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Introduction

Happy New Year!

We are coming back to school facing a very complex set of circumstances. The threat has now changed. In most cases (I hope) the risk is no longer so medically critical, but we now face a severe continuity risk and must expect higher levels of pupil and staff absence. Louise Malik has issued an updated Risk Assessment template which was sent to Heads yesterday. It covers all the things that we do to minimise spreading in school.

In the past when we have delivered online learning so successfully, we were in a situation of lockdown and had greater staff capacity. If we need to provide online learning this time because significant numbers of pupils are absent, then that will have to be delivered with much less staffing resource as schools will remain open, hopefully to most classes. We will be developing our plans at the Remote Learning Leaders meeting on Thursday. I have urged Headteachers to use their communications with parents to talk about how we are managing the continuity risks in school and to attempt to lower expectations as to what will be able to be delivered online if some pupils are absent. It seems unlikely to me that we will be able to offer nearly as much live teaching.

At Trust level we have suspended School Improvement activities this month to allow Heads to concentrate on continuity of provision. Sharon Roberts and her team will touch base briefly instead. We will keep governors up to date with events as they develop. We are preparing for serious disruption and hoping that it might not be as bad as predicted. Fingers crossed.

With best wishes,

Gary



Staffing in the Central Team

We are pleased to be able to announce some new appointments to the Central Team.

Fiz Forrest has been appointed as our Governance and Compliance Officer and is due to take up her post on 6th January. Fiz brings a wealth of experience in both school and trust governance to the Lighthouse Schools Partnership and we will communicate her contact details and priorities to all stakeholders in the next couple of weeks.

Diane Logan has been appointed as our Admin Assistant and will be starting with the Central Team on 17th January. Diane will be working in the mornings, Monday to Thursday each week.

Jane Norris has kindly agreed to cover the Admin Assistant role until Diane starts with the Central Team and to provide inductions and support to Fiz and Diane. Jane will be working 8.30 to 13.30 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays until 20th January.

Changes to Term Time Only Factors

The Central Team has prepared all of the necessary information to implement the changes to term time only factors in the January payroll (back dated to April 2020 as applicable). In doing so, a number of queries have been identified and we will be contacting schools about this today. Please can we ask you to prioritise your response to these questions so that we can meet the January payroll deadline. Once the queries have been resolved the HR Team will be inputting the amended factors into Civica on your behalf. We will also then return your completed spreadsheets and a template letter for you to share with your staff members ahead of the January pay day. You will also need to update the factors in Orovia to ensure that your salary costs project as accurately as possible. We would recommend updating your current working scenario wef 1st September 2021. If you have any questions on factors please contact the HR Team, or queries relating to Orovia, please contact the Finance Team.

Updated Policies

The updated Finance Policy was agreed by Trustees on 21st December. A copy of the agreed policy, with changes made since consultation highlighted in yellow, is available [here](#). The signed version will be on the website shortly and a link to it provided in next week's bulletin.

The updated Pay Policy, Redeployment Policy and Disciplinary Policy will also be issued in next week's bulletin.

School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) remit letter for 2022

The Secretary of State for Education has written a remit letter to Dr Mike Aldred, Chair of the School Teachers' Review Body asking for the STRB's recommendations on the 2022/23 and 2023/24 pay awards. The Secretary of State has referred the following matters for their recommendation:

- An assessment of the adjustments that should be made to the salary and allowance ranges for classroom teachers, unqualified teachers and school leaders to promote recruitment and retention, within the bounds of affordability across the school system as a whole and in the light of the Secretary of State's views on the need for an uplift to starting salaries to £30,000.

As part of this, recommendations for the pay awards for both 2022/23 and 2023/24.

The Secretary of State has asked the STRB to provide a report on these matters during May 2022 at the latest.

Preparing for retirement

Support Staff

The Avon Pension Fund will again be working with Affinity Connect in 2022, to offer Pre-Retirement Courses. The courses are designed to help scheme members plan for a positive retirement and will continue to be held virtually during 2022.

The course is designed for those who are thinking about retiring, taking their pension benefits within the next three years or those wanting to understand some of the key financial considerations about retirement. For further information regarding the dates of the courses and how to book, please visit the Avon Pension Fund website using the link below:

<https://www.avonpensionfund.org.uk/preparing-retirement>

The following courses have been arranged for 2022:

Online Course Date	Time	Online Course Date	Time
21 January 2022	1:00pm - 3:30pm	13 July 2022	9:30am - 12:00pm
4 February 2022	9:30am - 12:00pm	16 August 2022	9:30am - 12:00pm
9 March 2022	4:00pm - 6:30pm	2 September 2022	1:00pm - 3:30pm
27 April 2022	9:30am - 12:00pm	18 October 2022	4:00pm - 6:30pm
24 May 2022	4:00pm - 6:30pm	17 November 2022	1:00pm - 3:30pm
21 June 2022	1:00pm - 3:30pm	14 December 2022	1:00pm - 3:30pm

Teaching Staff

The Teachers' Pension Scheme are holding member presentations via Microsoft Teams. The presentations will cover the following topics:

- Benefits of being a member of the Scheme
- Types of members
- Contributions
- Different types of retirement
- How pensions are calculated
- Increasing your benefits
- Family benefits
- Teachers' Pensions website and 'My Pension Online'.

For further information regarding the dates of the courses and how to book, please visit the Teachers' Pension website using the link below: <https://bookwhen.com/>

Online Course Date	Time
20 January 2022	4 pm
24 February 2022	4 pm
24 March 2022	4 pm

Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) - updated

The DfE has updated the [Risk Protection Arrangement guidance](#) to reflect the new RPA pricing per pupil for academies from 1 September 2022. The section on 'What RPA covers' has also been updated with information about cyber cover.

This also provides information on the RPA costs for the current and next financial year:

- £19 per pupil, per year (1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022). This is in line with our budget assumptions
- £21 per pupil, per year (1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023). Please note that our budget assumptions estimated a cost of £20 per pupil for 2022-23 and beyond so this represents an increase.

SIMS Annual Entitlement

You may have received SIMS licence renewal information from ESS (formerly Capita). There is no need for you to respond as this contract is managed centrally and paid for from the core service charge. Please forward any communication you receive from ESS on to bwatts@lsp.org.uk

DfE Operational Guidance for Schools - updated

The DfE has updated its operational guidance for schools:

- [Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#) - updated the face coverings section to include the use of face coverings in classrooms for year 7 and above.
- [Protective measures for holiday or after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings for children during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) - updated the face coverings section to include the use of face coverings in classrooms and indoor activity rooms for adults and children aged 11 and above

The definitions of [Critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings](#) has also been updated and the list extended.

The [guidance on completing the education settings status form](#) has also been updated. From today (4th January), settings will be asked to provide information on the phased return process and the number of pupils absent due to attendance restrictions put in place to manage an outbreak or exceptional circumstances related to Covid-19.

Updated LSP Risk Assessment

We are now facing a new phase in the pandemic. In most cases the risk to health is not as medically critical, but we now face a severe continuity risk and are expecting very high levels of pupil and staff absence.

We have updated our template risk assessment following guidance from the DfE and Delegated Services. The changes are provided in amber text with old text crossed out. It is available in Foldr using the following path and link:

[LSP Communications\Covid 19 Resources\Reopening risk assessments\Risk Assessment January 2022\LSP Draft risk assessment template for January 2022.docx](#)

Public link: <https://foldr.lsp.org.uk/flinks/Jan22COVIDRA>

The main changes driven by Government guidance are:

- Changes to rules on self isolation
- Masks in classrooms in secondary schools
- Caution over international visits

In addition, in order to minimise transmission and, consequently, staff and pupil absences the risk assessment template also includes the following:

- Continuing existing arrangements for reducing mixing as much as possible within school
- Avoiding large gatherings eg assemblies unless additional mitigations are in place e.g. masks, social distancing between 'normal groups' and adequate ventilation
- Where additional mixing is required e.g. to cover staff shortages, staff should be encouraged to test on a daily basis when moving between groups or settings (more applicable in Primary than in Secondary)
- External staff eg supply teachers or peripatetic staff encouraged to test daily if coming in and out of different settings/groups

For Secondary schools the risk assessment needs to be updated, shared with staff for consultation and on websites by start of play on Wednesday 5th January.

For Primary schools the risk assessment should be updated, shared with staff for consultation and on websites by end of play on Friday 7th January

The Central Team are seeking an Employee Liaison Committee meeting this week to discuss how the above arrangements affect staff.

There are some key issues for us to face outside of the RA:

- Online learning

In the past, when we have done this so successfully, we were in a situation of lockdown and had greater staff capacity. If we need to provide online learning this time because significant numbers of pupils are absent, then that will have to be delivered with much less staffing resource. Janine will be sending round the link to the Remote Learning Leaders meeting in the afternoon this Thursday. Please ensure that every school/federation is represented. Please also use your communications with parents to talk about how we are managing the continuity risks in school and lower their expectations as to what will be able to be delivered online while your school remains fully open.

- School Improvement Visit and Leaders meeting

We have determined that it will not be possible to continue School Improvement Visits during January. Instead, we will arrange a short online 'catch up'. We also anticipate that the Leaders Meeting on 12th January will need to be online and focus on urgent business rather than strategic priorities.

- Support for pupils with SEND

Please be cautious about excluding pupils with SEND from school due to staff shortages - this is really only justifiable if you cannot ensure their Health and Safety. If you can ensure their Health and Safety but not the quality of their educational provision they should still be in school but perhaps with some explanations about any impact on provision. We encourage Headteachers to call Gary or Sharon for advice if they find themselves in this situation.

- Covering classes due to teacher absences

TAs and LSAs should only be used to lead a class if other options such as cover staff are unavailable. You may need to consider the remuneration for support staffing covering classes, particularly if this is without the supervision of a teacher (in class or online). Please contact the HR team for advice on this issue as required.

Please contact a member of the Central Team if you need any advice or support.

Self-isolation - clarification

The CST have flagged to the DfE a potential discrepancy in their bulletin. The DfE has confirmed that individuals who meet the necessary requirements can resume their usual day to day activities following a 2nd negative LFD result on day 7 as per national guidance.

You may have seen that the DfE bulletin used the wording “from day 8.” The DfE has clarified that this is because an LFD test would have to be done on day 7 early enough for a child to attend school, and the day 6 test done 24 hrs before that.

The DfE has confirmed that the guidance should be “on or after day 7” so that is in line with broader guidance and particularly given the priority for as many children and young people to be participating in face-to-face education as possible.

Funded air cleaning units for education and childcare settings

The Department for Education (DfE) will make up to 7,000 more air cleaning units available for poorly ventilated teaching spaces in state funded education settings, where quick fixes to improve ventilation are not possible. This is in addition to the 1,000 DfE funded air cleaning units previously announced for SEND and alternative provision settings, and the 350,000 CO2 monitors already delivered to settings.

All state funded primary and secondary schools, further education colleges and early years settings can apply for a funded air cleaning unit if they meet strict eligibility criteria. Special and alternative provision settings, including SEND units attached to mainstream units, that were not successful or did not apply during the first round are also eligible to apply during this round.

Further details, including the eligibility criteria, can be found in the [guidance on applying for an air cleaning unit](#).

Applications for all settings will close at 9am on Monday 17 January.

If your setting is not eligible for a funded unit, the [air cleaning marketplace](#) remains open, enabling you to purchase units at a suitable specification and competitive price.

Additional funding to support the cost of the Health and Social Care Levy

The Health and Social Care Levy provides for a temporary 1.25 percentage point increase to National Insurance contribution rates for the 2022 to 2023 tax year and revenue raised will go directly to support the NHS and equivalent bodies across the UK. From April 2023 onwards, the National Insurance contributions rates will decrease back to 2021 to 2022 tax year levels and will be replaced by a new 1.25% Health and Social Care Levy where the revenue will be ringfenced to support UK health and social care bodies.

In the 2022 to 2023 financial year, schools will be allocated £1.2 billion of this additional funding, to provide support for the costs of the [Health and Social Care Levy](#) and wider costs. This funding will be allocated through the schools supplementary grant 2022 to 2023.

North Somerset Council have been allocated £4,189,266 for this grant and Bath and North East Somerset £3,642,691. School-level allocations of the schools supplementary grant for the 2022 to 2023 financial year will be published and allocated by the DfE in spring 2022.

This additional funding will be provided in each year of the current spending review period. It is the DfE's intention that the payment of this additional funding will in the form of a separate grant will be for 2022 to 2023 only. The funding will be incorporated into core budget allocations for 2023 to 2024 where possible. So, for 5 to 16 schools, this will mean the funding being rolled into the schools national funding formula (NFF) for 2023 to 2024.

In recognition of the funding cycle for academies, academies will receive an additional allocation of the schools supplementary grant to cover April to August 2023, this is the period in advance of the funding being rolled into academies' core budget allocations through the NFF.

Schools will have the flexibility to prioritise their spending of the schools supplementary grant to best support the needs of their pupils and staff and address cost pressures, including those associated with the Health and Social Care Levy.

The funding for early years and post-16 provision in schools is provided in respect of the Health and Social Care Levy. The additional funding for mainstream school provision for pupils aged 5 to 16 is provided in respect of both the Health and Social Care Levy and wider cost pressures. This means that the funding rates in the schools supplementary grant are higher for 5 to 16 provision than early years or post-16.

The early years and post-16 elements of the schools supplementary grant will be allocated on a simple per-pupil basis.

Funding for 5 to 16 mainstream schools makes up the bulk of the additional £1.2 billion to be allocated through the schools supplementary grant. The 5 to 16 funding rates consist of the following three elements, which are based on factors already in the schools national funding formula:

- a basic per-pupil rate (with different rates for primary, key stage 3 and key stage 4)
- a lump sum paid to all schools, regardless of pupil numbers
- a per-pupil rate for pupils who are recorded as having been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years (FSM6), with different rates for primary and secondary pupils.

When confirming the school-level allocations of the schools supplementary grant the DfE will apply an area cost adjustment (ACA) to the funding rates below to take into account geographical variation in labour costs. The ACAs will be those used for the schools NFF for 2022 to 2023.

The base per-pupil funding rate for early years provision in schools, and for maintained nursery schools, will be £24 per pupil.

The base funding rates for 5-16 schools will be:

- basic per-pupil rate of £97 for primary pupils
- basic per-pupil rate of £137 for key stage 3 pupils
- basic per-pupil rate of £155 for key stage 4 pupils
- lump sum of £3,680
- FSM6 per-pupil rate of £85 per eligible primary pupil
- FSM6 per-pupil rate of £124 per eligible secondary pupil

The base per-student funding rate for 16-19 provision in schools, including 16 to 19 schools and academies, will be £35 per student.

School-level allocations will be published in spring 2022 and will show the total funding allocated for each applicable phase of provision. Conditions of grant will be published alongside the school-level allocations.

For early years, allocations will be calculated by multiplying the per-pupil funding rate (with the ACA applied) by the pupil count using data from the January 2022 census.

For 5 to 16 school provision, allocations will be calculated by multiplying the relevant funding rates (with the ACA applied) by the pupil count, and FSM6 pupil count, using data from the October 2021 school census. The allocations will also include the lump sum amount.

For post-16, allocations will be calculated by multiplying the per-student funding rate (with the ACA applied) by the student count using data from the 2022 to 2023 16 to 19 allocations.

The Central Team will estimate funding allocations for individual schools and share them with you shortly so that you can include additional estimated income for 2021-22 in your January budget monitor. Orovia has now been updated to include the additional NI costs and you should also update your projected income figures to incorporate the estimated grant once it has been estimated. We will hopefully have actual allocations for April 2022 to August 2023 to inform the 2022-23 budget planning process.

Pupil Premium Allocations 2021-22 and new rates wef April

The final allocations of Pupil Premium for FSM and FSM Ever 6 pupils have been published and the spreadsheet has been saved in Foldr [here](#).

Additionally, the Pupil Premium rates have been increased wef April 2022 as outlined below:

The PPG per-pupil rates for 2022 to 2023 are as follows:

Disadvantaged pupils	Pupil premium per pupil
Pupils in year groups reception to year 6 recorded as Ever 6 free school meals (FSM)	£1,385
Pupils in years 7 to 11 recorded as Ever 6 FSM	£985
Looked-after children (LAC) defined in the Children Act 1989 as one who is in the care of, or provided with accommodation by, an English local authority	£2,410
Children who have ceased to be looked after by a local authority in England and Wales because of adoption, a special guardianship order, or child arrangements order (previously known as a residence order)	£2,410
Pupils in year groups reception to year 11 recorded as Ever 6 service child or in receipt of a child pension from the Ministry of Defence	£320

We have updated the Pupil Premium Calculator in Foldr [here](#) with these revised rates.



Governance Update

Wishing all readers a Happy New Year.

SOURCE: THE KEY:

- 9 out of 10 leaders say early career framework reforms are creating extra workload (Schools Week).
- DfE launches market place for schools to buy air purifiers (Schools Week).
- Black children missing out most on physical activity (The Guardian).

SOURCE: NGA:

- DfE Funding announcements for dedicated Schools Grant for 22/23 have been published; same for PP Funding rates and allocation of the supplementary funding for Schools and High Needs, announced at spending review.
The announcements themselves have been published in [this press notice](#). The allocations tables and supporting documents which show how much funding each local authority will receive, and how that funding has been calculated, have also been [published](#).
- Ed. Sec. announces new “attendance alliance”. 17 person strong from multi agencies to reduce absence at school. Agencies included = Ofsted, Schools Minister, Children’s Commissioner, Chief Social Worker.
- Ed. Committee calls for written evidence as part of its enquiry into the educational challenges facing pupils from Gypsy, Roma and Travelling communities.

SOURCE: DfE:

- Covid-19 Workforce Fund now extended to cover absence costs 22/11/21 to Spring Term 2022.
- Guide launched 16/12 for Parents and Carers on on-line sexual harassment and how they can support children to stay safe on-line.
- DfE advice on MIS Systems Contract renewals: proceed as you would normally when procuring any contract. Multi-year contracts should be considered as a single total overall sum, rather than based on annual amounts. Check thresholds that apply and potential impact thereof.
- Ofsted: In addition to secondary schools not being inspected during week one of the new term, Ofsted, for a temporary period from start of January:
 - will not ask school leaders who are also inspectors, to undertake inspections
 - encourage settings “significantly” impacted by Covid related staff absences to ask for their inspection to be deferred
- Updated definition of Vulnerable Children for accessing face to face education; to support local decision making, now includes:
 - children known to Social Care Services in the past
 - children with challenging home circumstances
- Exams and Assessments in January to continue as planned

John Purcell