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Introduction

Dear Colleagues,

Those of you of a literary bent may know [TS Eliot's poem Journey of the Magi](#). It is not the most cheerful of Christmas poems(!) and I think it is uncoincidental that it has been on my mind this week. The opening line is, 'A cold coming we had of it...' I think that many of us would think the same of our journey to Christmas this year. It has been more gruelling and arduous than any that we have previously experienced. I'll resist listing all the factors, but they have affected us all. If ever we have needed a rest and time to reset, it is this upcoming holiday.

As we come to the end of this calendar year I am still counting my blessings. Our leaders and governors have stepped up to the uncongenial challenges that we have faced and shown real grit. We have tried as far as possible to absorb the pressures without passing them onto our colleagues who have less control over events than we do. Where we have needed to share information about budgets and cost reductions, we have explained clearly and shown grip. I think that we are generally making the best of it.

To be still more positive, I am profoundly grateful to be surrounded by excellent colleagues in both leadership in schools and in my own team. I constantly hear the needs of children and young people being put first and it is continually inspiring to work with principled and valued people.

This is the last weekly bulletin of this academic year, and the first bulletin for 2024 will be published on Wednesday 10 January.

Thank you to all for your hard work this year and the difference that you are making in our schools.

Have a really lovely Christmas holiday.

Gary Lewis

Chief Executive



Staff changes in the LSP Central Team

There will be few changes within the LSP Central Team at the end of this term:

- Shireen Hayes is leaving our school improvement team at the end of December. Shireen is moving to a leadership role with E-Act and we offer her our thanks and best wishes for her new post.
- Jackie Miles is moving on from our HR team to be HR Lead in the new Leaf Trust in South Gloucestershire. We also express our gratitude to Jackie for her work with us and congratulations on her new role.

Differing term dates and Central Team availability over the holiday period

Many of you will be aware that the term dates for North Somerset and BANES differ slightly for the end of Term 2 and start of Term 3:

	Last day of Term 2	First day of Term 3
BANES Schools	Friday 15 December	Tuesday 2 January
North Somerset Schools	Wednesday 20 December	Thursday 4 January
A reminder that 27-29 December are Trust Closure Days.		

The LSP Central Team are working on North Somerset term dates. This means that any colleagues within the Central Team who are term time only will be back at work from **Thursday 4 January 2024**. Apart from the closure days, mentioned above, all year round colleagues will be available across the holiday period, and will set 'out of office' replies if/when they are on holiday.

Also, on **Wednesday 20 December** the LSP Central Team will not be available on the main phone line/emails from 12.30pm. However please do call a member of the Central Team SLT on their mobiles should you have any problems or urgent issues you need support with.

Christmas Card for all LSP Staff

Gary Lewis has a message of festive well-wishes for all LSP colleagues.

We will send this electronic Christmas card directly to Headteachers on:

- **Thursday 14 December** for schools in BANES
- **Tuesday 19 December** for schools in North Somerset

Headteachers - please can you forward this onto all your staff before the end of your school term.

North Somerset Council - SEND Funding Consultation

As we mentioned in last week's bulletin North Somerset Council (NSC) are currently running their annual consultation on funding arrangements for the 2024-25 financial year which includes SEND funding.

The Top Up Funding (TUF) consultation spreadsheet shows four models. NSC have taken the SEND numbers for each school based on the January 2023 census so numbers may look different to those currently in your school now. The impact of each model on each of our schools can be seen and it does not make great reading: if we compare the proposed TUF figures to the current figures we can see that they are significantly less. We know that NSC are seeking to establish a sustainable high needs block as directed by the government but we also know that, by law, they will need to fund what is written within Section F of Education Health Care Plans (EHCP).

In regards to responding/choosing between the four models; although we have been given the funding for each band of TUF, we have not been provided with the descriptors of what kinds of needs would warrant which band.

I have requested this information from North Somerset Council but have not yet received this. Until we have this information it is challenging to speculate which model will be the best to meet the needs of our pupils. Myself and Gary Lewis are attending the North Somerset SEND meeting today (Wednesday 13 December) and will be raising this matter and requesting an extension to the consultation period.

Once we have the full set of figures we can then respond formally to the consultation. I will keep you updated.

Debbie Coker
Director of Inclusion

School Leaders' Meeting - Wednesday 17 January

The next School Leaders' Meeting takes place on **Wednesday 17 January 2024**.

It is being held at Nailsea Baptist Church and starts at 8.30am.

[Click here](#) to view the agenda for this meeting.



Health and Safety - Decorative 'Fairy' Lights

Following a student recently receiving quite a nasty electric shock, from a set of decorative lights, at one of our schools please ensure that the checks below have been carried out on any mains operated fairy lights you may have on display on your school sites. This incident was considered a RIDDOR incident and as such was reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

- All decorative/fairy lights need to be PAT tested
- A visual inspection on the full length of lights needs to take place; checking for exposed wire and damaged lights/bulbs. Please be mindful that the lights switching on does not necessarily mean that there are no faults, a visual inspection should still take place.
- A risk assessment should be in place; students should only come in to contact with lights after the above checks have been completed and full safety instructions should also be given to them. Lights should not be left on for excessive periods of time (and certainly not overnight). Lights and transformer boxes should not be adjacent to combustible materials.

Going forward we would strongly recommend that battery operated lights are used rather than mains electric ones. As and when mains operated lights break/expire they should be replaced with battery operated lights to mitigate any risks.

Energy Sparks reminder - Action required

You should have received an email from Energy Sparks asking for your commitment to sign up for a new year. Please can we ask that you respond to the email if you would like to continue with their programme. You will have the ability to monitor your energy usage, and access to numerous resources from them.

Before making a decision, you may like to check your dashboard to review the current energy saving recommendations for your school, and our suggested pupil activities to help you reduce your energy usage.

Any questions, then please email [Steph Franklin, Sustainability and Project Manager](#).



[Click here](#) to download this poster to display in your school



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Reminder: Early December pay day date

A reminder that the pay day date for December is **Friday 15 December**.

Wellbeing support for staff

Individuals may find this time of year can be challenging and stressful for a wide range of reasons and the recent inquest into the death of Ruth Perry has again highlighted the pressures that can be felt by those working within the education sector. Therefore we wanted to issue a reminder about wellbeing support helplines available for colleagues:

All LSP staff have access to a 24 hour confidential counselling helpline.

LSP confidential counselling helpline: 08000 280 199 (employer code: MHA179563)

In addition to this, [Education Support](#) is a UK charity dedicated to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of everyone working in education. They have a free 24/7, confidential helpline, and offer immediate crisis support with a qualified counsellor.

Education Support Helpline: 08000 562 561.

Please share these details with staff within your school(s).



Clerk Networks during Term 3

I will be holding online drop-in sessions for LSP Clerks from Term 3 so that we can start sharing ideas and good practice and with a number of new clerks recently joining the trust it is a good opportunity to welcome them into our team.

I'll shortly be sending out the Teams invite for the one-hour meetings which will start on **Wednesday 10 January at 1.00pm** on a fortnightly basis. I'd be open to changing the day or time if it proved difficult for many to join. Each session will typically include a short presentation on a specific area but will mostly provide the chance for you to bring your own questions/thoughts/ideas for discussion.

The topic for the first meeting will be the LGB minutes template that I recently circulated and there will also be an opportunity to discuss other matters and ask questions. I would very much welcome any suggestions for discussion topics in advance of the network meetings.

Chris Hills

Governance Professional

Resources from SEND funding law session

Thank you again to all those who attended the SEND funding law session with Garry Freeman on Monday 3 December.

We are still working on a guidance document/coordinated approach as to how we tackle funding with our Local Authorities following Garry's session - Debbie Coker, Director of Inclusion, will share this when it is ready.

[Click here](#) to view the slides that were presented and a recording of the session.



Reminder: Ofsted Training Session for Governors

Neil Lankester, Director of School Improvement, is running an online webinar on **Thursday 18 January from 6.30 - 7.30pm** covering Ofsted training for Governors.

The session will cover:

- The role of governors in the inspection framework
- How to prepare in the build-up to inspection
- What to expect during the inspection

To sign up for this session please [click here](#).

Clerks - please can you circulate this bulletin item to your Local Governing Body so they can access the sign up link should they wish to attend.

Reminder: Primary Moderation Sign Up

We are hosting LSP Moderation Sessions during the week beginning Monday 15 January 2024. at St Peter's Primary.

Year Group	Date	Time
Reception/EYFS	Tuesday 16 January 2024	8.30-11.30am
Year 1	Friday 19 January 2024	8.30-11.30am
Year 2	Tuesday 16 January 2024	1.00-4.00pm
Year 3	Thursday 18 January 2024	1.00-4.00pm
Year 4	Thursday 18 January 2024	8.30-11.30am
Year 5	Monday 15 January 2024	8.30-11.30am
Year 6	Monday 15 January 2024	1.00-4.00pm

Please ensure you have completed the online booking form/ask teachers to book onto the LSP moderation sessions [using this online form](#) by 12noon on **Wednesday 20 December 2023**.



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Upcoming Lighthouse Learning Sessions and CPD Networks

Please email [Lighthouse Learning](mailto:info@lighthouselearning.co.uk) if you have any questions about the below events.

Date	Event	Audience
Term 3		
15 January onwards	Primary Moderation Week. More details above.	Primary Staff
Monday 15 January 3.45-5.00pm	Assessment Network (Primary). Online	Primary Curriculum Leads
Thursday 18 January 6.30-7.30pm	Ofsted Training for Governors. Online Focusing on preparing for an Ofsted inspection including the phone call with the lead inspector Click here to register for this webinar.	All Governors
Monday 22 January	SEND Network. Online More details to be circulated shortly.	SENDCos
Tuesday 23 January 5.30 - 6.30pm	NEW: Introduction to Primary Assessment for Primary Governors. Online Introduction to Primary Assessment. Session will support you to understand and challenge primary assessment data. Click here to register for this webinar.	Primary Governors
Thursday 8 February 6:30 - 7:30pm	Pupil Premium Training. Online. As part of their role governors should understand how Pupil Premium is spent in their school, why and how the impact of this is monitored. Click here to register for this webinar.	All Governors (PP links)

KEY LINKS, DATES AND DEADLINES

These reminders do not replace the Annual Planner so please ensure you are checking this regularly.

Please note the following links will only work for those who already have access to the relevant site or folder. If you feel you need to be given permission to access something please [let us know](#).

[Click here to access the Annual Planner \(via Sharepoint\)](#)

[Click here to access an index of previous bulletin articles](#)

[Click here to access previous editions of the LSP weekly bulletin](#)

DATE	KEY DATE OR DEADLINE	FAO
Wednesday 17 January	School Leaders' Meeting @ Nailsea Baptist Church	Headteachers



Merry Christmas!

