate university applications post-18. Staff respond proactively by exploring aspirations, developing interview skills, and promoting alternative routes, such as degree apprenticeships and supported by initiatives like mock interview days with external partners. Ongoing enhancements to sixth form facilities, including the common room and teaching spaces, help to maintain a high-quality learning environment.

My thanks to Helen Costello, Head of Sixth Form, and Ben Clemson, Associate Headteacher, for sharing their reflections on the continued development of the provision.

Kate Broadribb

School Improvement Manager, for Eastleigh, New Forest and Test Valley, Secondary Inspector/Adviser and Subject Lead for Geography, HIAS

Email: kate.broadribb@hants.gov.uk



Celebrating achievement and maintaining a strong rewards system are central to the school's ethos. Student leadership is actively encouraged through the ambassador programme, with over half of Year 13 involved this year. Plans are in place to broaden these opportunities, introducing earlier recruitment of Year 12 ambassadors in the summer.

Courses

Details of our upcoming courses and networks are provided below. Visit our [courses Moodle page](#) for our full catalogue of professional learning opportunities.

How to book

All training can be booked via the Learning Zone. To search for a specific course, type the keywords provided in the *Find Learning* box, then click *See Classes* for details of available dates and times.

Learning Zone guidance

Visit our Learning Zone Moodle information page for [Guidance on accessing the Learning Zone and managing bookings](#).

Need help?

To speak to a member of the Learning and Development team, please contact:

Email: cs.learninganddevelopment@hants.gov.uk

Geography for Non-Specialist Secondary Teachers (Webinar)

This two-part virtual course is designed for secondary teachers who are new to teaching geography or who are not geography specialists. It will support teachers in building a strong foundation in key geographical concepts, develop confidence in teaching the subject, and learn how to make geography relevant and engaging for students.

Learning outcomes:

- develop an understanding of key geographical concepts and what it means to *be a geographer*
- understanding geographical enquiry
- knowing how geography progresses from EYFS – Key Stage 5
- strengthen subject knowledge and effective teaching strategies for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4
- learn how to teach case studies and support retrieval and engagement.

 24 June and 24 September 2026

 *Geography Teachers*

 Sub £150 / SLA £125 / Full £180

Secondary History Leadership Conference 2026

This dynamic and thought-provoking conference brings together leading voices from both national and local contexts to support the professional development of history subject leaders, classroom teachers, and senior leaders with responsibility for history. Through a blend of evidence-informed research, leadership insights and practical strategies, delegates will explore how to lead high-quality history provision that is ambitious, inclusive, and rooted in disciplinary rigour. Designed to challenge thinking and deepen expertise, the event offers a unique opportunity to reflect, connect, and lead with confidence in the ever-evolving landscape of history education. Hear from nationally recognised experts and local practitioners as they share the latest thinking, successful approaches, and real-world examples of impactful leadership in history education.

 25 June 2026

 *History Leadership*

 Sub £355 / SLA £170 / Full £426

Spring 25/26 Secondary Performance and Progress Group (PAPG)

The Secondary PAPG is a very well attended network meeting that meets twice a year for comprehensive updates and discussion on matters of mutual interest to secondary school headteachers and senior leaders, particularly concerning improving outcomes, performance data and the curriculum.

All senior leaders are welcome to attend PAPG and contribute to the forum.

Meetings will be led by HIAS data and curriculum leads and will also draw upon HIAS teaching and learning, and subject expertise.

 26 March 2026

 *Spring PAPG*

 Sub £65 / SLA £25 / Full £78



Empower Your Subject Leaders with HIAS Secondary Networks 2025/26

Support your school's improvement journey with high-impact, subject-specific professional development.

The Hampshire Improvement and Advisory Service (HIAS) offers a comprehensive suite of Secondary Subject Leadership Networks designed to equip subject leaders with the latest insights, strategies, and collaborative opportunities to drive excellence in teaching and learning across the county.

Objectives of the subject networks:

- **National and local updates:** Stay informed on the latest national developments, including the forthcoming DfE curriculum and assessment review, and how these translate into strategic priorities for schools.
- **Hampshire's approach:** Gain insight into HIAS's county-wide strategies, including the embedding of Ordinarily Available Provision to support inclusive practice.
- **Subject-specific expertise and leadership:** Deepen pedagogical knowledge and leadership skills tailored to each subject area.
- **Collaborative practice:** Share and learn from best practice across Hampshire schools, building a strong professional network of subject leaders to jointly problem solve.
- **Impactful CPD:** Equip subject leaders to lead improvement confidently and effectively within their departments.

Subjects Covered:

Art • Design and Technology • English • Geography • History • Mathematics • MFL • Photography • PSHE/RSE • Science • Tackling Educational Disadvantage (TED) • SENDCo Updates • Performance & Progress Group (PAPG)

Flexible Formats:

- Half termly sessions for maths and English, termly for all other subjects
- Blended delivery - subjects run a mix of face-to-face and virtual options
- Afternoon sessions; to reduce the impact of cover requirements. (English offers full day sessions)
- Booking Made Easy
- Book via the Learning Zone using subject-specific keyword searches
- Automated calendar invites sent via ESS or Learning Zone accounts

Any questions regarding booking please contact the team at: htlc.courses@hants.gov.uk.

For bespoke support or questions, contact:

Jean Thorpe

jean.thorpe@hants.gov.uk

County Education Manager

For booking information go to:

tinyurl.com/LearningZoneGuidance

Use the key word search or course name to search for this learning item in our catalogue.

hants.gov.uk

Secondary network meetings

The primary aims of the subject network meetings are to:

- ensure a clear understanding of the national picture and its application in local and school contexts
- support effective subject leadership as appropriate to each school's individual context
- develop skills, expertise and capacity within school subject leaders and their teams through quality strategic continuing professional development (CPD) and the sharing of good practice
- deepen understanding of subject specific pedagogy and knowledge that underpins good progress and attainment for all pupils
- facilitate school to school networking and develop strength across the system.

Art and photography

-  **Art:** 1 July 2026
Photography: 8 July, 24 Sept, 23 Nov 2026, 12 Jan and 17 March 2027
-  **Art:** *Summer 26 Secondary Art*
Photography: *Art Photography*
-  **Art:** Sub £80 / SLA £55 / Full £96
Photography: Sub £270 / SLA £215 / Full £324

Computing

-  10 July 2026
-  *Summer Secondary Computing*
-  Sub £90 / SLA £60 / Full £108

D&T

-  **Spring:** 25 March 2026
Summer: 9 July 2026
-  *Spring 25-26 Secondary Design*
Summer 25-26 Secondary Design
-  Sub £105 / SLA £80 / Full £126

English

The Secondary English Network is a well-attended and supportive group for English subject leaders. We meet termly for a full day to allow time for a balanced offer of subject-specific CPD, strategic subject leadership discussion and networking with colleagues around issues important to your settings.

-  **Summer:** 25 June 2026
-  *Summer Secondary English Network*
-  Sub £120 / SLA £60 / Full £144

Geography

-  13 May 2026
-  *Summer 25-26 Secondary Geography*
-  Sub £85 / SLA £55 / Full £102

History

Agenda

- Visit the sites of Black history in Southampton.
- Hear the stories of Black people who lived and worked in Southampton.
- Explore ideas for teaching diverse history through local sites.

-  18 March 2026
-  *Spring 2 Secondary History*
-  Sub £95 / SLA £55 / Full £114

Mathematics

-  **Spring 2:** 17 March 2026
Summer 1: 19 May 2026
Summer 2: 7 July 2026
-  *Secondary Maths Spring 2*
Secondary Maths Summer 1
Secondary Maths Summer 2
-  Sub £90 / SLA £55 / Full £108

MFL

-  **Summer:** 2 July 2026
-  *Summer 25-26 Secondary MFL Network*
-  Sub £60 / SLA £40 / Full £72

PSHE/RSE

-  18 March 2026
-  *Secondary Spring PSHE*
-  Sub £95 / SLA £55 / Full £114

Science

-  **Spring 2:**
 - 24 March (face to face) OR
 - 26 March 2026 (virtual)
- Summer 1:**
 - 18 May (face to face) OR
 - 21 May 2026 (virtual)
- Summer 2:**
 - 8 July (face to face) OR
 - 9 July (virtual)
- Please note** all delegates should aim to attend the face to face session available in the first instance, however the virtual session is a chance for those that are not able to attend the face to face session to catch up on the main points covered. Delegates should only attend one of these sessions and should only attend the virtual session as a last resort to the in-person meeting.
-  *Spring Secondary Science Network*
Summer Secondary Science Network
-  Sub £85 / SLA £40 / Full £102

SEN

-  **Summer:** 7 May 2026
- Agenda:** updates, SEND in the school development plan, staff development, preparation for summer data analysis.
-  *Secondary Summer SENDCo*
-  Sub £35 / SLA £25 / Full £42

TED

- Supporting secondary school leaders in developing meaningful, research-informed strategies to tackle educational disadvantage and to securely embed these strategies into day-to-day practice.
- Sessions offer the chance to share best practice and impact, with leaders learning from wider schools' successes to address identified areas of need. Sessions are adapted and responsive, focusing on bespoke areas identified by the group.
-  **Summer 1:** 5 May 2026
- Summer 2:** 1 July 2026
-  *Summer Disadvantaged Webinar*
Summer Secondary Disadvantaged
-  Summer 1: Sub £40 / SLA £30 / Full £48
Summer 2: Sub £95 / SLA £55 / Full £114