News Bulletin



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Issue 15: 10 January 2024

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Introduction

Dear Colleagues,

Happy New Year and very best wishes for the term ahead.

In the week ahead you will be getting a copy of the new relaunched staff newsletter, now called The Beacon. Our new Communications Officer Leah Evans has done a complete refresh of the look and function of the publication and I have been persuaded to record a video introduction. We will also be directly emailing The Beacon to all staff. The theme for this edition is CPD. This relaunch is part of a renewed priority on communications across the Trust. Let us have your feedback.

Another change for the start of the new calendar year comes in the arrival of Suzy Devine to the Central Team. Suzy joins us as our Lead Teacher for SEND and she will be supporting Debbie as we aim to scale up our service on this most significant of areas. Welcome Suzy.

As I write I have just completed the new Ofsted Inspector training launched in the wake of Ruth Perry's death last year. The advice is all very obvious and one might be surprised that it needs saying at all. What was incredibly reassuring was the opening address from Sir Martyn Oliver, the new HMCI. It felt quite different and it is good to have someone from the school sector in charge again. Sir Martyn was very clear that he sees no separation between the factors that motivate school leaders and the objectives of Ofsted. He encouraged us to see the inspectorate as working in partnership with schools and he is very clear that he wants more serving practitioners in the workforce. This is very timely and we will be pushing to have more of our Heads' long dormant applications to Ofsted picked up for training.

Have a great week and see you soon.

Gary Lewis

Chief Executive



Sue Betts

It is with great sadness that I need to report the death of Mrs Sue Betts. Sue was a very long standing member of staff at High Down Infants and had recently been working as a Teaching Assistant. She was ELSA trained and played a very significant role in smoothing the path to success for a great many children over several decades. Her death was sudden and unexpected. We extend our sympathy to Sue's family and to all our colleagues at High Down.

Gary

Implementation of the Reserves Policy

The Trustee's Finance Committee reviewed the implementation of the Reserves Policy at its meeting on Tuesday 19 December in light of the year end projections completed by schools.

The Committee was encouraged and thankful for the work being undertaken by schools to set sustainable budgets. Projected reserves at the end of the 2024-25 financial year are now with our target range of 3% to 5% although we are still currently projecting an overall in year deficit in 2024-25 of £1.7m. However, we are still projecting an in year deficit of over £4m in 2025-26 and this would exceed the total reserves available to us. In this context, the committee agreed that we are not in a position to relax our approach to reserves and that, as we are still projecting an overall deficit by the end of 2025-26, our discipline of requiring schools to set in year balanced budget for 2024-25 and 2025-26 needs to remain.

Having said this, there are a small number of schools for whom setting a balanced budget, whilst maintaining at least minimum staffing levels, is not proving possible for 2024-25. There is a further small group of schools for whom setting a balanced budget in 2024-25 will jeopard-ise their improvement journey. The Finance Committee have recognised this position and asked the Senior Leadership Team of the Central Team to agree, on a case by case basis, where exceptions to the requirement to set an in year balanced budget in 2024-25 can be made. Any exceptions will only be made for 2024-25 and the requirement to set an in year balanced budget in 2025-26 will remain in place for all schools.

Responses to NSC consultations funding and top up

On Friday 1 December, North Somerset Council issued a consultation on <u>school funding arrange-</u> <u>ments for the 2024-25 financial year, incorporating mainstream Primary and Secondary school</u> <u>Top up Funding</u>.

The consultation on school funding arrangements closed on Friday 5 January but the consultation on top up funding has been extended until **Wednesday 21 February.** More information on the top up funding consultation and wider SEND funding will be shared at the School Leaders meeting on Wednesday 17 January, in the first instance.

Much of the school funding consultation was not relevant to LSP schools as no changes were proposed for the elements that impact academies. A copy of the Trust's response to the school funding consultation is <u>available here</u>.

Upcoming Consultations:

Core Services Charge

We have planned to consult on changes to the Core Services Charge between **Tuesday 16** January and Friday 9 February. These are the same timescales as the consultation on the Operational Review.

Clearly the Operational Review could have impacts on the core services charge, but any such changes can be made without the need for further consultation (as the consultation will have taken place through the Operational Review consultation process). There are, however, some changes that we would like to make to the Core Services Charge that are outside of the Operational Review, and these still require consultation. We will, therefore, continue with our planned consultation of proposed changes to the Core Services Charge and this will commence on Tuesday 16 January alongside the Operational Review consultation.

Please note, we are not planning to make changes to the Scheme of Delegation for 2024-25 and, therefore, this will not be included in this planned consultation.

Operational Review

As part of the Organisation Review: Resourcing our Partnership, we will be sharing detailed consultation documents with key stakeholders in the next few days via a special edition of the LSP Newsbulletin.

Part of the consultation period will include face to face sessions. We thought it may be helpful to share the dates of these so that you can pencil them into your diary now. We have taken on board feedback from previous consultations and to ensure maximum opportunity for face-to-face engagement for all involved sessions have been organised for specific stakeholders.

Sessions will be held on:

Session	Stakeholders
22 January 11.00am - 12.15pm	Heads and SBMs
24 January 6.00-7.15pm	Heads, Chairs and Governors
29 January 4.30-5.45pm	Heads and SBMs
6 February 6.00-7.15pm	Heads, Chairs and Governors

More details on the sessions, and the consultation period itself, will follow in the coming days. Full and honest engagement with the consultation when released is highly encouraged and will be very much appreciated.

Complaints Policy

Thank you to all those who provided feedback and comments as part of the consultation on the Trust-wide complaints policy in Term 2.

The Trustees have now authorised the <u>latest version of the Complaints Policy</u> and this has been published on the <u>LSP website</u> and on <u>Foldr</u>. Please ensure you are directing parents/carer to this document and are handling any complaints received since the 12 December 2023 under this version of the policy.

Key changes to highlight for schools include:

- Schools are now required (from start of Term 3) to send copies of any formal complaint responses to <u>enquiries@lsp.org.uk</u> so that these can be logged centrally to identify any trends across the Trust.
- Clearer guidelines and expectations for parents/carers in regards to outlining their reasons to progress their complaint to the next stage of the policy.
- Clarification on when the complaints policy may need to be suspended due to an external agency investigation
- Flow chart to outline the process and timescales of the policy.

If you have any questions about the policy, or need any support, please do not hesitate to <u>email me</u>.

Eleanor Capel-Davies, Head of Administration

DfE Policy Consultation - Gender Questioning Children

On Tuesday 19 December the Department for Education (finally) <u>released their draft guidance</u> for schools regarding 'gender questioning children'. This is now open for feedback and consultation until **Tuesday 12 March 2024**. You are welcome to make your own responses to this consultation should you so wish by <u>clicking here</u>.

We have reviewed the proposed guidance and feel that the current <u>LSP Equalities and Diversity</u> <u>Policy</u> we have in place is more than fit for purpose. Should there be any significant changes to the DfE guidance, following consultation, we will review our policy accordingly if required.

Reminder for parents - applying for primary school deadline

The national closing date for applying to start school and junior school in September 2024 is 11.59pm on Monday 15 January 2024. To assist with completion please can our primary schools include the following paragraph in their newsletter/emails home to parents/carers this week:

Last chance to apply for 2024 primary school places

Do you have a child due to start school (Reception) or transfer to a junior school (Year 3) in September 2024? Have you applied for their school place yet?

Applications for primary school places must be submitted before next Monday (15 January). This applies to all children starting school for the first time in September 2024 (those born between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2020), as well as children moving from infant to junior school (even if they are already attending an infant school connected to or on the same site as a junior school).

Applications are made directly with your local authority, even if you are applying for a school within a different area. For more information, including the application form, please follow the relevant link depending on where you live:

Information for those living in North Somerset:

https://n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-09/Parents%20Guide%20to%20Starting%20School%20and%20Transferring%20to%20Junior%20School%202024-25.pdf

Information for those living in BANES:

https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Primary%20Admissions%20Booklet%202024-25.pdf

Information for those living in Bristol:

https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/schools-learning-and-early-years/school-admissions/ primary-admissions/primary-apply



Grant funding to improve grass pitches

CST have made us aware of an opportunity to receive grant funding to improve the quality of your grass pitches from the Premier League, The FA and Government's <u>Football Foundation</u>.

Through its <u>Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund</u>, the Foundation is providing eligible clubs and organisations with tapered six-year grants of up to £12.8k per pitch to help sustain good quality grass pitches or enhance pitches in need of improvement.

To access this support, you need to inspect your grass pitches using the Foundation's free web app, <u>PitchPower</u>. You'll then receive a bespoke PitchPower Assessment Report from the Grounds Management Association. Along with tailored pitch maintenance advice and recommendations, this report can help to secure funding to enhance pitches.

PitchPower is available to schools, universities and other educational settings that host community football outside on evenings and weekends. The PitchPower inspection window is open until Sunday 31 March 2024. To find out more about PitchPower and how to get your pitch match fit, visit the <u>website</u>.



ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPDATES



Formal invitation, and sign up form, to follow very shortly.

We are delighted to have a presentation from Mohammed Saddiq, Lord-Lieutenant of Somerset and Chair of the Bristol Future Talent Partnership at this event.

Mohammed is passionate about the environment and sustainability and also a keen advocate of business getting involved with communities to help address issues of inequality and social mobility. Event is free of charge and includes a complementary breakfast provided by Aspens.

HR UPDATES

Employment Law Update - Changes to the fines for employing an illegal worker

The fine for employing an individual without the requisite 'right to work in the UK' will increase to a maximum of £45,000 per illegal worker, where it is the employer's first office. The maximum fine for an employer who has repeatedly offended will increase to £60,000 per illegal worker. Right to work (RTW) checks must include either a manual RTW check, a RTW check using IDVT (which the Trust does not use), or a Home Office online RTW check.

For further information or assistance please see the employers guide or contact the HR team.

Budget Forecast as at 31/10/23

Thank you to School Business Managers, and any other staff involved, for producing your first budget forecast report for the 2023-24 financial year. The Central Team have now checked your submissions for reasonableness and have reported the collated information to the Board of Trustees Finance Committee meeting on 19 December. The <u>feedback from our quality assurance checks can be found here.</u> Please enter your LA and DfE number to find the information for your school. Please be aware that we do not have sufficient information to determine whether your projections are completely accurate or not. Checks have been carried out for reasonableness and information has been provided to indicate any areas that may need further investigation to ensure that your projections are accurate. If you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact the Central Team.

Additionally, we have included some projections for your electricity and gas expenditure as part of the feedback (not oil and also not for schools who have joined the Trust since January 2023) based on up-to-date tariffs for electricity and gas and last year's usage. Please use this information provided to support you with your next budget forecast. However, we recommend that you review recent invoices and consider likely usage for the year and also build in a contingency to your projections.

Outcome of revenue outturn position at the end of the 2022-23 financial year, and analysis required

The audit and the Annual Accounts completion process is now complete, and your final revenue and capital balances are available in your Master Scenario in IMP.

We are asking those schools with the largest variances to review their final revenue outturn against their April monitor. The schools that will need to undertake this exercise are those where the final revenue outturn position varies to that submitted in April by more than £20,000 or 1% of Core Services Charge income (whichever is the greater). The Central Finance Team are in the process of preparing the data to share with these schools to support schools with this process, but schools will need to consider the reasons for their variances.

The purpose of this review will be to:

- Ensure that there is an understanding at school, LGB and Trust level of why any significant variation between earlier projections and the actual outturn have occurred.
- Identify any changes in practices required at an individual school level, or at Trust level, to our processes and procedures and for this to inform our investigation into alternative budget planning and monitoring software.
- Identify and resolve any training issues.

You are asked to complete the review by **Wednesday 31 January** in order for an analysis to be reported to the Finance Committee at their February meeting.

Finance Drop-in Support Sessions for SBMs & other school finance staff

As discussed at the joint SBM Hub Meeting at the end of last term, the Finance Team are offering drop-in sessions to help support schools with their budget forecasting and other finance training needs.

These sessions are in addition to the support and training already provided and have been organised to provide SBMs opportunities to work alongside members of the team to help build confidence with IMP and other systems and processes. These sessions will all take place at our Gordano School so we can easily deploy members of the team depending upon uptake for each session. The dates of the sessions are as follows:

- Monday 22 January 1.15pm 4.30pm
- Tuesday 20 February 9.15am 12.30pm
- Monday 18 March 9.15am 12.30pm
- Tuesday 30 April 1.15pm 4.30pm
- Thursday 16 May 9.15am 12.30pm
- Monday 20 May 9.15am 12.30pm
- Tuesday 18 June 9.15am 12.30pm
- Monday 15 July 9.15am 12.30pm

Please <u>email Sue Warneford-Thomson</u> to book a place for a session in advance of turning up as space will be limited.



DfE Funding updates: Pupil Premium

Pupil Premium rates will be increasing with effect from Monday 1 April 2024 as outlined below.

The new rates have now been updated on IMP in time to be reflected in your December budget monitoring. The new rates, along with updated eligible pupil numbers from the October 23 pupil census, will determine Pupil Premium for the period April to August 2024. Please ensure that you have reviewed and updated IMP with eligible pupil numbers for 2023/24 to enable IMP to calculate Pupil Premium income as accurately as possible.

	Existing funding		Funding wef 1 st April 2024	
Pupil eligibility criteria	Funding for each Primary-aged pu- pil	Funding for each Secondary-aged pu- pil	Funding for each Primary-aged pu- pil	Funding for each Secondary-aged pupil
Pupils eligible for FSM or have been eligible in past 6 years	£1,455	£1,035	£1,480	£1,050
Previously Looked after pupils	£2,530	£2,530	£2,570	£2,570
Looked After Pu- pils	£2,530	£2,530	£2,570	£2,570
Service pupils	£335	£335	£340	£340

DfE Funding updates: Teachers' Pay Additional Grant 2024-25 (TPAG)

As previously notified, TPAG will continue for 2024-25 and the DfE will publish school level allocations in May 2024. IMP is currently projecting TPAG across all years as we expect this funding to be incorporated into core funding allocations for 2025-26.

Schools do not need to take any action on this yet.



Upcoming LSP Chairs' Forums and New Governor Training

LSP Chairs' Forum	An opportunity to discuss latest governance themes with other LSP Chairs and share best practice. Session led by Chair of Trustees and CEO. The sessions are duplicates of each other so Chairs only need to come to one of the two (not both).	Tuesday 23 January 7.00-8.00pm and Wednesday 24 Janu- ary
LSP New Governor Training Session	An introduction to Governance within the LSP: for new governors and current governors looking to re- fresh their skills. Session led by Chair of Trustees. The sessions are duplicates of each other so those who wish to attend only need to come to one of the two (not both).	Tuesday 30 January 7.00-8.30pm and Wednesday 31 Janu- ary 10.30am-12.00noon

MS Teams Invitations for these sessions will be sent by the end of this week.

Clerks - when you receive the MS Teams details for the New Governor sessions please can you forward this onto your Local Governing Body so Governors can attend should they so wish. Any questions please send me an email.

Chris Hills, Governance Professional

CPD UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Moderation Sessions

Thank you very for ensuring your relevant staff are signed up for moderation sessions which take place next week. The sessions will be held at St Peter's Primary School in the 'English Hub Room' on the following dates:

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

All those signed up to attend a moderation session(s) have been emailed earlier this week, confirming the details they need and what they need to bring along with them.

Trust-wide moderation sessions are an important opportunity not only for LSP teachers to moderate their assessments but also to network with their fellow year group colleagues. We are looking forward to the sessions and the sharing the great practice from our classrooms.

An update to our School Improvement Strategy

Following my appointment as Director of School Improvement, a review of the Trust School Improvement Strategy has now been completed. Consultation with the Education Team and the Headteacher Reference Group has now been completed and I am pleased to say that our updated School Improvement Strategy is now ready for publication. <u>The strategy can be accessed</u> <u>here along with a summary of key changes.</u>

Training on the new strategy

- The Central Education Team have been training on this document over the last term and this will continue across the year particularly around SIP visits and the use of the updated categorisation criteria.
- Headteacher meetings are being used to unpick sections of this documentation, between Terms 4 and 6 we will be looking at the updated categorisation criteria and the link to the SEF and SDP.
- Governors and Trustees will be able to attend an online session on the updated strategy in Term 4 (date to be confirmed).

Neil Lankester, Director of School Improvement

OFSTED Briefing: The Features of a High Quality English Curriculum - Wednesday 24 January, 4.00 - 5.15pm

Unlocking Excellence and Ilsham English Hubs are delighted to offer this briefing led by Kirsty Godfrey, HMI. It will be hugely beneficial for HTs, English/Reading/Writing Leads and EY Leads to attend.

Kirsty Godfrey HMI - 24th January 4-5.15pm

Sign up here: <u>https://forms.office.com/e/xpGD6jdwhk</u>

The session with Kirsty Godfrey (Senior His Majesty's Inspector) will explore the features of a high-quality early English curriculum, including:

- Communication and language in Early Years (EY)
- Developing pupils' language comprehension and spoken language beyond EY
- Systematic, synthetic phonics
- Ensuring that all pupils secure important foundational knowledge (word reading and transcription)
- Fluency and reading in KS2

The session will draw upon research from Ofsted's English research review, EY best start in life research and from inspection insights.

Term 3 SEND staff meeting training sessions

Please find below the links for the SEND staff meeting with Sally Franklin on Wednesday 17 January and the replacement Autumn term one for Wednesday 7 February. Sally is a fantastic trainer and so these sessions promise to be good! Both sessions will be appropriate for SENDCOs and teachers. You may have already received these links via email.

Barriers to effective SEND provision - Wednesday 17 January

This session will discuss some of the key barriers schools face in delivering effective SEND provision and will offer some practical, manageable steps in addressing these. We will look at challenges around the identification and assessment of SEND, interventions, working with partners, provision mapping and how to demonstrate a whole school approach to SEND.

When: Wednesday 17 January 2024Time: 3.30 - 5pmTopic: Barriers to effective SEND provisionAccess the Zoom Meeting Link here.Meeting ID: 825 7172 8218Passcode: 726724

SEND in mainstream schools - EEF guidance - Wednesday 7 February

This session will explore the five EEF recommendations around special educational needs in mainstream schools, and how they can be used practically by teachers and SENCOs to embed good practice across the school.

When: Wednesday 7 February 2024Time: 3.30 - 5pmTopic: EEF SEND Guidance and RecommendationsAccess the Zoom Meeting Link here.Meeting ID: 812 4208 4908Passcode: 294606



CPD UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES



Upcoming Lighthouse Learning Sessions and CPD Networks

Please email Lighthouse Learning 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
Wednesday 17 & Thursday 18 January 3.30-5.00pm	Secondary Curriculum Networks (English is on Thursday 18 January)	Secondary 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 <u>Click here</u> 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. <u>Click here</u> to register for this webinar.	Primary Governors

continued below

CPD UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Upcoming Lighthouse Learning Sessions and CPD Networks

Date	Event	Audience	
Term 3			
Tuesday 23 January 7.00-8.00pm	LSP Chairs' Forum. An opportunity to discuss latest governance themes with other LSP Chairs and share best practice.		
and .	Session led by Chair of Trustees and CEO.	Chairs of LGBs	
Wednesday 24 January 10.30-11.30am	The sessions are duplicates of each other so Chairs only need to come to one of the two (not both).		
	MS Teams Link to be circulated this week.		
Tuesday 30 January 7.00-8.30pm	LSP New Governor Training Session. An introduc- tion to Governance within the LSP: for new gover- nors and current governors looking to refresh their skills.		
and	Session led by Chair of Trustees.	Covernors	
<i>and</i> Wednesday 31 January	The sessions are duplicates of each other so those who wish to attend only need to come to one of the two (not both).	Governors	
	MS Teams Link to be circulated this week to Clerks to forward on.		
	Pupil Premium Training. Online. As part of their role governors should understand how Pupil Premium is spent in their school, why	All Governors (PP	
6:30 - 7:30pm	and how the impact of this is monitored. <u>Click here to register for this webinar</u> .	links)	







'Release Your Potential' with our new NPQs

From March 2024 Lighthouse Learning are delighted to be a delivery partner with The Foundation for Educational Leadership delivering National Professional Qualifications (NPQs), exclusively for Lighthouse Schools Partnership Staff, in: Senior Leadership (NPQSL) Leading Teaching (NPQLT)

Free of Charge

Delivered through a combination of live seminars, online learning modules, coaching and in person sessions.

FIND OUT MORE <u>WWW.LSP.ORG.UK/NPQS</u>



CPD UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES



School Leaders and Parish Partners' Conference

Join us for our 2024 School Leaders conference where we will be welcoming guest speakers Dr Margaret James and Paul Rusby.



Dr Margaret James National director of SIAMS for the Church of England



14 or 15 March 2024

9:00am - 4:00pm

Flourish House, Wells



Paul Rusby National Leader of Education, Primary Consultant Leader and **Improvement Partner**

£45 per delegate (card only)

Sign up here



'Our school, our legacy'. Great spiritual leadership in Church Schools ensures that ethos does enhance outcomes for all. What is great spiritual leadership in the context of a Church School in the 21st Century and how do we work in partnership to secure this?

https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/school-parish-conference

Funded by Department for Education

English Hubs Unlocking Excellence

Unlocking Reading Fluency

Reading fluency bridges the gap between word recognition and comprehension. During this comprehensive full day of training, we will provide you with the knowledge needed to teach fluency across your school and how to identify pupils who need additional support to develop their fluency. We'll also support you to create an action plan for how you can implement or enhance fluency provision in your school.

This CPD comprises of a full day of in-person training – held at St Peter's Primary School, Portishead, BS20 6BT – and a subsequent half day online coaching session.

We will be holding information sessions to provide you with more detail about this CPD on Thursday 11th January from 4-5pm and Thursday 18th April from 4-5pm.

Spring dates:

Friday 2nd February – 9am – 3pm @ St Peter's Thursday 21st March – 1:30 – 4pm online

Summer dates:

Register your interest HERE!

Friday 10th May – 9am – 3pm @ St Peter's Thursday 11th July – 1:30 – 4pm online

Cost: All sessions are offered free of charge. Places are limited so don't miss out! Register your interest today!

🗶 @UE_EnglishHub 🔰 🔀 InfoEnglishHub@sppschool.uk

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 <u>let us know</u>.

Click here to access the Annual Planner (via Sharepoint)

<u>Click here to access an index of</u> previous bulletin articles <u>Click here to access previous</u> <u>editions of the LSP weekly bulletin</u>

DATE	KEY DATE OR DEADLINE	FAO
Wednesday 17 January	School Leaders' Meeting @ Nailsea Baptist Church	Headteachers
Wednesday	Data Drop 1	Headteachers
31 January	Primary: Share teacher assessment with Governors and up- load onto Insight for the EYFS, Phonics Screening Check, Y1, Y2, Y3, Y4, Y5 Y6 (SATS)	
	Secondary: KS4 (current attainment grades) on SISRA	

