



## Top Ten Budget-Busting Tips for Schools & Educational Settings

How to Save Money and Plan  
Your Budget Effectively

## Top Ten Budget-Busting Tips for Schools

It's no secret that schools are coming under increasing pressure from all angles:

- There is less and less support at a local authority level
- Less time to study
- No budget for Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Stress of inspections
- Recruitment – a reported decrease of 74% in applications for a post
- Knife crime and gang culture

As the leading provider of Safeguarding and Duty of Care training, [EduCare](#) has over 20,000 customers in schools across the world.

What they are telling us is that **a lack of funding is the overarching problem**, as budgets in schools and educational settings get tightened every year.

With the start of the new financial year, we have asked our customers, consulted government advice pages and spoken to our own staff to create these ten budget-busting tips that can help you think outside the box when it comes to budgeting better and ensure your money goes further.

## 1. Think local

Advice from Dawn Jotham, experienced Pastoral Lead and Pastoral Care Specialist at EduCare.

*“Look locally for co-operative opportunities. Can students at your local FE college support your pupils? With the correct checks, supervision and partnership agreements in place, this can help support both your pupils and the students of the college.*

*“Also, look at local businesses. Can they support you in any way? This could be from simple advice to supporting fundraising events and may help bring in further income streams. When you are more involved in your local community you are in a much more secure place.”*

## 2. Look after each other

Staff wellbeing has many positive benefits and in Ofsted’s proposed new inspection framework, will also become a key part of school inspections. However, there are also financial benefits as well. In a government case study, a sponsored single academy trust in Cumbria was having to spend over £150,000 on supply cover. They implemented enhanced occupational health provision and as a result of that and other changes, the absence rate improved by 5%.

As the absence rate improved, the academy recorded significant savings in supply cover costs.

Jane Charman, Executive Headteacher at Park Hill Infants' School and Tunstall Nursery School has also implemented a scheme to improve wellbeing and seen great results.

*“All staff are given a 'wellbeing' day where they can have a paid day off in term time that is covered by existing staff. As the time off is planned, the school does not suffer financially by having to pay for emergency supply cover.*

*“The 'wellbeing day' is given as a golden ticket for Christmas and staff can take it whenever they like in the year. Furthermore, they don't even have to use the ticket for things like assemblies for their own children, as that is already permitted anyway. Staff*

*have used their wellbeing day on a day just for them, such as spa days, family weddings, or extended weekends away.*

*"Staff really value it and it has had a huge impact on well being and sickness absences are low".*

Dawn Jotham, EduCare's pastoral care specialist adds to this:

*"In a big school, in particular, it is easy for staff to feel alone. Simple things go along way to make staff feel supported. A smile in the corridor, a hello and the occasional cup of tea and get together at the end of day will all help with staff wellbeing and retention which will have financial benefits."*

### 3. Collaborate

Oliver Phillips, Trust Finance Manager at the Multi-Academy Trust, Equals Trust, recommends working together with local, or partner schools, to take advantage of economies of scale. This may be local cluster groups, partner faith schools or schools under one Multi-Academy Trust.

*"By buying together across all member schools, Equals Trust was able to save 31% on year on year training costs."*

## 4. Make money go further

Schools should always review what they have spent and see if the money could be spent in different ways. Even if the best deal was found for a solution, it may be better to think if an alternative solution would be better.

Carleton Endowed Church of England Primary School headteacher Duggie Speight, managed to do just this when reviewing how training budgets were spent.

*“Rather than pay £200 for staff to go out on training that only benefits that one member of staff, and ask them to disseminate back, we looked at ways to make our funding go further so ALL staff could benefit in a consistent way.”*

## 5. Benchmark

The Department for Education has set up a scheme that allows schools to compare their budget with schools or trusts in similar circumstances to see if spending could be more efficient.

Using the online system, schools can:

- identify schools or trusts that are similar, or with similar challenges
- compare school or trust’s spending with similar schools or trusts
- compare the staffing structures
- find contact details for similar schools or schools within similar trusts

Benchmarking also helps to connect schools to discuss challenges and successes. Visit the gov.uk website to begin: <https://schools-financial-benchmarking.service.gov.uk/>

## 6. Regularly check DfE Deals

Former Headteacher and EduCare's Senior Manager, Doug Watt advises that the DfE has released its '[Deals for Schools](#)' webpages which aim to regularly add new deals and advice such as how to purchase books through the Books and Related Materials framework

*"It's worth keeping an eye on these deals as new items are due to be added and the government are listening to feedback as to how this can be improved."*

## 7. Prioritise carefully!

Akeim Mundell, pastoral leader and school governor at CHS South in Chorlton, Manchester has simple but effective advice. He recommends that everyone should really think about what the school will not be able to operate without versus what the school will be able to do without at this current moment of time.

*"It simple: Separate out the wants from the needs! This will help you focus on what you really have got to spend and will help you save in the long run."*

## 8. Review past performance

In the National College for Teaching and Leadership's Managing School Finance's programme, they recommend reviewing past performance against previous budgets.

*"The school can gain a good idea where underspends and overspends have occurred, lessons learned from procurement and contract management areas where better use could be made of resources."*

## 9. Better the devil you know

Doug Watt, former Headteacher, analysed all his suppliers on a regular basis.

*“Although a supplier may have won a tender, it’s not always the case that they will continue to give you the best value. Look around to see who else offers a better service, they may have invested more in their offer and be more up-to-date and relevant. They can teach you to work to best practice, and may even save you money.”*

## 10. Look at what is under your nose

Your school has access to a minefield of talent waiting to help raise money or save money  
Dawn Jotham, former pastoral lead recommends asking pupils for ideas.

*“Young people often come up with some fantastic ideas and are always willing to help. Also, think about what other skills staff may have. Go and have a look at their CV. Or ask, you will be pleasantly surprised.”*

*“I did an ‘Introduction to cooking’ course after school for some of our older pupils. It was such good fun, the pupils get to see a different side to their teachers and it made the school money - and they didn’t have to pay for an external resource.”*

## EduCare Can Help

As budgets continue to be reduced across all schools and educational settings, EduCare remains committed to provide the best value for money online learning service possible. EduCare for Education.

### 5 ways EduCare for Education can relieve the pressure - at a price that is right

1. **New courses added regularly**

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And definitely less than a Flat White!

**[Challenge us today and see how much you can save!](#)**

How much could you save?



## What To Do Next

### EduCare for Education®

We understand that the duty of care training needs in an educational setting are broad ranging; from Child Protection and Mental Wellbeing, to Fire Safety and GDPR. We also understand that different people require different levels of training; from the Designated Safeguarding Lead to the Lunchtime Supervisor to the part-time volunteer.

You can demonstrate compliance for all staff, on an unlimited basis, quickly and easily with [EduCare for Education](#), our cost-effective, all-in-one Safeguarding and Duty of Care e-learning service which combines over 30 online courses with a robust reporting suite to evidence learning to inspectors.

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and get ensure your staff are trained and you can evidence compliance

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