



Is it time to replace your school defibrillator?

A practical one-page check before spending on pads, batteries or a new AED

The short answer

An expensive pad or battery quote does **not automatically mean the AED must be replaced**. First identify the exact model, confirm compatible parts are still supported, and compare the full cost of keeping it with the whole-life cost of replacement.

1. CHECK THE DEVICE YOU HAVE

- ✓ Photograph the model label, serial number and manufacturer details.
- ✓ Check pad and battery expiry dates and the ready/fault indicator.
- ✓ Confirm the exact compatible part number before ordering anything.
- ✓ Ask the manufacturer or authorised technical support whether the model is supported or discontinued.

When replacement is worth comparing

- ✓ The device is at or beyond its documented anticipated service life.
- ✓ Correct batteries or pads are no longer available.
- ✓ The manufacturer no longer supports the model or necessary updates.
- ✓ A costly consumable for a very old device makes replacement competitive over the remaining life.

This is a comparison trigger, not a device-specific clinical recommendation. Exact model details matter.

2. BEFORE BUYING A REPLACEMENT

- ✓ Ask for the exact make and model - not just 'a school defibrillator'.
- ✓ List everything included: adult/paediatric capability, pads, battery, case, sign and preparation kit.
- ✓ Get pad and battery replacement prices, expected replacement intervals and availability.
- ✓ Check warranty length, anticipated service life, software support and any servicing charges.
- ✓ Compare the full whole-life cost against the DfE minimum specification before ordering.

Use the official route as a benchmark

The current DfE publication is **Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs): Guidance for schools**, January 2025. The purchasing section is on printed page 15 (PDF page index 14). It describes a reduced-cost arrangement negotiated with NHS Supply Chain for eligible settings, including schools, nurseries, playgroups and holiday/out-of-school providers.

Obtain the current price from the scheme/supplier. Do not rely on an old quoted figure. Buying through the arrangement is voluntary; Appendix A provides a useful minimum specification for comparing alternatives.

3. FINAL READINESS CHECK

- ✓ Location and access: visible, signposted and quickly reachable.
- ✓ Ongoing checks: ready indicator, pads, battery, cabinet and a recorded check routine.
- ✓ The Circuit: register the AED and keep availability and emergency-ready status current.
- ✓ Consumables: the BHF shop lists pads and batteries for several brands, but only buy after exact model compatibility is confirmed.

Trusted links

[DfE AED guidance for schools \(January 2025\)](#)

[BHF pads and batteries shop](#)

[Register and maintain details on The Circuit](#)

Important Never buy a battery or pad on appearance alone. Confirm the exact model and compatible part number with the manufacturer or an appropriate technical supplier.

This handout provides general information, not a technical assessment of a particular AED. Follow the AED manufacturer's instructions and seek appropriate technical support for your exact device.