

News Bulletin



LIGHTHOUSE
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

Issue 29: 8 May 2024



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LIGHTHOUSE
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

Introduction

Dear Colleagues,

I am a Trustee of [Challenge Partners](#) and at their board meeting yesterday we had an update from Dame Sue John on the education landscape pre-election. Inevitably some of it is quite cheerless and she noted that the best that either party was offering was a context of flat money, albeit against a background of cuts almost everywhere else. Interestingly, she said that she detected a change in the 'ask' from the sector and shared her impression that schools might be pragmatic about coping with tight finances so long as there was a recognition that the demands on them are now extraordinary; schools are having to deliver a massive social mission that reaches far beyond what they receive funding for. I felt that this was spot on. Some people have talked about education as a fourth emergency service. The [Confederation of School Trusts](#) (CST) describes us as anchor institutions that hold communities in place. Our speech should be full of this and I hope that our political leaders might start talking up the social priority of what we are doing.

Gary Lewis

Chief Executive



Reminder: Internal Leadership Vacancy

We have one final internal leadership vacancy which closes tomorrow. Click on the following link to find out more, including how to express an interest (EOI), for this opportunity:

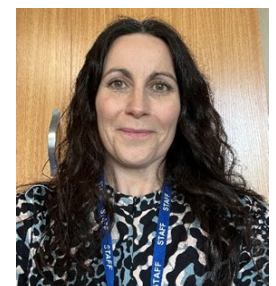
[Deputy Headteacher at Winford CofE Primary School \(secondment/maternity cover\)](#) - extended EOI deadline is 9.00am on Thursday 9 May 2024.

Please remind any colleagues who you think may be interested including Deputy/Assistant Heads and Phase Leaders.

Finance Business Partners

We are delighted to appoint Sally Phillips (currently School Business Manager at the Federation of Bishop Sutton and Stanton Drew) and Lorna Matthews (currently School Business Manager at Churchill Primary) as Finance Business Partners in the Central Team.

Sally and Lorna will be joining Jane Wakefield and Vanessa Forrest in September and the team will be delivering the new service level agreement, following the operational review, to 13 primary schools. We were blessed with a strong field of internal applicants and, along with Sue Warneford-Thomson and Pascale Dunning in the leadership role, have a really skilled, experienced and enthusiastic team ready to deliver a fantastic service to schools.



Goodbye and best wishes to Lorna Glover

Lorna Glover is retiring from LSP this week. Lorna has worked with many schools in her time with LSP and we have all benefited from both her experience and her joyful personality. We wish Lorna a happy and fun-filled retirement.



Date for LSP Operational Away Day

We are currently planning this year's LSP Operational Away Day for School Business Managers, Office Managers, HR, Estates and Trust Services.

This is scheduled to be held on Tuesday 2 July 2024 at Churchill Academy & Sixth Form.

Please hold this date in your diaries - more details, including a sign up form, to follow in due course.

Surveys - next steps

As you are aware the window for staff, parent and pupil surveys closes on Friday 10 May. Thank you for all your assistance on gathering responses.

Headteachers will be sent their results, and summary analysis, by Friday 7 June at the latest - please bear with us as we gather these together for you.

Any questions please do not hesitate to [email me](#).

*Eleanor Capel-Davies,
Head of Administration*

Info for Pupils: 2nd Portishead Junior RapidPlay Chess Competition

Entries are open for the 2nd Portishead Junior RapidPlay. The competition is open to all under-18 year olds (as of 01.09.23) whatever your strength and experience, and is a great place to start a journey into competition chess! Please feel free to share this with your students.

For more information, and to apply, students can go to: <https://www.portisheadchess.com/event-details/2nd-portishead-junior-rapidplay>

Bespoke mosaic designs

A huge thank you to [David Bowers of Mosaic Madness Ltd](#), who has kindly gifted us a lovely mosaic of our Lighthouse Schools Partnership logo. The mosaic (see photo) will be displayed proudly in the LSP Central Team Offices.

David is hoping to promote awareness of his business and if any schools are interested, he can be contacted on the link above.



Curriculum Alignment in the Primary Phase

Following the Primary Headteacher's meeting last week, [linked here](#) is a copy of our vision for our journey to curriculum alignment in the primary phase at LSP. At Subject Leader Networks next term we will be sharing this document and talking about how this will be crafting the focus for each of the Subject Leader Networks over the coming year.

Please can I ask that you share and discuss [this document](#) over the coming term with your governors, your SLT and your staff. In Term 6 line management meetings, we will begin discussions about actions which may need to be taken in your schools over the next three years.

Finally, as discussed in the meeting, I would like to establish a curriculum working party in Term 6. The focus of this group initially will be to support the writing of our curriculum policy for the Trust and to begin work on our LSP Curriculum Handbook. I am looking for volunteers to join the group. It is likely that the group will meet once a term during 2024-2025 for around 1.5-2 hours; meetings will be a mixture of in person and online. If you, or a member of your SLT have a passion for curriculum and the capacity to attend please could you [email me](#) with their name and email address by **Monday 20 May**.

Thank you in advance,

*Neil Lankester,
Director of School Improvement*

Data Returns Deadlines

Many thanks to those that have returned the below information. For those that have yet to do so, please see the return dates below and [get in touch with me](#) if you need any support.

- **Maternity Cover Data - deadline of 10/5/24**
(Please refer to the email sent on 30/04/24 and return your data by Friday 10/5/24.)
- **Wraparound Care Data - deadline of 10/05/24**
(Please send your Wraparound Care Surveys and the NS Wraparound Care Questionnaire to [Tracey](#) by Friday 10 May as per instructions in [last week's bulletin](#))
- **Cyber Response Plan Data - deadline of 24/05/24**
(Please refer to the email sent on 26/03/24, and return the requested information by 24 May.)

*Tracey Joyce,
Trust Services Officer*

PE and Sports Premium new monitoring tool

The National Governance Association (NGA), in partnership with the DfE and Local Government Association (LGA), has developed a monitoring tool which sets areas of focus for Primary LGBs to evaluate a PE and Sports Premium spending decisions. The aim is to ensure that schools are using the funding to make additional and sustainable improvements to PE, sport and physical activity.

The tool covers the:

- Areas where schools should prioritise PE and Sport Premium.
- Role of continuing professional development (CPD) in securing sustainable improvements.
- Questions to ask when evaluating the impact.

The tool is available in the Information for 2024/25 budget folder [in Foldr](#):

Schools Business Managers - Trust Wide - Information for 2024-25 Budgets - NGA PE & Sport Premium Monitoring tool

Also, we'd like to remind schools that they must spend the PE and Sport Premium in full by **Wednesday 31 July 2024** (including any underspend allowed from 2022/23). Schools will not be allowed to roll over any used funding into the following academic year. This is so that expenditure can be accounted for in:

- The school's published online report
- The new digital PE and Sport Premium reporting tool that is not yet in place but expected to be published within the next couple of months. The digital reporting tool will be piloted for the current academic year but is likely to be a mandatory requirement for schools to complete for the 2024/25 academic year. DfE training sessions on how to complete the tool are expected and we will, of course, update schools as more information becomes available.



Key Financial Dates Y/E 31/08/2024

The Central Finance Team are busy preparing for the Interim Audit and are grateful to those that have been submitting their Fixed Asset additions for entry to the Fixed Asset Register (FAR).

The Interim Audit takes place w/c 3 June 2024, a month earlier than originally scheduled. During this week our auditors will be carrying out transactional testing, reviewing Board Minutes and inspecting the FAR. We don't anticipate too much disruption for schools however would advise that you ensure all Invoices/Credit Notes are scanned to PS Financials should we be asked to provide copies.

The Audit Workbook will be issued on the 01 June 2024, and lists the following Key Dates in which you should be aware of (these dates are also one the relevant LSP Annual Planner):

Key Dates
01/06/2024 - Schools to issue Budget Holders with notice of closure of Purchase Order Book 09/07/2024
01/06/2024 - Final audit workbooks issued to schools
03/06/2024 - Interim Audit
01/07/2024 - Outstanding fixed asset entries to be submitted
09/07/2024 - Last date for purchase orders, Amazon and credit card orders to be raised (with exception of emergency/site purchases)
11/07/2024 - Audit workbook drop-in session via Teams (2:00pm - 2:30pm)
12/07/2024 - Audit workbook drop-in session via Teams (11:00am - 11:30am)
18/07/2024 - Audit workbook drop-in session via Teams (2:00pm - 2:30pm)
19/07/2024 - Audit workbook drop-in session via Teams (11:00am - 11:30am)
04/09/2024 - Funds workbook issued to schools
06/09/2024 - First payment run of the year - Please include as many 23/24 invoices as possible
06/09/2024 - Audit workbook drop-in session via Teams (11:00am - 11:30am)
11/09/2024 - Initial August monitoring report available in IMP for review
11/09/2024 - Final 23/24 payment run prior to closure - please include as many 23/24 invoices as possible
12/09/2024 - Audit workbook drop-in session via Teams (2:00pm - 2:30pm)
13/09/2024 - Audit workbook drop-in session via Teams (11:00am - 11:30am)
13/09/2024 - 24/25 Purchase Order books open
13/09/2024 - 23/24 period closure at midday - Any further 23/24 invoices should be entered as 01/09/2024, 2024/25.01
20/09/2024 - Audit workbooks to be submitted by midday via Foldr/SharePoint
20/09/2024 - Outstanding Fixed Asset entries to be submitted
20/09/2024 - Absolutely no further input to PSF relating to 23/24 including journals - Closure midday
24/09/2024 - <u>Compulsory</u> Funds Workbook Session via Teams (2pm - 2.30pm)
03/10/2024 - Central team to input year-end schedules to PSF
03/10/2024 - Updated August monitoring report, including schedules available in IMP for review
14/10/2024 - Deadline for schools to raise queries after review of monitoring report and deadline for adjustment requests to the central team
14/10/2024 - Funds workbook to be submitted via Foldr/SharePoint

(continued)

Key Financial Dates Y/E 31/08/2024 *(continued)*

Invitations to the Workbook sessions have already been issued, if you have not received the invitations, please do let us know and we will resend.

Please let us know of any queries relating to the Audit via Finance@lsp.org.uk.

Kind Regards

Natalie Fear,
Finance Manager



School Financial Benchmarking Comparisons for 2024-25 Budget Planning

All schools should undertake financial benchmarking to help schools see how they spend their money and the outcomes they achieve against other schools, and the Department for Education (DfE) provides tools to enable schools to do this. However, although we would still encourage schools to use these DfE tools, IMP also gives us some valuable KPIs to help support schools with the budget setting process.

We have therefore prepared some comparison reports using your draft budgets on the IMP Master Scenario. We know that these are not yet finalised budgets, but the information provided may help inform your final budget preparation and prompt useful conversations with other schools. We will aim to reproduce and share these reports again once final budgets have been approved.

We have prepared separate reports for secondary and primary schools and added consolidated data for federations at the far right of each worksheet on the primary school version. These are available to view [in Foldr](#) (accessed via folder below):

School Business Managers- Trust Wide- Information for 2024-25 Budgets - Financial Benchmarking

Schools are also encouraged to review the DfE Self-Assessment Dashboard (now updated with data for the 2022-23 financial year) and use the benchmarking comparisons to investigate those areas where your school's data on your dashboard suggests your school is significantly out of line with schools with similar characteristics. However, it is worth noting that there continues to be an issue with the way that Trust costs and capital reserves are allocated across schools. The DfE do not have a way of including or reporting MAT Central Team costs, so these are shared across schools, which means that the balances are not shown correctly in the data.

These tools can be access via [Schools Financial Benchmarking - GOV.UK \(schools-financial-benchmarking.service.gov.uk\)](https://schools-financial-benchmarking.service.gov.uk) and additional guidance on using these tools is available to download [from Foldr](#) (accessed via folder below):

School Business Managers- Trust Wide- Information for 2024-45 Budgets - Financial Benchmarking



Upcoming Lighthouse Learning Sessions and CPD Networks

Please email [Lighthouse Learning](#) if you have any questions about the below events.

Date	Event	Audience
Term 5		
Thursday 9, 16 and 23 May	Job Evaluation Training. Multiple venues.	All
Monday 13 May 3.45 - 5.00pm	LSP Primary Maths Network. Online MS Teams link to be circulated in due course.	Primary Maths Leads
Friday 17–Wednesday 22 May	Primary Moderation Sessions. St Peters' Primary Details already shared with Heads and Assessment Leads	Primary Heads and Assessment Leads

Early Years Network - change of date

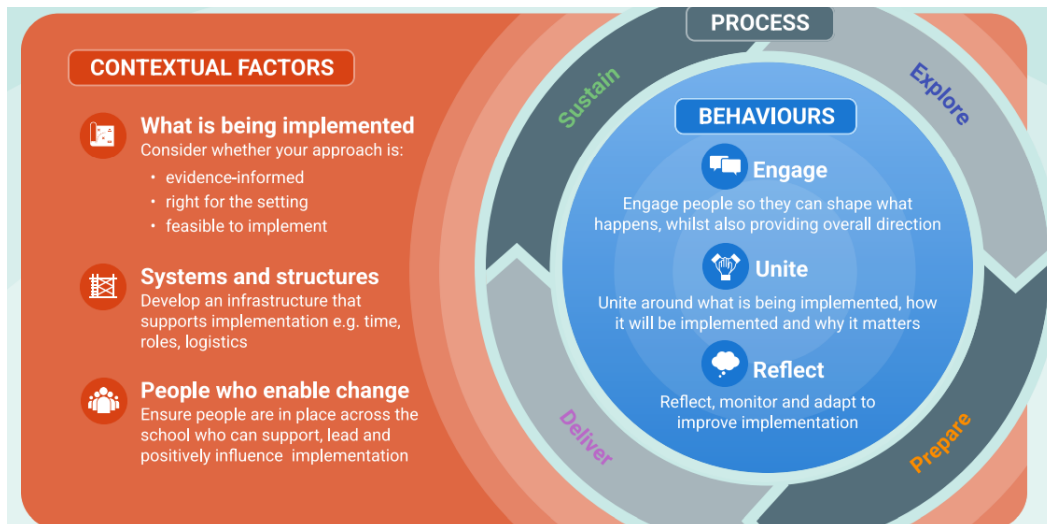
Confirmation that the next LSP Early Years Leader Network will take place 12.30-3.30pm on **Monday 17 June.**

This is a change of date from originally scheduled (Monday 20 May) so please update diaries accordingly.

Agenda and venue to follow in due course.

Updated EEF Implementation Guidance

Last week the Education Endowment Fund (EEF) published their updated 'Guide to Implementation' which is designed, along with its accompanying resources, to help you make sure new approaches or practices have the biggest possible impact on children and young people's outcomes. This update moves on to unpicking the 'how' of implementation.



As we move through next year we will be unpicking this document in more depth at our Headteacher meetings to support effective implementation of our school development plans. *(Click the link below to access the updated guidance)*

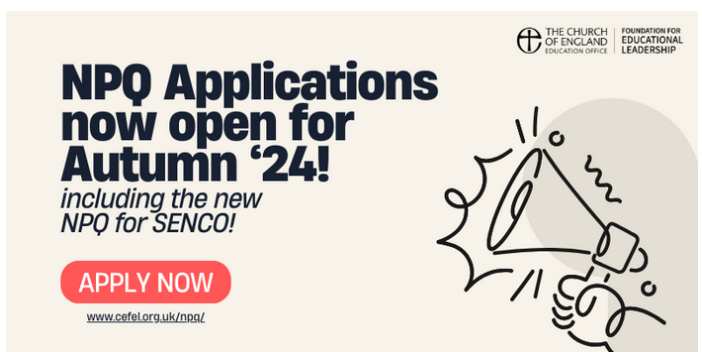
[Updated guidance can be accessed here.](#)

Neil Lankester,
Director of School Improvement

NPQ Applications for Cohort 7

We're delighted to share that the NPQ applications for Cohort 7 (including the new NPQ SEND) are now open.

Because of the changes in funding arrangements it is very important that applicants apply as quickly as possible to stand the best chance to secure a funded place.



Please can you pass on details for applicants to apply, following the links below.

Further Information about NPQs: [click here](#).

To Apply: [click here](#).

If you have any questions please email [Janine Ashman, Director of Learning](#)



LSP GOVERNANCE CONFERENCE

THURSDAY 13 JUNE 2024

This event is for LSP Clerks,
Chairs, Governors and Trustees

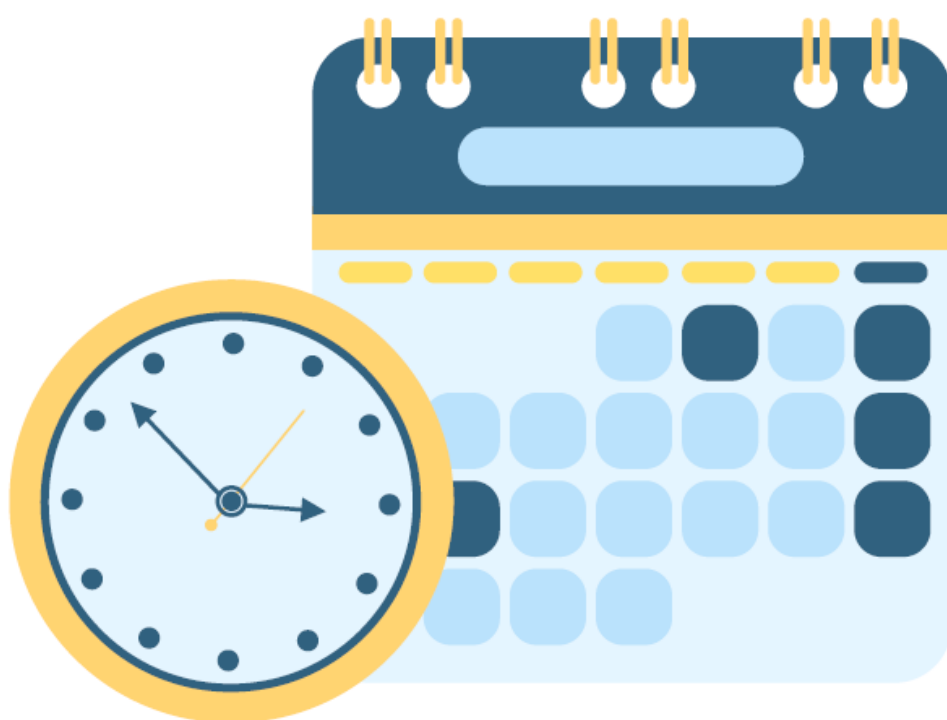
SAVE THE DATE

**VENUE:
BACKWELL SCHOOL
BS48 3BX**

**MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW,
INCLUDING HOW TO SIGN UP,
TOWARDS THE END OF MAY
2024**

Key Dates and Deadlines

DATE	KEY DATE OR DEADLINE	FAO
Friday 10 May	Deadline to inform <u>Central Team</u> regarding your NSC supported Admission Requirements for 2024-25.	Heads, SBMs and Admission Leads
Friday 10 May	Closing date for Parent, Staff and Pupils Surveys	Heads
Friday 10 May	Deadline to return LSP Wrap Around Care Surveys to Trust Services: tjoyce@lsp.org.uk	SBMs
12noon Thursday 23 May	Closing date for LSP HR Policies Consultation	All
Thursday 13 June 5.30pm - 7.45pm	LSP Governance Conference <i>More details to follow soon!</i>	Trustees, Clerks & Chairs



KEY LINKS

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](#).



Annual Planner 2023/24

Click to view the Annual Planner
(Via Sharepoint)

Annual Planner 2024/25

Click to view the Annual Planner for next
academic year (Via Sharepoint)



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The Beacon

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be shared in our newsletters and on our social media.

Email your stories to: newsletter@lsp.org.uk