



What primary school leaders really want from EdTech

Insights from Winfield Education showcase feedback

Summer term 2026 | Primary leader insight report

Based on 143 primary leader responses, 8 showcase sessions and 858 product-feedback records.

143

Primary leader responses



858

Product-feedback records



19

Products / suppliers shown



The report in one page

Primary leaders are open to product discovery, but they are not persuaded by product features alone. The strongest response comes when suppliers connect clearly to school priorities, usefulness, implementation and evidence of value.

100%

Good or Excellent event rating

142 event-level ratings

99%

Would recommend the sessions

Definitely or probably

41%

Product records with follow-up

352 of 858 records

School leaders value discovery

The most valued part of the sessions was discovering new products and keeping up-to-date with the market.

The demo is not the decision

Presentation scores were strong, but usefulness and price response sat lower. Suppliers need to prove fit, not just present well.

Relevance converts

Follow-up rose sharply when leaders scored a product as useful. School priority fit matters more than feature volume.

Existing provision is the biggest competitor

The leading barrier was already using something similar, ahead of budget and timing.

Stated demand and action differ

SEND is both high-demand and high-action. Attendance and safeguarding look under-supplied this term.

Follow-up needs a ladder

Most interest starts as a request for information, pricing, evidence, trial detail or colleague referral.

Data note: The analysis is based on Winfield Education primary showcase feedback from May-June 2026. It should be read as practical market insight from a structured leader audience, not as a nationally representative survey.

School leaders valued the sessions

The data strongly suggests leaders see the sessions as useful product discovery and market awareness, not simply voucher-led attendance.

How leaders rated the evening



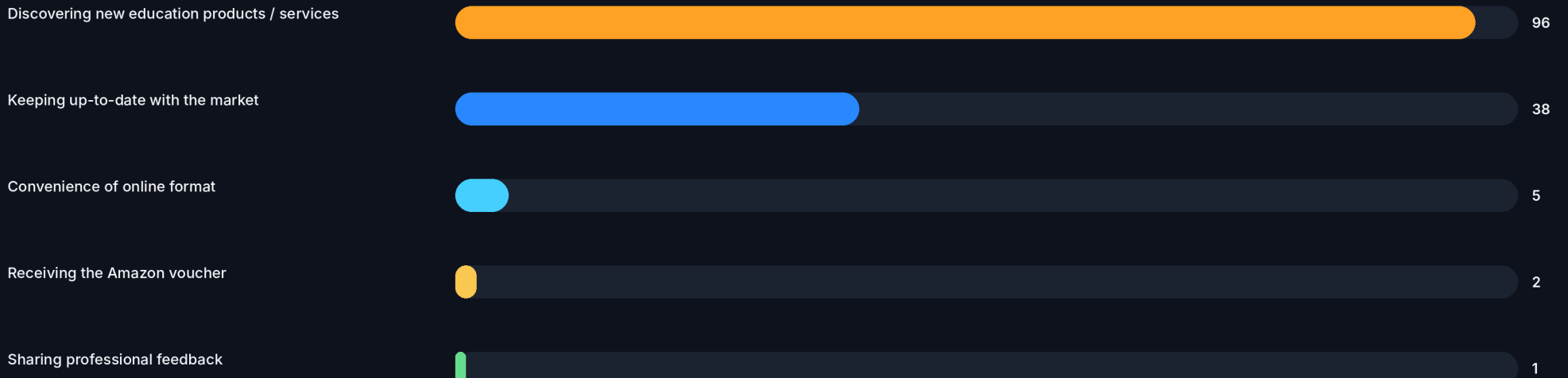
Useful professional learning / sector awareness

141 of 142 leaders said the session definitely or to some extent provided useful professional learning or sector/product awareness.



What leaders valued most

This directly addresses a supplier concern: leaders are mainly engaging for product discovery and market insight, not just incentives.



How leaders described the sessions

Open comments reinforce the event-level data: leaders repeatedly describe the sessions as useful, informative, time-efficient and a good way to discover products they may not otherwise encounter.

Recurring words and phrases in leader comments

Useful 27

Informative 22

CPD 12

New products 10

Interesting 10

Varied 7

Quick taster 5

Speed dating 5

Market awareness 4

School improvement 3

Counts based on anonymised leader comments where publicity permission was granted.

Selected anonymous comments

“ A great opportunity to hear about new products.

Primary school leader

“ Informative! Like speed dating for education!

Primary school leader

“ An excellent way to find out about new resources and solutions without having to leave your school.

Primary school leader

“ Very useful, quick taster of lots of interesting and useful products!

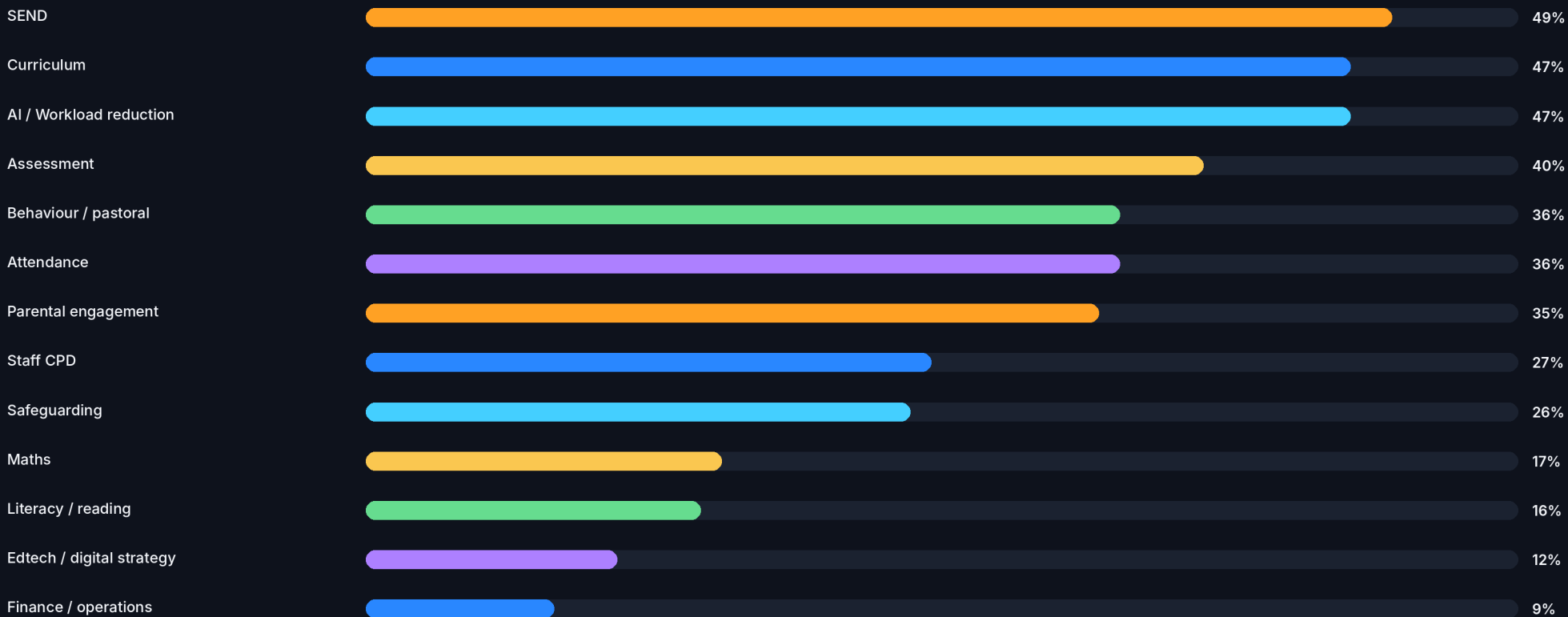
Primary school leader

Leaders are not asking for EdTech in the abstract

They are asking for help with live school priorities: SEND, curriculum, workload, assessment, behaviour, attendance and parental engagement.

Future-focus areas requested by primary leaders

129 leaders selected 512 topic areas. Multiple selections were allowed.



Key read The opportunity is strongest where a company can connect its offer to an already-visible school improvement agenda, rather than presenting as a generic platform.

What leaders ask for vs what they act on

Future topic requests are useful. But the more revealing signal is what receives a concrete next step when real products are placed in front of school leaders.



Three practical reads from the comparison

SEND

High stated demand and the strongest concrete-action rate.

Attendance & safeguarding

Clear leader demand, but little/no product representation in this term's dataset.

Assessment

High demand, but lower action: differentiation and implementation story matter.

Which product areas triggered concrete follow-up?

Concrete follow-up includes trial/pilot interest, a meeting request/booked time or a leader asking to pass the product to a colleague. It excludes 'more information only'.

Concrete follow-up rate by indicative product category

Rates are per category exposure. Products can sit in more than one category.



Action volume matters too: curriculum, assessment and digital categories generated more total signals because more products sat in those spaces.

Curriculum: 86 signals Assessment: 65 signals Edtech / digital strategy: 57 signals Staff CPD: 52 signals

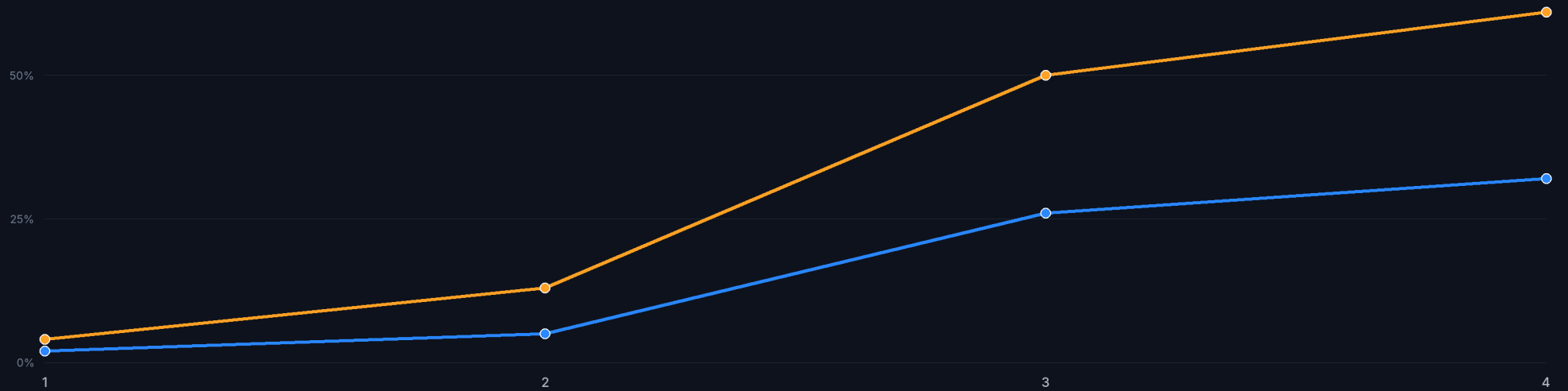
Relevance converts. Polish alone does not.

Presentation quality matters, but usefulness is the sharper commercial signal. Once leaders score usefulness at 3 or 4, follow-up rises steeply.

Follow-up rate by perceived usefulness score

Usefulness score is on a 1-4 scale.

— Any follow-up — Concrete action



1/4 usefulness

4% any follow-up

Very low conversion.

2/4 usefulness

13% any follow-up

Still mostly passive.

3/4 usefulness

50% any follow-up

A clear step change.

4/4 usefulness

61% any follow-up

Strongest engagement.

A strong demo is not the same as a buying signal

Across the term, suppliers generally presented well. But usefulness and price response sat lower, which is where sales conversations are usually won or lost.

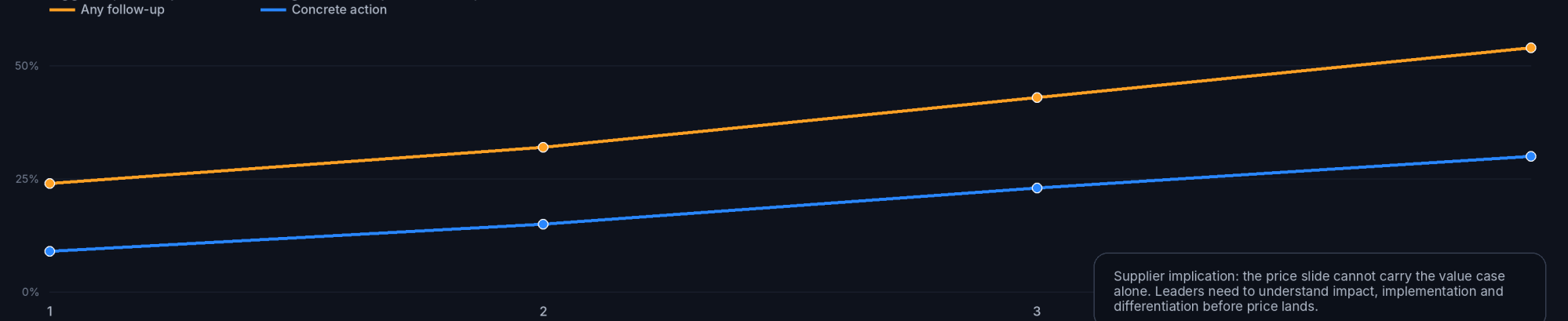
Average leader ratings

Ratings were captured on a 1-4 scale.



Price/value response is linked to follow-up

This suggests price objections often begin as value-justification questions.

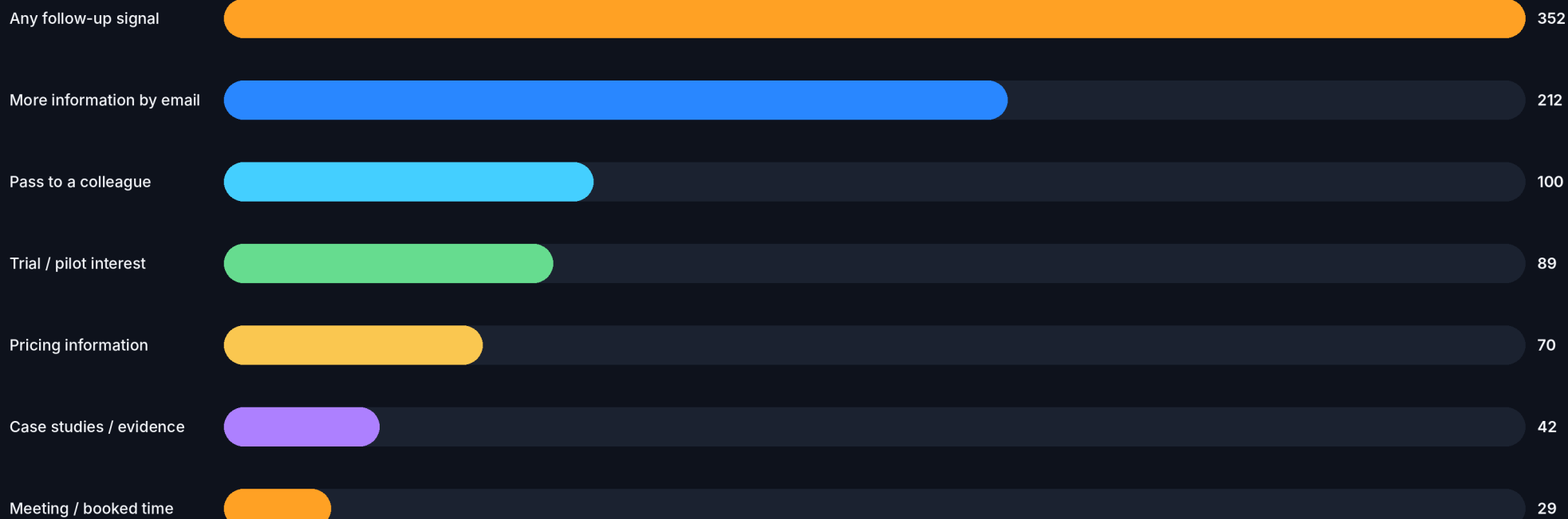


Interest often starts before a meeting is booked

Showcases generate several levels of commercial signal: information requests, evidence needs, colleague referrals, trials and meetings. Suppliers need assets ready for each step.

Follow-up signals generated across product records

Based on 858 product-feedback records. Multiple follow-up options could be selected.



What this means for companies

A 'send me more information' response is not the end of the process. It is permission to continue with the right evidence, pricing summary, colleague-forwardable material or trial pathway.

What this means for Winfield

The value is not just exposure. It is structured feedback, practical segmentation and a clearer read on who may be ready now, later or after internal discussion.

The biggest competitor is often existing provision

Budget matters, but the leading barrier this term was that schools already use something similar. Suppliers need to explain differentiation and why change is worth considering.

Reasons leaders gave for not requesting follow-up

Multiple reasons could be selected.



Supplier lesson

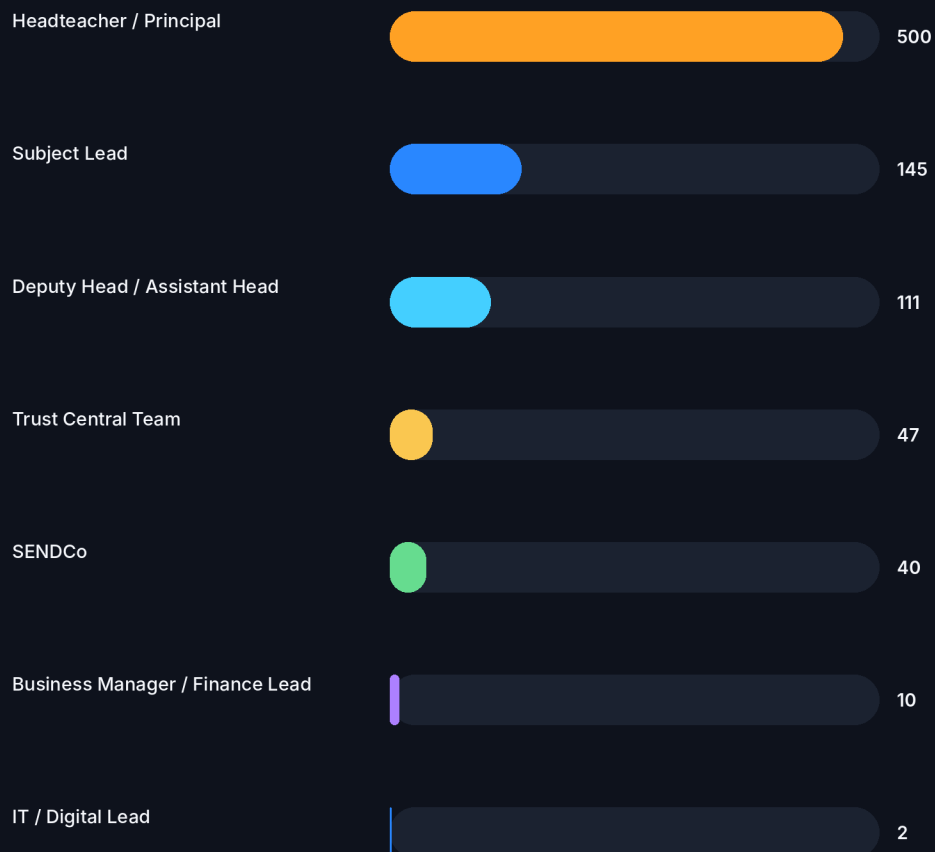
Do not only ask 'can they afford it?' Ask: what do they already use, what would we replace or improve, why should they change now, and what makes implementation feel low-risk?

The Headteacher remains the main gateway

Even where the product is curriculum, SEND, pastoral or assessment-led, leaders frequently identify the Headteacher or Principal as central to the decision.

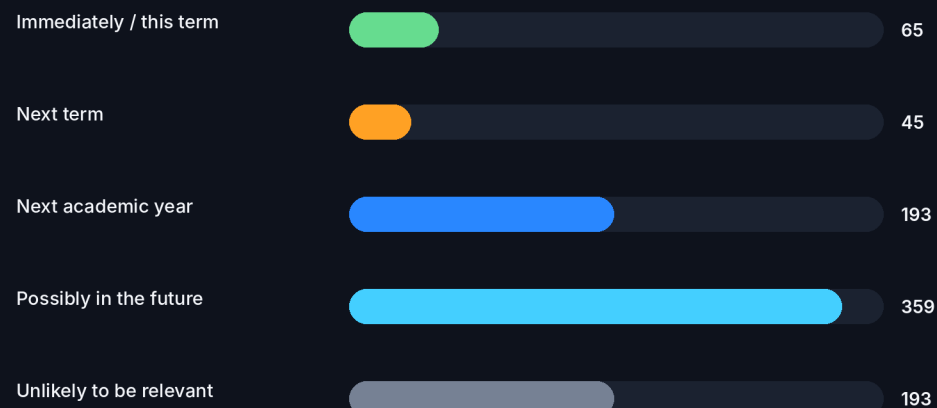
Likely decision-maker identified

This shows who leaders believe would lead or influence the decision.

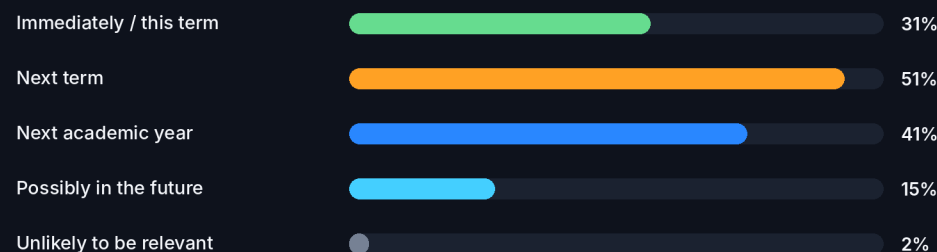


When products may become relevant

The buying cycle rewards patient follow-up. 'Not now' can still mean next term, next academic year or future planning.



Concrete action rate by timing signal



What EdTech companies should do differently

The strongest opportunities come when companies connect to a school priority, prove usefulness quickly and make the next step easy for a busy leader.

● Lead with priority

Name the school problem before describing the platform.

● Differentiate clearly

Explain what you replace, improve or make easier.

● Make value visible

Connect price to evidence, impact and workload saved.

● Speak to two audiences

Support the specialist user and the senior decision-maker.

● Prove usefulness

Show exactly who uses it, when, and what changes.

● Reduce implementation risk

Show onboarding, staff time, ownership and support.

● Prepare follow-up assets

Have pricing, case studies, trials and one-pagers ready.

● Plan beyond the first demo

Nurture future interest through school planning cycles.

Core takeaway Schools do not buy 'EdTech' in general. They buy credible answers to school problems that leaders already recognise.

Showcases are not just exposure

Winfield sessions give companies structured access to school leaders, practical product feedback, evidence of market fit and a clearer route into follow-up conversations.

The Winfield value loop



Want to test your product with school leaders?

Book a conversation to discuss the right route: a showcase, Product Discovery Sprint, one-to-one school leader meetings or MAT leader conversations.

[Book a meeting with Dave](#)

<https://calendar.app.google/9beN8wFYvweAwLJP9>



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