

DPS Schedule 6 (Order Form Template and Order Schedules)

Order Form

ORDER REFERENCE:

THE BUYER: **The Department for Education**

BUYER ADDRESS **Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street,
London, SW1P 3BT**

THE SUPPLIER: IFF Research

SUPPLIER ADDRESS: **IFF Research, 5th floor Harlequin Building, 65
Southwark Street, London, SE1 0HR**

REGISTRATION NUMBER: **00849983**

DUNS NUMBER: **211574041**

DPS SUPPLIER REGISTRATION SERVICE ID: **SQ-BK6S9Z6**

APPLICABLE DPS CONTRACT

This Order Form is for the provision of the Deliverables and dated 14/01/2026
It's issued under the DPS Contract with the reference number **RM6126 CCS
Research & Insights Marketplace DPS** for the provision of **Attendance and
Behaviour Hubs Evaluation**.

DPS FILTER CATEGORY(IES):

**Further Education, Mixed method (qualitative and quantitative), Impact
evaluation, Experimental / quasi-experimental impact evaluation, Theory-based
impact evaluation (incl. Theories of Change (ToC) and Logic Modelling),
Evaluation scoping / evaluability assessment, Feasibility study, School
support staff, Teaching, England**

ORDER INCORPORATED TERMS

The following documents are incorporated into this Order Contract. Where numbers are missing we are not using those schedules. If the documents conflict, the following order of precedence applies:

1. This Order Form including the Order Special Terms and Order Special Schedules.
2. Joint Schedule 1(Definitions and Interpretation) **RM6126 CCS Research & Insights Marketplace DPS**



DPS Joint Schedule 1
- Definitions v1.0.pdf

3. DPS Special Terms

4. The following Schedules in equal order of precedence:

- Joint Schedules for **RM6126 CCS Research & Insights DPS**

- [Joint Schedule 1 is covered in '2.' above, and *must* be included]
- Joint Schedule 2 (Variation Form)



DPS Joint Schedule 2
- Variation Form v.1.0

- Joint Schedule 3 (Insurance Requirements)



DPS Joint Schedule 3
- Insurance Requirem

- Joint Schedule 4 (Commercially Sensitive Information)



DPS Joint Schedule 4
- Commercially Sensit

- [Joint Schedule 5 is covered in '6.' Below, and *must* be included]
- [Joint Schedule 6 (Key Subcontractors)]



DPS Joint Schedule 6
- Key Subcontractors

- Joint Schedule 10 (Rectification Plan)



DPS Joint Schedule
10 - Rectification Plan

- Joint Schedule 11 (Processing Data)

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DPS Joint Schedule
11 - Processing Data \

- **Order Schedules for 24-25/018**
 - **Order Schedule 1 (Transparency Reports)**



DPS Order Schedule
1 - Transparency Repr

- **Order Schedule 2 (Staff Transfer)**



DPS Order Schedule
2 - Staff Transfer v1.1.

- **Order Schedule 3 (Continuous Improvement)**



DPS Order Schedule
3 - Continuous Impro

- **[Order Schedule 4 (Order Tender)**



Attendance and
Behaviour Hubs IFF

- **[Order Schedule 5 (Pricing Details)**]



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- **[Order Schedule 7 (Key Supplier Staff)**



DPS Order Schedule
7 - Key Supplier Staff

- **[Order Schedule 9 (Security)**]



DPS Order Schedule
9 - Security v1.1.docx

- **[Order Schedule 10 (Exit Management)**]



DPS Order Schedule
10 - Exit Management

- **[Order Schedule 20 (Order Specification)**]



DPS Order Schedule
20 - Specification v1.0

5. CCS Core Terms (DPS version) v1.0.3



RM6126 DPS Core
Terms v1.0.pdf

6. Joint Schedule 5 (Corporate Social Responsibility)



DPS Joint Schedule 5
- Corporate Social Res

No other Supplier terms are part of the Order Contract. That includes any terms written on the back of, added to this Order Form, or presented at the time of delivery.

ORDER SPECIAL TERMS

The following Special Terms are incorporated into this Order Contract:

Special Term 1. Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

Special Term 2. Project outputs

Special Term 3. Departmental Security Standards for Business Services and ICT Contracts



Special Terms -
Research updated Oct

ORDER START DATE: 23 January 2026

ORDER EXPIRY DATE: 1 March 2030]

ORDER INITIAL PERIOD: 4 Years, 2 Months

A break clause shall apply to the Impact Evaluation Feasibility Assessment. If, following completion of the feasibility phase, it is determined that the project evaluation should not proceed, the Authority shall provide written notice to the Supplier by 30th April 2026.

Furthermore, should funding not be secured for the subsequent Spending Review period, the Authority may exercise an additional break clause. In such circumstances, the Authority shall notify the Supplier in writing.

DELIVERABLES

See details in Order Schedule 20 (Order Specification)]

MAXIMUM LIABILITY

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The limitation of liability for this Order Contract is stated in Clause 11.2 of the Core Terms.

The Estimated Year 1 Charges used to calculate liability in the first Contract Year is **2026**

ORDER CHARGES

Milestone	Description	Invoice scheduled for	Cost
1	Completion of inception phase (incl ethics and data approval) and ToC review, design of staff survey and submission of evaluation workplan	March 2026	██████████
2	Impact evaluation feasibility assessment and report submitted	April 2026	██████████
3	Completion of academic year 1 fieldwork - Cohort 2 and 3 baseline surveys complete, 10 case study visits C2 complete (stage 1); 20 Hub lead school interviews	July 2026	██████████
4	Design and commencement of academic year 2 field work	September 2026	██████████
5	Midpoint of academic year 2 fieldwork - Cohort 4 baseline and Cohort 2 follow up surveys complete	February 2027	██████████
6	Completion of academic year 2 fieldwork - Cohort 5 and 6 baseline, Cohort 3 and 4 follow up surveys complete, 10 case study visits C2 complete (stage 2); 20 Hub lead school interviews	July 2027	██████████
7	Interim evaluation report submitted, design and commencement of academic year 3 fieldwork	Sept 2027	██████████
8	Midpoint of academic year 3 fieldwork - Cohort 7 baseline, Cohort 5 follow up survey complete	February 2028	██████████
9	Completion of academic year 3 fieldwork - Cohort 8 baseline, Cohort 6 and 7 follow up surveys complete, 10 case studies C6 complete (both stages)	July 2028	██████████
10	Design and commencement of academic year 4 fieldwork -	September 2028	██████████

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	Cohort 9 baseline surveys complete		
11	Midpoint of academic year 4 fieldwork -Cohort 8 follow up surveys complete	February 2029	
12	Completion of all fieldwork - Cohort 9 follow up surveys complete, 20 Hub lead school interviews	April 2029	
13	Submission of draft evaluation report	July 2029	
14	Final evaluation report approved for publication	October 2029	

ORDER CHARGES

Expenditure for the financial year 2025-26 shall not exceed [REDACTED] exclusive of VAT.

Expenditure for the financial year 2026-27 shall not exceed [REDACTED] exclusive of VAT.

Expenditure for the financial year 2027-28 shall not exceed [REDACTED] exclusive of VAT.

Expenditure for the financial year 2028-29 shall not exceed [REDACTED] exclusive of VAT.

Expenditure for the financial year 2029-30 shall not exceed [REDACTED] exclusive of VAT.

Total Project expenditure shall not exceed **£449,769** exclusive of VAT

REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES**None****PAYMENT METHOD**

Via BACS upon submission of valid invoice

BUYER'S INVOICE ADDRESS:

Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street,
London SW1P 3BT

Invoices must be submitted in pdf format, state the Purchase Order number (provided separately to this form), and sent via email to

AccountsPayable.OCR@education.gov.uk

BUYER'S AUTHORISED REPRESENTATIVE

[REDACTED]

Senior Social Researcher

[REDACTED]

Fifth Floor Unity Square

**Queensbridge Road
Nottingham
NG2 1AW**

BUYER'S ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Department for Education Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, 21 April 2022, available online at: [Sustainability and climate change strategy - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainability-and-climate-change-strategy)

BUYER'S SECURITY POLICY

Department for Education Personal Information Charter, available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about/personal-information-charter#co>

SUPPLIER'S AUTHORISED REPRESENTATIVE

[REDACTED]

Research Director

[REDACTED]

IFF Research, 5th floor Harlequin Building, 65 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0HR

SUPPLIER'S CONTRACT MANAGER

[REDACTED]

Senior Research Manager

[REDACTED]

IFF Research, 5th floor Harlequin Building, 65 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0HR

PROGRESS REPORT FREQUENCY

One report on the first Working Day of each calendar month

PROGRESS MEETING FREQUENCY

Weekly

KEY STAFF

Buyer			
Name	Role	Email	Address
[REDACTED]	Project manager	[REDACTED]	Fifth floor 1 Unity Square Queensbridge Road Nottingham NG2 1AW

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██████████	Project manager	██████████	Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street London SW1P 3BT
██████████	Project manager	██████████	Cheylesmore House 5 Quinton Road Coventry CV1 2WT
██████████	Project manager	██████████	Bishopsgate House Feethams Darlington DL1 5QE
Supplier and Subcontractor			
Name	Role	Email	Address
██████████	Research Director (Project lead Director)	██████████	IFF Research, 5 th floor Harlequin Building, 65 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0HR
██████████	Research Director	██████████	IFF Research, 5 th floor Harlequin Building, 65 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0HR
██████████	Research Director	██████████	IFF Research, 5 th floor Harlequin Building, 65 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0HR

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██████████	Senior Research Manager (Project Manager)	██████████	IFF Research, 5 th floor Harlequin Building, 65 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0HR
██████████	Research Manager	██████████	IFF Research, 5 th floor Harlequin Building, 65 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0HR
██████████	Senior Research Executive	██████████	IFF Research, 5 th floor Harlequin Building, 65 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0HR
██████████	Senior Research Executive	██████████	IFF Research, 5 th floor Harlequin Building, 65 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0HR

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	Senior Research Executive		IFF Research, 5 th floor Harlequin Building, 65 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0HR
	Research Executive		IFF Research, 5 th floor Harlequin Building, 65 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0HR

E-AUCTIONS

Not applicable

COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE INFORMATION

See 'DPS Joint Schedule 4'

SERVICE CREDITS

Not applicable]

ADDITIONAL INSURANCES

Not applicable

GUARANTEE

Not applicable

SOCIAL VALUE COMMITMENT

The Supplier agrees, in providing the Deliverables and performing its obligations under the Order Contract, that it will comply with the social value commitments in Order Schedule 4 (Order Tender)]

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For and on behalf of the Supplier:		For and on behalf of the Buyer:	
Signature:		Signature:	
Name:		Name:	
Role:		Role:	
Date:		Date:	

Order Schedule 20 (Order Specification)

This Schedule sets out the characteristics of the Deliverables that the Supplier will be required to make to the Buyers under this Order Contract

Pack for Call-off Competition

Attachment 3 – Statement of Requirements

Title: Evaluation of the Attendance and Behaviour Hubs Programme

Contract Reference: **25-26/063**

**FURTHER COMPETITION FROM THE CROWN COMMERCIAL SERVICE
RM6126 RESEARCH & INSIGHTS DYNAMIC PURCHASING SYSTEM
(DPS)**

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Department for Education referred to as ‘the Authority’ or ‘the Department’ hereafter is looking for a supplier to provide a Process, Impact and Economic evaluation of the Attendance and Behaviour Hubs programme.
- 1.2 Attendance and Behaviour Hubs seek to improve attendance and behaviour practice in schools, through both intensive and light touch regionally based leadership support.
- 1.3 The Department is seeking an evaluation to support with the following evidence needs:
 - capture formative learning and real-time insights to understand operational and contextual challenges / successes, and ways to exploit or overcome these, fostering continuous improvement of the hubs programme.
 - assess whether the hubs are effective in meeting strategic aims, objectives and expected outcomes.
 - assess whether / to what extent outcomes can be attributed to the hubs.
 - to inform future decisions about whether, and how, to scale-up the hubs.

2. Background to the Contracting Authority

- 2.1 The Department for Education (DfE) is the Government Department responsible for children’s services and education, including early years, schools, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships, and wider skills in England. We enable children and learners to thrive by protecting the vulnerable and ensuring the delivery of excellent standards of education, training, and care. This helps realise everyone’s potential - and that powers our economy, strengthens society, and increases fairness.
- 2.2 The Government’s Plan for Change sets out our relentless focus on making sure every child gets the best life chances, including establishing free breakfast clubs in every primary school, providing access to mental health support, ensuring earlier intervention in mainstream schools for all pupils particularly those at risk of exclusion and making attendance one of the four core priorities of our school improvement teams.
- 2.3 Ensuring that all school age children and young people regularly attend a good school is a government priority. Poor school attendance can lead to a range of negative impacts on attainment and wider life chances, as well as involvement in risky behaviours. Regular attendance is vital to maximising the benefits of education, and is also beneficial for a child’s well-being, mental health and long-term development. Furthermore, it provides a protective factor from wider harms, particularly for vulnerable pupils.
- 2.4 Improving school attendance, especially for persistently and severely absent pupils (pupils missing more than 10% and 50% of their school sessions, respectively) is critical to the Department’s priorities. Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with families. The government has published statutory and non-statutory guidance to support working together to improve school attendance.¹

¹ [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK](#)

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- 2.5 School attendance is primarily managed at a school level. However, pupils who have high levels of school absence often receive support from social care, primary healthcare or child and adolescent mental health services, and may interact with the criminal justice system. Other voluntary sector organisations also work to support pupils and their families to address some issues that may result in poor school attendance.
- 2.6 Calm, consistent, safe school environments support children to achieve and thrive. The government is committed to improving good behaviour and culture in all schools as no pupil should miss out on education because they feel unsafe, because their lesson is disrupted, or fall behind because their needs are not identified and supported.
- 2.7 We know that, on average, seven minutes is lost for every 30 of teaching time due to misbehaviour, while persistent disruptive behaviour remains the leading cause of both suspensions and exclusions.^{2,3} Schools need to manage behaviour well so they can provide calm, safe, and supportive environments where both pupils and staff can work in safety and are respected.
- 2.8 All schools are required by law to have a behaviour policy which outlines effective strategies that will encourage good behaviour, and it is for headteachers to implement a policy that works for their own school community. The Behaviour in Schools guidance provides guidance for schools on developing and implementing a behaviour policy which outlines effective strategies that will encourage good behaviour.

3. Definitions

² [School and college voice: May 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

³ [Suspensions and permanent exclusions in England, Academic year 2023/24 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)

Expression or Acronym	Definition
DfE	Department for Education
LA	Local Authority
Persistence Absence	Pupils missing more than 10% of their school sessions
Severe Absence	Pupils missing more than 50% of their school sessions

4. Summary

4.1 The Department is seeking a supplier to deliver a mixed-methods process, impact and economic evaluation of the RISE Attendance and Behaviour Hubs programme. This will require expertise in formative and summative evaluation, quantitative, and qualitative analysis, bespoke data collection and analysis, and reporting.

4.2 The evaluation contract is expected to run from December 2025 to December 2029.

4.3 The programme is based on the delivery models of the separate Attendance Hubs and Behaviour Hubs programmes which were available during 2023 – 2025. (Attendance Hubs) and 2021-2025 (Behaviour Hubs). Findings from these programmes were utilised to determine programme delivery.

4.4 The programme is being delivered by the Department’s regional teams and will see up to 540 schools per year receiving 10 days of intensive support (‘enhanced support’), with light-touch support available for a further ~3,600 per year (‘regional support’). The programme intends to deliver support to both primary and secondary schools, but with resources weighted more towards secondary due to the nature of the attendance and behaviour problem (higher rates of overall and persistent absence as well as higher numbers and rates of suspensions and permanent exclusions).

Deadline to submit – 17th November 2025 (17/11/2025)

4.5 **Aim:** The overall aims of the project are to:

- Capture formative learning and real-time insights to understand operational and contextual challenges / successes, and ways to exploit or overcome these, fostering continuous improvement of the hubs programme.
- Assess whether the hubs are effective in meeting strategic aims, objectives and expected outcomes.
- Assess whether / to what extent outcomes can be attributed to the hubs.
- Inform future decisions about whether, and how, to scale-up the hubs.

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4.6 Objectives: The evaluator will complete a formative and summative evaluation to:

- Assess whether the programme has been implemented and delivered as intended (process evaluation)
- Understand what worked well in programme implementation and delivery (process evaluation)
- Understand any barriers to programme implementation and delivery (process evaluation)
- Assess the impact of the programme on key outcome measures (impact evaluation)
- Assess whether the programme provides Value for Money (economic evaluation)

4.7 Proposed methods: We are looking for a contractor or consortium, with proven relevant experience, to deliver this evaluation which will involve a process, impact and economic evaluation. The supplier is required to conduct fieldwork using a mixed methods approach with multiple stakeholders including schools and pupils on the intervention. There may not be a need for distinctive fieldwork components to deliver the different evaluation strands, however it is essential that any fieldwork elements clearly address the overall evaluation aims and objectives. Suggested methods are included below, however we welcome supplier suggestions and innovation.

We will require the contractor to produce several project outputs and research materials to enable the objectives above to be met. This includes sharing interim findings from each of the elements as they become available, and a final written report and presentation of the findings. The evaluation methodology and the data collection approach taken should be such that multiple mixed data sources can be triangulated to produce the required outputs.

Process Evaluation Strand

The Department needs to understand how the intervention is implemented by regions and if there are any barriers or enablers to delivery. The process evaluation will also feed into the delivery of the programme by identifying lessons for improving implementation throughout the duration of the programme at school, regional and national levels. Methods are anticipated to utilise management information (MI) data and surveys as part of the quantitative analysis, as well as semi-structured interviews, focus groups and case studies for the qualitative component.

Impact Evaluation Strand

The Department wants to understand the impact of the intervention on schools' attendance and behaviour policies, the outcomes identified in the programme's theory of change (ToC), how long it takes for a change in outcomes to materialise, as well as how these changes are sustained.

Contractors will be expected to conduct an impact evaluation feasibility assessment and develop a detailed impact evaluation plan as part of the contract. It is expected that a quasi-experimental method will be employed, which may include analysis of administrative data or bespoke data collection in programme schools and a comparator group of schools. In this strand, we are keen to draw on supplier expertise to explore and present further options for data collection, analysis, and reporting that contributes to the overall objectives, addresses any gaps and complements and adds value to the impact evaluation.

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Economic Evaluation Strand

We require an economic evaluation to assess value for money of the programme. The Department would like to consider the programme against the four Es (Economy, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Equity), including a cost-benefit analysis.

4.8 The evaluation findings will inform the work of teams within the Department for Education working in areas of school attendance, behaviour and exclusions.

4.9 **Project Outputs:** The Department requires the following outputs:

- Workplan and project timelines, including final agreed research questions.
- Completion of the Department's Ethics Checklist.
- Research tools and materials.
- Review and update to the existing Theory of Change.
- Impact evaluation feasibility report and detailed impact evaluation plan.
- Emerging findings from the fieldwork at agreed upon milestones.
- Interim findings presented in a high-quality slide-deck and short report.
- A final integrated report concluding the evaluation.
- The interim and final reports must be drafted using the Department's templates and be compliant with the Departmental style guide. Reports are expected to be accessible, brief, and engaging, and quality assured prior to being shared with the Department. The interim and final reports are expected to be published on gov.uk.
- We may also require the contractor to share anonymised interview transcripts from any case studies and interviews with the Department. Datasets and transcripts would need to be securely transferred.

4.10 **Project timeline:** See Table 1 for an outline of project timeline. Bidders are required to provide a detailed timeline, including timings of fieldwork, as part of their submission.

Table 1: Project Timeline

Task	Start	Completion
Launch of procurement via Jaggaer e-Tendering Portal	06/10/2025	17/11/2025 (23:59)
Questions on proposals to the Department	06/10/2025	20/10/2025

Answers to questions out to all bidders	20/10/2025	27/10/2025
Deadline for submission of Bid		17/11/2025
Assessment of bids	18/11/2025	01/12/2025
Award Contract		15/12/2025
Execution (signature) date for contract	December 2025	
Project set-up including inception meeting	December 2025	December 2025
Evaluation Fieldwork	January 2026	April 2029
Impact evaluation plan	January 2026	April 2026
Interim Findings		Sep 2027
Draft Final Report		July 2029
Final Report		October 2029

5. Background to the Requirement

Policy Background

5.1 Improving attendance is a key driver of the ‘Achieving and Thriving’ pillar, within government’s Opportunity Mission, and is of specific interest to No10. Only around 100 secondary schools (of more than 3000) are back to pre-Covid absence levels, and existing programmes have high unmet demand.

5.2 Improving behaviour is integral to creating safe and supportive environments, and fostering a sense of belonging in schools, which makes it likely that attendance will improve and could also impact attainment.

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5.3 Attendance and Behaviour Hubs seek to improve attendance and behaviour practice in schools, through 1:1 regionally based leadership support. Data shows schools with a similar cohort of pupils (i.e. SEND, FSM, EAL) can have very different absence rates – highlighting that school level factors and practice are a significant driver of outcomes⁴. One of the Department’s core pillars for both attendance and behaviour policies is providing schools with support to develop effective strategies to address the problems that drive poor attendance and behaviour within their schools – this is backed up by evidence from the EEF. The evidence generated as part of this evaluation will help us better understand the mechanisms through which schools can improve in this respect.

5.4 This proposal is based on lessons learned from evaluations of the attendance hubs and behaviour hubs programmes and will aim to address evidence gaps relating to impact. The interim evaluation of the behaviour hubs programme⁵ showed sizable positive changes in overall staff behaviour ratings between baseline and follow-up, with the largest positive changes being reported by staff in schools receiving extended support and in schools with high deprivation levels. Changes in schools were also evidenced in the qualitative data. Behaviour policies shifted staff and leadership focus and actions, new tools to improve the implementation of behaviour policy were created, and relationships between teaching staff, teachers and pupils, senior leadership team (SLT) and teachers, and teachers and parents changed, with a greater focus on behaviour.

5.5 Attendance and behaviour Hubs (‘A&B Hubs’) will be integrated in the new Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence (RISE) teams to provide multi-tiered, school to school support from September 2025. This model builds upon prior attendance hubs (unfunded) and behaviour hubs (funded). Both these programmes ended by summer 2025.

5.6 The Department will collaborate with successful bidder to share relevant existing evidence.

Attendance and Behaviour Hubs Model

5.7 As part of the Attendance and Behaviour Hubs programme, c.540 schools per year will receive 10 days of intensive support (‘enhanced support’), with light-touch support available for a further c.3,600 per year (‘regional support’) (see Figure 1). The programme intends to deliver support to both primary and secondary schools, but with resources weighted more towards secondary due to the nature of the attendance and behaviour problem (higher rates of overall and persistent absence as well as higher numbers and rates of suspensions and permanent exclusions).

⁴ [Pupil absence in schools in England, Autumn term 2024/25 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)

⁵ [Evaluation of the behaviour hubs programme: interim report - GOV.UK](#)

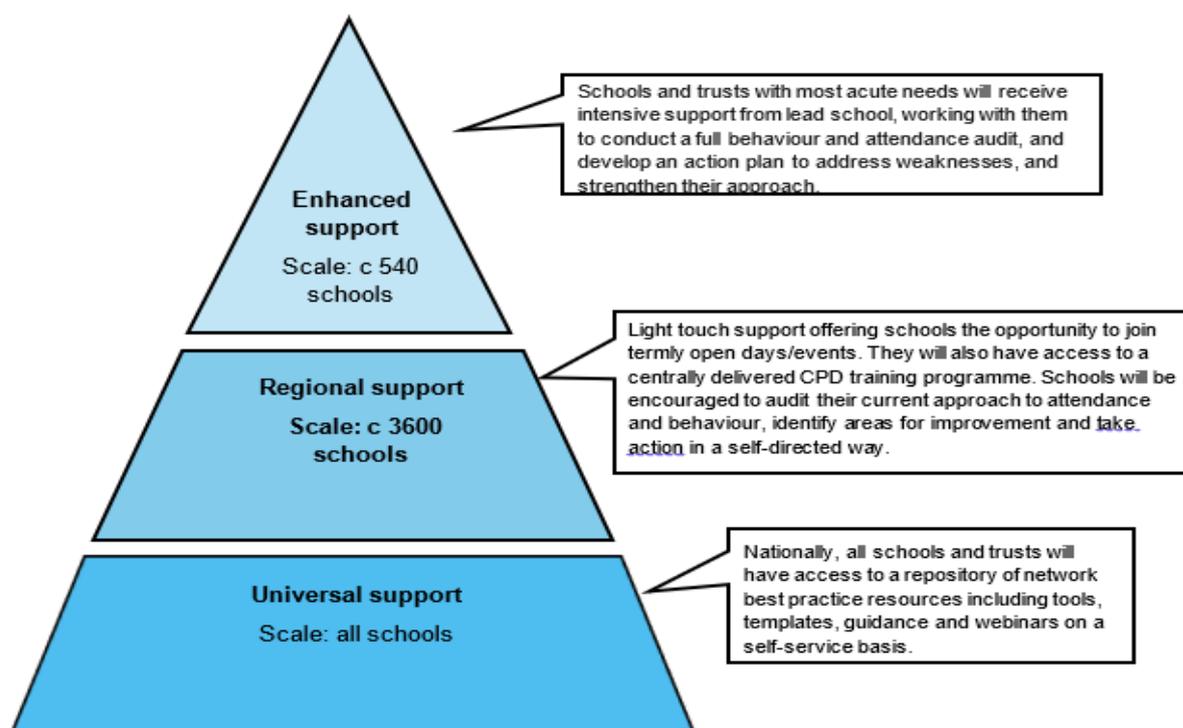


Figure 1 Delivery Model

5.8 This support will be provided by:

- Up to 10 schools/trusts in each region with strong attendance and behaviour practice ('lead schools/trusts')
- Up to 1 attendance and behaviour expert adviser in each region

5.9 The full programme is planned to run from January 2026 to March 2029, with mobilisation throughout 2025 and a small number of Hubs starting in September 2025 to test the approach. Internal Department for Education teams across Families Group and Regions Group will manage the programme delivery.

Evidence Needs:

5.10 The published interim evaluation report of the behaviour hubs programme identified improved behaviour management processes and communication within schools and sizable positive changes in behaviour ratings by staff. However, it also identified that pupil ratings of behaviour slightly decreased following the programme. The externally commissioned evaluation, which uses a theory-based approach, is still ongoing with a final report expected late 2025.

5.11 Our evidence on what works to improve attendance is limited, despite the initial Attendance Hubs programme. Due to the delivery method of the previous Attendance Hubs programme, no formal evaluation was conducted, which further outlines the need for a comprehensive evaluation of the A&B Hubs programme.

5.12 The evaluation of the A&B Hubs programme will build on this existing evidence and strengthen our confidence in the effectiveness of hubs through a robust and analytically rigorous evaluation.

5.13 We need to build the evidence base on what interventions are effective at improving pupil attendance and behaviour, as well as supporting schools to develop impactful and sustainable policies. The different elements of the evaluation (process/impact/economic) will allow for emerging insight to help improve the intervention model and greater insight into if the intervention works and whether it provides value-for-money. The evaluation is therefore impactful on decision making and supporting a robust delivery model.

6. The Requirement

6.1. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

6.1.1. The aims of the evaluation are to:

- Capture formative learning and real-time insights to understand operational and contextual challenges / successes, and ways to exploit or overcome these, fostering continuous improvement of the hubs programme.
- Assess whether the hubs are effective in meeting strategic aims, objectives and expected outcomes. Specifically, to:
 - Improve attendance and behaviour leadership
 - Improve practice and culture
 - Support the use of data to more effectively target intervention
- Assess whether / to what extent outcomes, as identified in the ToC, can be attributed to the hubs.
- Inform future decisions about whether, and how, to scale-up the hubs.

6.1.2. The evaluation objectives are:

- To assess whether the programme has been implemented and delivered as intended. (process evaluation)
- To understand what worked well in programme implementation and delivery. (process evaluation)
- To understand any barriers to programme implementation and delivery. (process evaluation)
- To assess the impact of the programme on key outcome measures (impact evaluation)
- To assess whether the programme provides Value for Money (economic evaluation)

Table 2 Evaluation Questions

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Evaluation questions (draft)
Process
Implementation and delivery
1. To what extent has the A&B hubs programme been implemented as planned?
2. To what extent does the implementation of the programme differ between schools and regions? And why?
3. Which aspects of the programme work well and not so well? What were the facilitators and challenges?
4. What are the lessons for improving implementation of the programme – at school / regional / national levels?
Schools' experience
5. What are partner and lead schools / trusts experiences of the programme?
6. How confident were schools in the ability of lead schools to support with change
7. What practical changes did schools make and how did these influence A&B policies and culture?
8. How satisfied were partner schools with the type and level of support provided by the programme?
9. How satisfied were partner schools with the type and level of support provided by advisers
10. Which components of the programme were perceived to be most / least effective?
Unintended consequences
11. Are there any unintended consequences of the programme – for pupils or for schools?
Impact
12. What is the impact of the A&B hubs programme on the key outcomes of interest?
13. Are there schools with particular characteristics who benefit more/less from the programme?
14. How long does it take for a change in outcomes to materialise and are changes sustained?
Economic
15. What are the costs of the programme in practice?
16. Does the programme provide good VfM?

TARGET PARTICIPANT GROUP

6.2. The main audience to be targeted by the research are schools participating in the Attendance and Behaviour Hubs programme.

6.2.1. Enhanced support will be provided to ~540 schools identified by the Department using attendance data, Ofsted gradings for behaviour and internal information from regions group (such as support already offered, for example).

6.2.2. Regional support will be provided to ~3,600 schools identified by the Department using attendance data, Ofsted gradings for behaviour and regions groups internal information, along with an expression of interest from the school.

6.2.3. We are interested in answering the evaluation questions for both these groups where possible throughout the evaluation.

6.2.4. DfE will provide universal support to all schools nationally. The universal support is outside the scope of the evaluation.

6.3. SUGGESTED APPROACH AND ANALYSIS

6.3.1. The evaluation will involve mixed-methods (a range of qualitative and quantitative data collection) covering process, impact and economic evaluation, built around the programme's theory of change. A copy of the draft programme theory of change can be supplied at project initiation stage.

All elements of the evaluation will be externally commissioned, and the contract will run for approximately 4 years in parallel with delivery of the programme, with additional time after programme close to allow for final analysis and reporting.

6.3.2. Process Evaluation

The process evaluation will be conducted throughout the programme and will evaluate the implementation and delivery of the programme and collect feedback from participants about their experiences of taking part. The process evaluation will be conducted throughout to enable refinements to delivery to ensure that the programme is working effectively.

Suppliers will have access to management information (MI) data that will be collected from all schools on the programme by the Department's delivery teams.

We expect suppliers to collect the following quantitative and qualitative data:

Quantitative data collection:

- Surveys with schools (lead and partner) (lead schools and regional support partner schools sampled across region and cohort)
 - Baseline and follow-up surveys in all partner schools participating in the enhanced support group (up to approx. 1,260 partner schools across the lifetime of the programme as Cohort 1 will likely be excluded from this due to delivery timelines).
 - Baseline and follow-up surveys will also be used operationally so a mechanism for sharing results with schools must be built into the process.
 - The surveys can be used as part of the process and/or impact evaluation.

Qualitative data collection (supplier to propose sample sizes):

- Semi-structured interviews with delivery teams (based in regions group and policy).
- Semi-structured interviews with schools (lead and partner) (potentially conducted in conjunction with impact evaluation) – including a range of participants (e.g. senior leadership, behaviour leads and teachers) (sampled across region, cohort and support level).
- We are open to including other qualitative approaches with partner schools e.g. focus groups and case studies – potentially including data collection from further

participant groups such as parents and pupils if this supports answering the evaluation questions.

6.3.3. Impact Evaluation

The impact evaluation should utilise a quasi-experimental counterfactual impact evaluation design to quantify and isolate the impact of the programme on the outcomes of interest. Contractors will be expected to conduct an impact evaluation feasibility assessment and develop a detailed impact evaluation plan as part of the contract.

The impact evaluation will assess the effectiveness of the intervention against attendance and behaviour outcomes. For attendance, this will involve analysis of daily attendance data to determine any causal impact the intervention may have had on attendance levels. For behaviour, this will likely involve analysis of survey data (including perceptions of behaviour and associated measures related to behaviour management). We will work with suppliers to identify an appropriate outcome measure for behaviour; however we expect this will be provided from the survey data rather than administrative data (suspensions and permanent exclusions data will be monitored to provide contextual information for schools but we do not anticipate using it as an outcome measure).

Quantitative data:

- Administrative attendance data and any other administrative data that supports measurement of outcomes/impacts or provides contextual information e.g. school workforce data, suspensions and permanent exclusions data.
- Surveys with schools. This will include partner schools (as identified above for the process evaluation) and potentially a comparator group of schools, dependent on final impact evaluation design, at baseline and follow-up timepoints.

We are particularly keen to draw on supplier expertise for the impact evaluation strand and are open to supplier's suggestions for methodological approach and any options for additional quantitative or qualitative data collection.

6.3.4. Economic Evaluation

The approach to economic evaluation will be dependent on our ability to successfully attribute outcomes to the A&B hubs programme. It is anticipated a VfM assessment will be undertaken to evaluate how effectively resources were used throughout the programme to achieve the programme objectives by comparing the costs of the programme with the monetised and non-monetised benefits of the programme using standard Green Book appraisal techniques. Additionally, wider economic evaluation against the four E's (Economy, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Equity) should be completed as part of the economic evaluation. As the programme is being delivered internally, we will collect cost data from policy and regional teams.

6.4. RESEARCH OUTPUTS

6.4.1. We require the contractor to produce several research outputs and tools as outlined below:

- Workplan and project timeline. The project plan and timeline should clearly set out the ordering and timing of each fieldwork element. The timeline should also indicate when emerging findings can be expected and when input/sign-off from the Department will be required.
- Completion of the Department’s Ethics Checklist, this must be completed before any fieldwork starts.
- Research tools and materials. All data collection tools (e.g., topic guides) will be agreed with the Department and signed off by the Department’s project manager.
- Impact evaluation feasibility report and detailed impact evaluation plan.
- Review and develop the existing Theory of Change.
- Emerging findings from the fieldwork at agreed upon dates e.g., through written updates, briefings, or emerging learning meetings
- Interim findings presented in a slide-deck and short report (of publishable quality).
- Publishable integrated final evaluation report. Findings should be presented in a written report that addresses each of the evaluation questions. The report must provide final conclusions.
- The interim and final report must be drafted in the Department’s [templates](#) and be compliant with the Department’s [style guide](#). Reports are expected to be accessible, brief, and engaging, and quality assured prior to being shared with the Department. We expect 2 rounds of review and comments per report as a minimum.
- We may also require the contractor to share a selection of anonymised transcripts from the interviews with the Department. All datasets must be transferred securely and in line with Departmental data protection requirements.

Table 3 Project Outputs

Output	Date
Evaluation workplan	December 2025
Research tools/materials	January 2026
Theory of Change model (continuous iterations should be made throughout the project)	January 2026
Impact evaluation feasibility report and detailed impact evaluation plan	April 2026

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Emerging learning (continuous reports or meetings delivered throughout the project)	June 2026 onwards
Interim report	Sep 2027
Draft final report – plus presentation of findings	July 2029
Final report	October 2029

6.4.2. To ensure research outputs and tools/materials meet the expectations and requirements of the Department, drafts should be shared with the Department as early as is practicable. The Department reserves the right to request iterations of the output or tool until they meet the agreed upon standard. Comments on draft outputs or research tools should be given and dealt with in a timely manner, to be agreed upon between the contractor and the Department.

6.5. LIAISON ARRANGEMENTS

6.5.1. Minimum requirements throughout the evaluation include:

- **Inception meeting:** Attend one virtual inception meeting with relevant Department research and policy teams.
- **Evaluation Workplan:** Develop a detailed workplan including a timeline on when input from the Department will be needed (including time for sign-off on research materials and reports).
- **Project Management:** Regular online progress meetings with the Department's project manager. The frequency of these meetings will vary over the course of the evaluation, however during project development phase and fieldwork, we expect these meetings to be weekly. Frequency will also be dependent on assessment of emerging risks. These meetings must be accompanied by regular written project updates.
- **Research Material Development:** During the development of research materials, it is likely that the evaluator will need to attend roundtable meetings with analytical and policy colleagues from the Department to discuss topic guide content. The evaluator is required to clear any data collection tools with the Department before engaging in fieldwork.
- **Evaluation steering group:** The formation of an evaluation advisory group is still to be determined, but suppliers should provide costs for attendance at a twice-yearly evaluation advisory group meeting.
- Members of the steering group are likely to include methodological and subject experts from the Department and a range of external stakeholders.

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6.5.2. Bidders must set out their approach to project management and resourcing of this work.

6.5.3. The evaluators and the intervention delivery and policy teams will work collaboratively and iteratively during the evaluation period. Collating and sharing data and information from the delivery teams to the evaluators is an essential part of the project and the time required for this should be accurately costed. Similarly, the evaluator has a responsibility to share interim findings with the delivery teams so that this knowledge can inform practice.

6.6. TIMINGS

Task	Start	End
ITT open	06/10/2025	17/11/2025
Clarification questions on proposal to the Department	06/10/2025	20/10/2025
Answers to questions out to bidders	20/10/2025	27/10/2025
ITT close	17/11/2025	
Assessment of bids	18/11/2025	01/12/2025
Proposed award notification date		December 2025
Draft and finalise Contract		December 2025
Contract Signed		December 2025
Project inception meeting	December 2025	
Project set up, inc ethics approvals	December 2025	January 2025
Fieldwork	January 2026	April 2029
Interim report		Sep 2027
Draft final report – plus presentations of findings		July 2029
Final Report		October 2029
Project end		December 2029

6.7. BUDGET

6.8. The budget for this project, including expenses and any respondent incentive payments is £456,000 (excluding VAT). A detailed breakdown of costs is required within **Attachment 4 Price Schedule** as per the instructions set out in **Attachment 2 Instructions to Bidders**.

6.9. The proposed package of activity and reporting must be proportionate (not excessive), guard against burden for participants, be based on sound rationale, and demonstrate how it will deliver on the aims and objectives, and where and how it adds value.

6.10. FORMAT OF PROPOSAL

6.11. Your written proposal should clearly demonstrate how you will deliver the requirements, including whether the services will be delivered solely by your 'in-house' capability or whether you intend to Sub-Contract any element(s) of the Services delivering the proposal. Details of sub-contractors should also be provided as part of your response to Qualification Criteria 4 – Further Information within **Attachment 2 Instructions to Bidders**.

6.12. Your proposal should be in the following format:

- **Format:** Microsoft Word or PDF
- **Font:** Min. font size 12pt
- **Page Limit:** 20-30 A4 Pages and no more than 7000 words. Anything longer than this will be disregarded and not evaluated. This includes the Additional Proposal Sections

6.13. Your proposal should contain the following:

- **Section 1:** Table of Contents - not included in word count.
- **Section 2:** Summary of Proposal.
- **Section 3:** Meeting the Requirement:
 - Aims and Objectives.
 - Methodology and Rationale.
 - Project Management and Monitoring.
 - Staffing (Include CVs of the project team members as an Annex – CVs are not included in word count).
 - Outputs and Reporting.
 - Timetable of Activities (including time per activity).
- **Section 4:** Risk Management (Including Risk Register). (further details given in 'Proposal Requirements – Section 4: Risk Management' below).
- **Section 5:** Data Security Consideration and Arrangements.
- **Section 6:** References and Expertise
- **Section 7:** Social Value Theme – as detailed in TEC5 in '6. Technical Evaluation Criteria' of 'Attachment 2 Instructions to bidders'

6.14. Proposal Requirements – Section 4: Risk Management

6.15. You should submit as part of your proposal a one-page summary on what you believe will be the key risks to delivering the project and what contingencies you will put in place to deal with them.

6.16. A risk is any factor that may delay, disrupt, or prevent the full achievement of a project objective. All risks should be identified. For each risk, the one-page summary should assess its likelihood (high, medium, or low) and specify its possible impact on the project objectives (again rated high, medium, or low). The assessment should also identify appropriate actions that would reduce or eliminate each risk or its impact.

6.17. Typical areas of risk for a research project might include staffing, resource constraints, technical constraints, data access, timing, management, and operational issues, but this is not an exhaustive list.

6.18. Additional Proposal Requirements – Dependencies

6.19. You should indicate in your proposal if you are reliant on any third party for the access of information, data or undertaking any of the work. This should be considered in addition to your requirement to outline formal sub-contracting arrangements within your response.

6.20. Additional Proposal Requirements – Monitoring Techniques

6.21. You should indicate in your proposal how you will monitor the project to ensure it is delivered in terms of quality, timeliness, and cost.

6.22. Additional Proposal Requirements – The Use of Incentives

6.23. With some important exceptions, the Authority believes that the routine use of respondent incentives in surveys is, in general, not justified as they are rarely cost effective in either increasing participation or reducing non-response biases. If you are proposing the use of respondent incentives in your proposal you must set out why you feel they are necessary, why it is not possible to achieve the required sample sizes or response rates without the use of incentives, how and to what extent they will raise the overall response rate, how you will mitigate any specific biases that could be introduced, and provide a cost comparison with non-incentive methods. Your arguments should be supported by empirical evidence from past use.

6.24. The exceptions to this are payment for participation in group discussions or in-depth qualitative interviews, payment to cover respondent expenses e.g., travel and childcare costs, and compensation for excessive demand on respondents, e.g., taking basic skills tests, diary keeping, panel maintenance and compensating schools for the respondent's time. If you wish to use a prize draw incentive then you must also set out in your proposal how you will comply with all relevant legislation and codes of practice (e.g., the British Code of

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Advertising and Sales Promotion), state that you shall be solely liable for any breach of these and that you shall indemnify the Authority against any claims that may be made under them.

7. Key Milestones and Deliverables

7.1. The following Contract milestones/deliverables shall apply:

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Milestone	Description	Delivery Date or Timeframe
Project inception meeting	Virtual inception meeting with the Department's analytical and policy teams	December 2025
Ethics Approvals		December 2025
Data Approvals		December 2025
Evaluation workplan and research tools finalised and agreed	Research design finalised and agreed with the Department and intervention delivery partner Research materials developed or selected and tested.	January 2026
Fieldwork conducted	Participant recruitment and data collection	January 2026- April 2029
Theory of Change model	Diagram and narrative setting out a ToC for the intervention	January 2026 (continuous iterations should be made throughout the project)
Emerging findings	Updates from fieldwork and analysis in the form of briefing or meetings that shares early or emerging insights.	February 2026 – Continuous throughout project
Impact evaluation plan	A feasibility assessment to be conducted for the impact evaluation to ensure outputs are robust.	April 2026
Interim report	Findings presented as slide-deck alongside short report of publishable quality.	September 2027
Draft final report and presentation of findings	Written integrated report shared as draft, and slide-deck for presentation of findings	July 2029
Final report	Final integrated report	December 2029

8. Continuous Improvement

- 8.1. The successful supplier shall maintain open channels of communication with the Authority to resolve issues, share lessons learned and present new ways of working during project review meetings. Any proposed new ways of delivering the Services shall be brought to the Authority's attention and formally agreed prior to any changes being implemented.

9. Social Value and Sustainability

- 9.1. The bidder shall demonstrate commitment to social value in Technical Evaluation Criteria 5 (TEC5) in Attachment 2 Instructions to Bidders. Social Value Criteria 'Tackling Economic Inequality - Creating new businesses, new jobs, and new skills: Employment' has been selected for this procurement.

10. Price

- 10.1. Prices are to be submitted *only* within **Attachment 4 Price Schedule** as per the instructions set out in **Attachment 2 Instructions to Bidders** excluding VAT and including all other expenses relating to Contract delivery.
Suppliers should ensure that there is no reference to prices within the Technical sections of their bids.

11. Staff and Customer Service

- 11.1. The Supplier shall provide a sufficient level of resource throughout the duration of the Contract to consistently deliver a quality service.
- 11.2. The Supplier's staff assigned to the Contract shall have the relevant qualifications and experience to deliver the Contract to the required standard.
- 11.3. The Supplier shall ensure that staff understand the Authority's vision and objectives and will provide excellent customer service to the Authority throughout the duration of the Contract.
- 11.4. The Supplier shall communicate all changes to the Key Personnel as defined in the Call-Off Contract throughout the Term.

12. Security and Confidentiality Requirements

- 12.1. **Departmental Security Standards for Business Services and ICT Contracts**
- 12.2. The Authority's security standards clauses are included as the Buyer's Security Policy within **Attachment 6a Order Contract Terms & Attachment 6b Order Form**.

12.3. Supplier Security Assurance Questionnaire

12.4. Suppliers and any sub-contractors are required to complete **Attachment 5 Supplier Security Questionnaire** as part of their bid, for the Authority to obtain a level of assurance with regards to our assets throughout the life of the contract.

12.5. Data Collection

12.6. All proposed research must comply with [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#) guidelines. The contractor will work with the Department to finalise a Data Protection Impact Assessment once the evaluation methodology has been agreed. The evaluation data collection will not proceed until all GDPR and data protection agreements are in place and the contractor has sufficiently demonstrated how their work will meet these standards.

12.7. Suppliers will be expected to clear any data collection tools with the Authority before engaging in field work. Suppliers should include Data Privacy Notices for research participants via respondent documentation and/or interviewer briefing notes, and clearly state what the data is being collected for and on behalf of the Authority and that no reference is made, implied or otherwise, to the data being used solely by or available only to the supplier. Suppliers should establish with the Authority the legal basis for data processing under the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.

12.8. The respondent documentation and/or interviewer shall ensure that the respondent clearly understands (before they give their consent to be interviewed) the purpose of the interview, that the information they provide will only be used for research purposes and, in the case of interviews (telephone or face-to-face), that they have the right to withdraw from the interview at any time. Where consent is used as the legal basis for data processing, consent procedures should ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.

12.9. Burden

12.10. The Authority seeks to minimise the burdens on schools and Local Authorities (LAs) taking part in surveys. It is therefore important that bids should set out how the proposed methodology will minimise the burden on schools and/or LAs and a justification for the proposed sample size.

12.11. When assessing the relative merits of data collection methods, the following issues should be considered:

- only data essential to the project shall be collected;
- data should be collected electronically where appropriate and where schools and/or LAs prefer this;
- questionnaires should be pre-populated wherever possible and appropriate;

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- schools must be given at least four working weeks to respond to the exercise from the date they receive the request; and
- LAs should receive at least two weeks, unless they need to approach schools in which case, they too should receive 4 weeks to respond.

12.12. The Contractor shall clear any data collection tools with the Authority before engaging in field work.

12.13. Researchers shall check with the Authority whether any of the information that they are requesting from schools can be provided centrally from information already held.

12.14. Consent Arrangements

12.15. The Authority and the supplier shall agree in advance of any survey activity taking place the consent arrangements that shall apply for each of the participant groups. All participants should be informed of the purpose of the research, that the supplier is acting on behalf of the Authority and that they have the option to refuse to participate (opt out). Where opt-in consent is used, the approach should be compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018. Contact details should be provided including a contact person at the Authority. Children who are 16 or over will usually be able to give their own consent but even where this is so, the Contractor, in consultation with the Authority, should consider whether it is also appropriate for parents, guardians or other appropriate gatekeepers (e.g., schools, Local Authorities) to be informed when a child has been invited to participate in research.

16. PAYMENT AND INVOICING

16.1 Details of payment and invoicing requirements are included within **Attachment 6a Order Contract Terms** and **Attachment 6b Order Form**.