

80% of SENDCOs have either resigned or are considering leaving their role

Twinkl survey reveals 'workload' and 'lack of support' as key drivers pushing special educational needs teachers to their limits, as 'heartbreaking' crisis reaches a tipping point.

Sheffield, England, January 16th, 2025: A survey of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinators (SENDCOs) has shone a light on the shocking extent of the teacher retention crisis in this area of education - with four fifths (80%) having either 'resigned or considered resigning' in the last school term.

With the cross-party Education Committee launching [a major new inquiry](#) focused on finding solutions to the crisis in special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) provision, the survey findings, by educational publisher [Twinkl](#), highlight the urgency of the situation.

"While the new Government has correctly identified SEND as the area of education most in need of support, these survey findings should reaffirm the need for policy makers to move swiftly, such is the dire state of special education provision," commented Lauren Brown, [Twinkl](#) SEND expert and qualified former SENDCO. "In many cases, it is the skill and passion of SEND teachers that is keeping the system afloat. With staggeringly high numbers considering leaving the profession, the sector needs to see signs of positive action sooner rather than later."

The research also reveals the following key factors behind SENDCO job exasperation and their primary reason for considering leaving the profession:

- 72% - of those surveyed identified intense workloads as their biggest pain point, with large quantities of admin and paperwork the most common factor
- 61% - indicated 'a lack of support and understanding'
- 59% - mentioned 'bureaucracy' in the system
- 56% - claimed the job was too demanding from a time perspective, with 30% experiencing a negative impact on mental health and well-being

One SENDCO included in the survey stated: "More paperwork – form after form, hoop after hoop – meaning less time with children and modelling strategies. The SENDCO role is now an office job."

Another shared: "The last few years have been horrendous. My average working week is now 60 hours Monday to Friday, plus eight hours at weekends. You suddenly end up realising you've spent more time with – and fighting for – other people's kids at the expense of your own."

One SENDCO concluded: "It's heartbreaking that a job can shatter you to pieces."

When it comes to potential remedies:

- 66% believe funding is the major requirement - with a focus on hiring and retaining more staff to meet demand
- Elsewhere, 39% of SENDCO's mentioned a need to simplify SEND systems, with a more centralised or consistent approach across regions
- A desire for more training was mentioned by 13% of respondents

"The Government's first priority should be ensuring key groups are aware of the current SEND inquiry and their ability to contribute. Opinions canvassed should include families, teachers, SENDCOs, and other relevant professionals such as occupational therapists," said Georgina Durrant, National Inclusion Lead at Twinkl, author and qualified former SENDCO. "Secondly, the Education Committee should ensure its response includes the creation of short term recommendations that can be implemented quickly to make an immediate difference - not just loftier, long-term goals. Every year that passes without meaningful reform leaves thousands of children behind."

Twinkl is compiling a response to the Government's current SEND inquiry that will detail many of the facts and suggestions produced by this survey, as well as insights from over a decade supporting SENDCOs across the UK.

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About Twinkl

[Twinkl](#) was founded in 2010 by husband and wife Jonathan and Susie Seaton, with a mission 'to help those who teach'. The company provides high quality learning materials and educational services, which are all teacher-created and checked.

Today, Twinkl offers over 1.5 million resources via its website, with new content added daily - ranging from classroom content and assessments, to AI tools and augmented reality games. Twinkl is used and trusted by schools and educators in over 190 countries and regions, including primary and secondary school teachers, nursery workers and parents.

About the survey

Twinkl surveyed 358 teachers who identified as SENDCOs or special educational needs teachers in December 2024. The percentages given to individual questions sum to over 100% as responses often contained multiple selections - with each percentage representing how often a category was mentioned across all responses.