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LIGHTHOUSE SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

Introduction

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome back to a new academic year with all the potential and activity that brings. I am imagining today the welcome events and assemblies for Reception, Yr7 and Y12 and all the reassurance, warmth and inspiration that you will be pouring into those communications and the expectations and high standards that you will be exhorting (luckily not thwarted by the burst pipe in Nailsea yesterday!). It is a time of year when we can speak to how we want things to be in our renewed schools. I had that same opportunity with my colleagues in the Central Team yesterday and I talked to them about the high levels of challenge that our schools have faced in the last year with financial pressures and communities under pressure. It was good to consider how this year's financial settlement is much improved and that we can be more optimistic in approaching the next 12 months. I was also able to point to the ambitions that we have set in our new strategy documents for strong pupil outcomes, especially for the disadvantaged, for our reputation as an employer that nurtures the careers and talents of our colleagues, and for our aspiration to be totally reliable and supportive of our schools so that the services that you receive allow you to focus primarily on the education and pastoral. I sense that we have really matured in the last few years and are now hitting our stride as a strong and effective Trust.

The start of term is always super busy. You will see evidence of that in this bumper edition of the bulletin. Please ensure that it is shared with all the people who need to see it, as I'm conscious of just how much information we are sharing out to schools. On a personal note, there is a short trailer for the Research Community with the University of Bristol and the Chartered College of Teaching that I emailed you about on Monday. I do hope that we have some takers for this as I would love us to be a research producing Trust as well as being a consumer of evidence based practice. Please put anyone interested in touch with me.

Lastly, I mentioned in my end of term email and [welcome back video](#) the opportunity that the Department of Education (DfE) have offered us of working with three Bristol primary schools who need a good Trust with a Church of England foundation as their own Trust is closing. I was grateful for the number of positive responses that I had from you. At this stage this is a proposed development and has not yet been through ratification by the DfE - things are going a bit slowly for entirely understandable reasons as the new government feels its way forward. I said to you how excited I felt about this development partly because I think there is so much for us to gain and learn from colleagues working in a different context than most of our schools. The events of this summer, and the shocking scenes of disorder on our streets, have made me feel even more passionately about the need for us to work across communities rather than separately. I am certain that we have the skills, systems and expertise to serve a number of new schools well, but I also believe that we have here a huge opportunity to engage with and be part of a diverse and complex city. I'll keep you posted on developments as they occur.

As ever,

Gary Lewis
Chief Executive

Central Team and Centralised Services

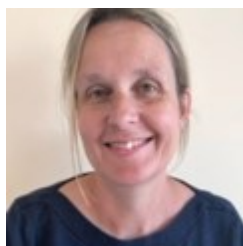
We are delighted to welcome a number of new staff members to the Central Team, many of whom will be supporting the delivery of the new centralised services.

A total of 13 primary schools will now be receiving the centralised services. We are absolutely committed to delivering schools a fantastic service and recognise the extra support that may be required during the transition period. We are grateful to the team at Hannah More Infant and Grove Junior schools, who moved to the centralised service in April, for the feedback that they have provided on the move to the new arrangements. As a result, each school moving to the new service will be given a named member of the Central Team as a key point of contact during this initial transition period. We want to get this right and we encourage colleagues at schools joining the centralised service to raise any issues, via your Headteacher, with your named contact at the earliest possible opportunity so that we can provide any necessary support.

We are welcoming the following new colleagues to the Central Team:



Pascale Dunning, School
Finance Manager
(job share)



Sally Phillips, Finance
Business Partner



Lorna Clark, Finance
Business Partner



Jo Summerton,
HR Assistant



Callum Fear, Estates
Support Officer



Louise O'Rourke,
Advisor for Behaviour
and Nurture

A reminder that a Who's Who of the Central Team can [be found here](#).

Research Community with University of Bristol and the Chartered College of Teaching

Gary wrote to Heads on Monday to promote the concept of a research community of educators from LSP doing research on their own and their school's practice within the structure provided by the Chartered College of Teaching Certificate in Educational Research and Inquiry. Colleagues from the School of Education at Bristol (including Prof Alf Coles, who is one of our five Trust Members) have offered to support and host some of the activity. We will be able to offer a small amount of timetable release to participants to help them write up their findings.

The programme would be ideal for practitioners considering a future Masters project or just interested in finding out a bit more about the processes, uses and limitations of action research.

A fuller [description of the programme is available here](#). Please give it a big push at your next staff meeting or briefing. Please [contact Gary directly](#) with any questions.

New Staff LSP Welcome Sessions

As you are aware we run regular new staff welcome sessions for colleagues who join the Trust. These sessions cover staff benefits, Trust structures etc and are also a good opportunity to meet Central Team Colleagues and other new staff. We will be running four of these (one in each hub) in late September/early October for those who have joined this new academic year.

If you could let any new employees know that their invitation will come out to them, by email, in mid-September that would be great. Schools do not need to do anything further on this - we will organise, send invitations, and manage RSVPs centrally.

We will also run events after Christmas and Easter for those who join us at mid-points throughout the year. Again all communications regarding this will be handled centrally.



Reminder - key actions and new policies for the start of this academic year

A reminder that a number of key policies have been updated and are now effective across the Trust:

Name of Policy	Personalisation required?	Upload required to school website?
SEND Policy	No	No - the SEND policy is on the LSP website. Schools do need to ensure that you have published your SEN information report, as per DfE Website requirements. It should be updated annually and any changes to the information occurring during the year should be updated as soon as possible.
Attendance Policy	Yes Highlights in yellow need to be updated before publication on your website.	Yes - ASAP and by 4 September at the latest. A folder (named Attendance Policy and Letter July 24) has been set up in Foldr. Template letters to support this policy will be uploaded in there by mid-September 2024.
Safeguarding Policy	Yes Text in red need to be noted/updated and comments removed before publication on your website.	Yes - ASAP and by 4 September at the latest (then updated following LGB approval).

All of these policies have been uploaded to the LSP website and have [been saved in Foldr](#) (including word versions for those that need specific sections personalised for your school site) here: [LSP Policies>Operational Policies](#). You will also find the template letters and information to support the Attendance Policy in the same place so you can share these with colleagues who need them.

Please ensure you are referring to the correct versions of these policies - they are live on the LSP website, so for those of you with direct links to our policies page, they are already up to date.

Also back in July we published two special editions of the LSP bulletin outlining all of the information, link and deadlines for the start of the academic year: one for [Heads and School Business/Office Managers](#) and one for [Clerks](#).

If you have any questions about any of the above please do not hesitate to contact the [Central Team](#). Many of the key deadlines are also noted on the Key Dates and Deadlines page at the end of this bulletin.

Blue Light Card for Education Sector

Those working within the Education Sector are now eligible for a Blue Light Discount Card. A Blue Light Card gives access to over 13,000 discounts in restaurants, shops etc across the UK.

At the moment you need to join the waiting list to sign up for a card: <https://teachers.bluelightcard.co.uk/>

Please share this message with staff so they can sign up if they so wish.

Introductory Meetings - Advisor for Nurture and Behaviour

As you are aware, and mentioned in the Headteachers' meeting in June, [Louise O'Rourke](#) has now started in the Central Team working three days a week as our Advisor for Nurture and Behaviour.

All school will receive three half day visits from Louise to support the work on aligning to Nurture UK six principles this academic year. These visits will be with the lead for Nurture in each school/school leader as appropriate and Louise will email school leaders **early next week** to organise her first introductory visit so please keep an eye out for her email.

Louise will also offer support on the following:

- For schools with Nurture Groups, Louise will lead the network and support where needed to ensure that these groups succeed.
- Schools can request additional case work to review challenging cases (*this may be charged though if in excess of core hours*)
- Review of cases where pupil is in danger of PEX



Cornish Garden Services

We have been advised by Cornish Garden Services that, as per their contract terms, a 5% inflationary increase has been applied to their annual fee. This is the last year of the current contract, and a new tender is now underway.

Schools Advisory Service - Primary Schools only

Just to remind schools that staff details need to be uploaded to the Schools Advisory Service (SAS) portal at your earliest convenience, as the staff absence contract commenced on Sunday 1 September 2024. If you have any questions regarding this please contact stacey@schoolmutual.co.uk.

Core Services Contracts

Please be reminded that as of Sunday 1 September 2024, the following contracts are part of the core services and as such will be paid for centrally. Schools will only need to raise purchase orders and settle invoices for these contractors if the work sits outside of the service contract e.g. remedial work or additional services:

- IT Support - 2IT
- MIS support - Scomis/Bromcom
- Insight tracker
- Asbestos re-inspections - Casa
- Servicing of heavy catering equipment - Lionel Saunders
- Servicing and inspection of fall protection equipment - A2M
- Servicing of fire and security systems - Evo
- Servicing of fume cupboards - GP fume
- Servicing of M&E and electrical appliances - Waterhouse
- Servicing of kilns - Celtic Kilncare
- Legionella services - Broadwater
- Servicing of lifts - Liftech
- LOLER inspection - BES group
- Portable appliance testing - JR Pat testing
- Servicing and inspection of lightning protection - Dawson steeplejack
- Servicing and inspection of patient lifting equipment - Beaucare
- Servicing of workshop machinery & dust extraction system - Bowerhill machinery services
- Servicing of fire extinguishers and blankets - Firemark
- Servicing and inspection of drama & stage lighting - Solutions on stage
- Servicing of automatic doors - Avon Armour
- Display energy certificates - ESOS
- Air conditioning certificates - ESOS
- Inspection of Roller shutters - Door services, Bristol

Flu Vouchers

For those schools considering your options for flu vouchers please see the pricing options below. There are no plans for trust-wide procurement as the potential savings do not make the exercise worthwhile.

Flu Vouchers www.fluvouchers.co.uk	Doctor Call	Boots
Electronic Vouchers	Electronic Vouchers	10+ £14.50
5-500 £11.50	Less than 10 - £16.00	1000+ £12.50
500+ £11.15	10 to 249 - £11.00	
	250 to 999 - £10.50	
Paper Vouchers	1000 to 4999 - £10.00	
5-500 £10.50 (£10 postage)	5000+ - £9.00	
500+ £10.25 (£10 postage)		
	Paper Vouchers	
	Minimum order of 10 - £9 - No postage	

Specsavers - VDU/DSE Vouchers

Specsavers **VDU Eyecare Vouchers** are just £17 and are designed to fulfil your obligations to your staff under the Health and Safety Executive's Display Screen Equipment Legislation.

Staff can go into any Specsavers store, get a full sight and eye health check and, if they require glasses solely and specifically for VDU use, then choose from the £49 range for free or have a £49 contribution towards other frame ranges.

You can find more information [on the Specsavers website](#).

Incidents

As mentioned in the [guidance sent to schools in the Summer term](#) (article: Logging Incidents in iAM and Riddor), please ensure that any 'unresolved' incidents in iAM are reviewed, any notes added and marked as 'resolved' (unless of course the incident is still under investigation). This will mean the academic year is started afresh.

If you have any questions about any of the above please contact trustservices@lsp.org.uk

ParentPay

Please find below a link to a 'New Academic Year Checklist' that ParentPay have shared with us. It covers the key tasks schools need to undertake for the start of the new term.

[New Academic Year Checklist - ParentPay Group](#)

Annual Safeguarding Declaration

A reminder that the Annual Safeguarding Declaration is in Employee Self Service (ESS) in iTrent. Please ensure your staff complete the declaration by the **deadline date of Friday 20 September 2024**. School Business Managers can check who has completed the declaration in iTrent under reports: People Reports, E-Signature Correspondence Summary.

Please note: If you have a new starter not shown in your report, you must manually allocate this declaration to them.

Childcare Disqualification Declaration

A reminder that the Childcare Disqualification Declaration, for primary schools, is available in Employee Self Service (ESS) in iTrent. Please ensure your staff complete the declaration by the **deadline date of Friday 20 September 2024, unless an earlier date has been agreed in your school**. School Business Managers can check who has completed the declaration, along with the responses, in iTrent under reports: People Reports, ESS Questionnaire Summary.

Please note: If you have a new starter not shown in your report, you must manually allocate this declaration to them.

New Legislation - Prevent Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

In the UK, the new Worker Protection Act, which comes into effect in October 2024, creates a duty on employers to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of their employees in the workplace. This strengthens existing protections for workers. The new law will place a new duty on employers to take 'reasonable steps' to prevent sexual harassment. Tribunals will have the power to increase compensation by up to 25% if they find an employer has breached this duty.

We are updating our policies to reflect the changes in legislation and will provide details on training for all staff members in due course.



Pay Progression - Teaching and Leadership

Please keep an eye out for the spreadsheets for pay progression, which will be sent to schools on Friday 13 September 2024 via 'HR Secure' in MS Teams.

Applications to UPS need to be made by Monday 30 September.

The deadline for returning completed spreadsheets to the HR Secure Teams channel, that have been signed off by your Local Governing Body, is 10am on Tuesday 8 November 2024. Once the Staffing and Pay Committee have ratified the recommendations, letters will be produced and added to the HR Secure folders, and uploaded to iTrent in readiness for December pay.

Pay Awards - Teaching staff

The pay award as outlined in the STRB 34th Report will be implemented and paid in September for teaching and leadership staff. The pay award is 5.5%. The salary scales have been prepared and iTrent will be implementing them prior to September pay. The Pay Policy is being updated, and new salary scales will be sent to schools in the first week of term.

Pay Awards - Support staff

The support staff pay award has not been agreed nationally as yet. The offer that was made to unions on Thursday 16 May has not been agreed by all unions, so some are balloting for strike action.

The offer from the National Employers to the Unions was:

- With effect from 1 April 2024, an increase of £1,290 (pro rata for part-time employees) to be paid as a consolidated, permanent addition on all NJC pay points 2 - 43 inclusive.
- With effect from 1 April 2024, an increase of 2.50% on all pay points above the maximum of the pay spine but graded below deputy chief officer (in accordance with the Green book).
- With effect from 1 April 2024, an increase of 2.50% on all allowances.

GMB voted to accept the offer. Unite's ballot closes on Tuesday 15 October 2024 and Unison's ballot closes on Wednesday 16 October 2024. We have been contacted by unions not to implement a pay award ahead of the national agreement, to avoid potential legal implications and to avoid undermining the current process. We will provide you with updates as soon as we hear further from our unions.

Monthly Forecasting

This is the second year that we will be using IMP for our budgeting and financial forecasting. Quite a few schools, including those moving to the new Centralised Service, will now be doing monthly forecasting on IMP (rather than the minimum requirement of three times per year). The Board of Trustees find monthly forecasting drastically improves the quality of the financial information that they receive each month and would like to encourage as many schools as possible to move to monthly forecasting.

We recognise and understand, however, that capacity may be a barrier to this. If there are other barriers to this that we could remove it would be really helpful to hear about them so that we can do whatever we can to enable as many schools as possible to move to monthly forecasting. If you have any thoughts on this please could we encourage you to raise this with Sue or Pascale, our School Finance Managers.

*Louise Malik,
Chief Financial and Operating Officer*

2024-25 Financial Year - Monthly Schedule of Finance Deadlines

Please download the schedule of finance deadlines for the 2024-25 financial year ([available on Foldr](#) - location below), including dates for processing transactions, monthly accruals and prepayments and the dates of uploading budget monitoring data. Where the deadline for accruals and prepayments falls in a school holiday, please send your template to lspfinance@lsp.org.uk in advance. Please use the up-to-date template (Foldr location below) for your monthly return - including nil returns.

Schedule for Monthly Accruals and Prepayments: *Foldr - School business Managers - Trust wide - Finance Documents and forms - Monthly Accruals and Prepayments - Schedule for Monthly Accruals and Prepayments 2024-25*

Template: *Foldr - School business Managers - Trust wide - Finance Documents and forms - Monthly Accruals and Prepayments - Accruals and Prepayments Monthly Return 2024-25*



Updated Financial Position and Financial Strategy

Thanks to everyone for all of the hard work that you put into producing your three year budgets for the 2024-25 financial year onwards. We know that this was a very difficult process and that the deficits produced in most cases have been a cause of great concern. The budgets that you produced were **agreed by the Board of Trustees on Wednesday 17 July**. The consolidation of the deficits for individual schools also produced a very concerning projection for the Trust overall, with overall reserves reducing from just over £5m projected at the end of the 2023-24 financial year to a deficit overall of £3.2m by the end of 2026-27.

The Reserves Policy requires all schools to set in year balanced budgets if the Trust's overall reserves are below, or projected to be below, the minimum target range of 3%. This clearly applies in the budgets produced. However, Trustees felt that savings at this level were unlikely to be achievable and targeted a lower level of savings to ensure a minimum level of reserves of 4% at the end of the 2025-26 financial year and 3% at the end of 2026-27. This would still require considerable savings by schools of £1.2m in 2025-26 and a cumulative total of £4.0m for 2026-27.

On Monday 29 July the Government agreed a teachers' pay award of 5.5% (this will be reflected in colleagues September pay) and a new grant called the Core Schools Budget Grant.

The following statement was provided:

“The core school budget grant (CSBG) will provide almost £1.1 billion to support schools with their overall costs in the 2024 to 2025 financial year, in particular following confirmation of the 2024 teacher pay award. This matches what we have calculated is needed to fully fund, at a national level, the teacher pay award and the support staff pay offer in financial year 2024 to 2025, over and above the available headroom in schools' existing budgets. We recognise the picture will be different for individual schools. We are also providing £97 million in respect of early years and post-16 provision”

This is undoubtedly excellent news and much better than we had anticipated. We do not yet have all of the information needed to fully calculate the new grant but have estimated it at about £2.3m p.a. for the Trust. Our estimates of the CSBG grant at individual school level can be found [in Foldr](#).

Foldr location: *School Business Managers / Trust Wide / Information for 2024-25 Budgets / Estimate of CSBG 2024-25*

Whilst reviewing the impact that these announcements have had on our financial position, we also took the opportunity to review what we have budgeted for the support staff pay award from April 2024. We have budgeted for an increase for each full time equivalent (fte) member of support staff of £2,192 p.a. and this roughly equates to an overall % increase for the Trust of 7.95%. Inflation has fallen since our budget assumptions were set and, along with the knowledge of the Teachers' pay award, we now feel that our budget assumption for the support staff award is probably too high.

Continued...

Continued: Updated Financial Position and Financial Strategy

The national employers have offered £1,290 p.a. per fte. This is the level that the Government says is fully funded and it roughly equates to an overall % increase for the Trust of 4.68%. At this stage, 2 of the 3 local government unions have rejected this offer. It is, therefore, still possible that an award higher than that offered will be agreed and we do not anticipate an increase in the CSBG if this is the case. Whilst this is impossible to accurately estimate, our best guess is now an increase of £1,350 p.a. per fte on each scale point which would equate to an overall % increase for the Trust of approximately 4.9%. This would provide a minimum of a 5.5% increase for all staff with a full-time equivalent salary of £25,000 or less.

We estimate that the financial implications of these three developments on the overall Trust could improve our financial position in 2024-25 as estimated below:

Estimated increase in the budgeted cost of teachers	£ 840,200
Estimated decrease in the budgeted cost of support staff	£ (532,186)
Estimated CSBG	£(2,339,012)
 Estimated overall budget improvement	 £(2,030,998)

The table below demonstrates the impact of the above on the Trust's overall financial position for the next 3 years:

Table 4 - Estimated updated approved budget position - no additional savings	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Projected reserves b/fwd	£(5,091,128)	£(6,009,041)	£(5,544,936)
In year deficit (as per agreed budget)	£1,113,086	£2,476,556	£4,700,731
Estimated increased teachers' award	£840,200	£862,616	£898,346
Estimated reduced support staff award	£(532,186)	£(536,055)	£(556,530)
Estimated CSBG	£(2,339,012)	£(2,339,012)	£(2,339,012)
Updated in year deficit/ (surplus)	£(917,913)	£464,105	£2,703,535
Projected reserve c/fwd	£(6,009,041)	£(5,544,936)	£(2,841,401)
% reserves (internal measure)	8.91%	8.12%	4.11%

Whilst this is a huge improvement on our agreed budgets, we are still projecting a small deficit in 2025-26, which grows considerably in 2026-27 and takes us below our 5% reserves target.

Continued...

Continued: Updated Financial Position and Financial Strategy

Based on these updated figures the Trustees have agreed the following strategic approach:

1. We will change the wording in the Reserves Policy as detailed below:

5.4	If the Trust's overall reserves are below, or projected to be below, the minimum target range (below 35%), all schools within the Trust will be required to set a balanced budget without utilising their accumulated reserves in order for the Trust to establish or maintain reserves within the target range. This position will be agreed and communicated by Trustees as part of the budget assumptions guidance issued in advance of the budget preparation process and updated as necessary .
5.5	Schools that have projected revenue reserves that are outside of the target range of reserves are required, in partnership with the Central Team, to consider the level of reserves and to take remedial action to meet the requirements of this policy. The purpose of this action is to:
5.5.1	Ensure that resources are utilised for the benefit of the children and young people currently within the school(s), as far as reasonable. Please note that this will be restricted when the Trust's overall reserves are below, or projected to be below, the minimum target range of 35% when all schools will be required to set a balanced budget without utilising their accumulated reserves as detailed in paragraph 5.4.

2. In line with the amendments to the Reserves Policy detailed above, we will not require schools/federations to set balanced in year budgets for 2025-26. Any schools that wish to progress with change management for the 2025-26 financial year will still be able to do so.

For those schools/federations that wish to continue to set a deficit budget in 2025-26 and delay any required changes until 2026-27, we still encourage Headteachers and LGBs to take any opportunities that present themselves to reduce the projected deficit.

For those schools/federations that will now have a surplus budget in 2024-25 and/or 2025-26, we still encourage Headteachers and LGBs to consider the projected financial position for their school(s) in 2026-27 when taking spending decisions. This will mean not committing any in year surpluses in 2024-25 or 2025-26 to ongoing costs that can't be maintained in 2026-27 and beyond, and taking any opportunities that present themselves to reduce the projected deficit in 2026-27.

3. In line with the amendments to the Reserves Policy detailed above, we will require all schools/federations to set a balanced in year budget for 2026-27. For primary schools the achievability of this will be considered on a case by case basis against the minimum staffing levels.
4. To start work, in partnership between school leaders and the Central Team, in Autumn 2024 to consider options to achieve an in year balanced budget for each school/federation for 2026-27.

Continued...

Continued: Updated Financial Position and Financial Strategy

This change in focus for restructuring from 2025-26 to 2026-27 provides more time for both schools and the central team to analyse school budgets (incorporating integrated curriculum and financial planning), take opportunities for savings and restructuring through natural turnover, implement savings through further developments such as procurement and IT and it also enables a more effective implementation of new arrangements such as Learning Partners. It provides school leaders with more time to consider options and impacts and to embed changes to working arrangements. It provides the central team with more time to provide schools with high quality and timely support for such changes.

5. We will also change the wording in the Reserves Policy as detailed below:

5.6	The LGB of individual schools must refer any spending decision outside the agreed budget, that meets the criteria in 5.6.1 and 5.6.2 below, to the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees for review and approval. Any such request will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances. Requests for recurrent spending are likely to only be agreed in exceptional circumstances. Requests for one off spending, particularly on items that will improve the schools ongoing financial sustainability are more likely to be approved.	
5.6.1		Spending not included in the agreed budget of over £15,000, or 1% of the school's income used to calculate the Core Services Charge (whichever is the greater) or more for a primary school or over £50,000 or more for a secondary school must be referred to the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees
5.6.2		Additional permanent staffing, or temporary staffing exceeding the levels specified in 5.6.1, to the levels agreed in the budget (either contracted or casual for a period of more than one month), must be referred to the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees
5.6.3		LGBs are not required to refer spending decisions outside of the agreed budget to the Finance Committee if the spending is fully funded from additional unbudgeted income and has no detrimental impact on the schools longer term financial position.

It is hoped that this will provide schools with more flexibility in the use of their reserves from September 2024 onwards.

The updated Reserves Policy is [available on the LSP website](#).

IMP was updated on 22nd August with all of these changes. There is a new version of the Approved Budget (version 4) incorporating these changes. The Master Scenario has also been updated. This should enable you to identify the financial impacts of these changes on your school(s), although schools should recognise that the revised support staff pay award is still an estimate. The Approved Budget V4 will be the budget set for forecasting for 2024-25 and will obviously differ from the budget agreed by your LGB. This decision has been taken, as it was last year, as these changes have been out of individual schools control. You should share the Multi Year Budget Review Summary report with your LGB at their next meeting. If your school is still projecting an in-year deficit for 2025-26, you should discuss and seek LGB agreement whether or not you wish to proceed with change management for the 2025-26 financial year. Those schools wishing to progress with the implementation of the Learning Partners model for 2025-26 will need to continue with a change management process.

Funding for 2024-25 redundancy and pay protection costs

A number of schools followed a change management process, with support from the Central Team, last year to implement new staffing arrangements from September 2024.

The Central Team maintain a small contingency to support the redundancy and pay protection costs that arise from these processes but, until the processes have concluded, it was not possible to confirm if there are sufficient funds available to cover the costs in full.

I am pleased to confirm that any redundancy and strain on the pension fund costs incurred as at 31st August 2024 as a result of these change management processes will be fully funded by the Central Services Budget. I can also confirm that pay protection costs that will be incurred as a result of these processes during the 2024-25 financial year will also be fully funded by the Central Services Budget.

Change management is a very difficult process and I would like to extend my gratitude to those that have led and facilitated these processes in schools and in the Central Team.

*Louise Malik,
Chief Financial and Operating Officer*

National Tutoring Programme funding - Mandatory year-end statement

All schools in receipt of the NTP grant are required to submit a year-end statement to report how they have used their funding. The form will open on 2 September 2024 and close on 26 September 2024. Guidance on completing the year-end statement, including a link to the online form, will be published on [NTP allocations for 2023 to 2024 academic year](#).

You must report all tutoring delivered in academic year 2023/24, from 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024. [Further details can be found here](#).

BACS Paylist Schedule

The proposed BACS paylist schedule is now [available on Foldr](#) (see Foldr location below). As with previous years we endeavour to work to the published schedule however this may be subject to change. You will be notified in advance of any changes to the published dates.

Foldr: *LSP Finance / Proposed Payment Dates 2024/25.xlsx*

Monthly Finance Checklist 2024-25

Please download the revised monthly finance checklist for 2024-25, which is [available on Foldr - see location below](#). The checklist has been updated to include reference to a new spreadsheet available monthly for schools to check whether unidentified bank items are for them and also excluding the need to complete monthly staff disclosures as this will now be completed by the Central Finance Team.

Foldr location: *School business Managers / Trust wide / Finance Documents and forms / Templates and Forms / Monthly Finance Checklist September 2024*

IMP Reporting

We have been advised by IMP that as part of their work on enhancing reports, they are making some changes to reports with effect from Sunday 1 September. At the time of writing, the Finance Team have not seen the revised reports, but it seems that most reports have retained their format (apart from added colour!) However, the forecast reports have been restructured and new reports added. We will advise SBMs of the new reports available as soon as possible and before Wednesday 11 September which is when the initial August forecast report will be ready. (See Audit Work below).

2023-24 Audit Work

The deadline for completion of the Audit Workbooks and upload of supporting documentation is **Friday 20 September 2024**. Schools should have access to the Audit Workbooks via the secure Teams team called LSP Audit Workbooks - Secure. Please let the [Finance Team](#) know if you are unable to access your workbook.

Initial August Monitoring reports will be available in IMP on Wednesday 11 September. This will give schools an early indication of both revenue and capital balances before the year end journals from the workbooks are processed. You should review income and expenditure in detail - this will aid your completion of your Accruals and Prepayments for the Audit Workbook. Please note that although it is expected that the vast majority of 2023-24 invoices will be processed by Wednesday 11 September, the final deadline for processing 2023-24 invoices is Friday 13 September to capture any last-minute transactions.

Once the journals from the Audit Workbooks have been processed by the Finance Team, a revised version of the August Forecast will be prepared (so please do **not** freeze the earlier version on IMP) on Thursday 3 October for further review and completion of the Funds Workbook. The Funds Workbooks will be added to the LSP Audit Workbooks secure team later in the month once we have prepared a completed example to include in the workbook. We will obviously advise schools when these have been made available.

There is a compulsory Funds Workbook session for SBMs via Teams at 2.00pm-2.30pm on Tuesday 24 September. You should already have received an invite for this session. Please contact the Finance Team if you do not have the link in your calendar.

IMP Housekeeping

For school action: Employees who have service end dates in a prior financial year will appear on your list of staff members unless you 'disable' them. Go to Reporting Suite - Operational tab - System Health Check and run report for 2024/25. This will give you a list of staff members with recommended actions if an employee has left the Trust.

Actioned by Finance Team: Please note that IMP recommend that the Central Team roll over staff contracts so that when schools look at a staff member contract, the latest pay scale data will be displayed on the contract screen. As we were all new to IMP, this 'contract roll over' process was not actioned last year, which means that the pay scale information you have seen at first glance will have been historic as it was when the contact was first added, although pay progression for budgets will be correct.

Rolling over contracts ends all contracts with the selected pay scale(s) and creates a new contract line with a start date of the pay scale increment date, thus showing at a glance more accurate data. If a contract already has an end date, the roll over process will not change that. Contract lines in previous financial years may appear to have disappeared but will be available to view if you click 'show historic' in the contract screen. If 'no increment' is ticked for an individual employee on the contract screen, a new contract line will be created, but pay scale will not have changed.

This process has now been actioned for both teachers and support staff for the Master Scenario only and will continue to be run annually around the increment dates for teachers and support staff. Scenarios already have these future year salary calculations in place and running in the background, so this process will not have changed your budgets, it just gives schools the most accurate overview when you view a contract.

Use of payroll nominals for agency cover and sports coaches

As we approach the end of the financial year, we are undertaking some additional checks on the use of payroll codes to ensure that they reconcile with the payroll journals. It has been noticed that some schools are using payroll salary nominals to pay invoices for agency supply and/or sports coaches. Please ensure that non-payroll expenditure is not coded against payroll journals. You will be contacted to request that you action appropriate journals to move expenditure before closing. Please [contact the Finance team](#) if you need advice on appropriate coding.

Federated School recharges

The Trust guidance on recharges has been updated to request that all federated staffing recharges are actioned on a monthly basis, processed on staffing nominals and broken down for basic pay, NI and pension costs. This will ensure that the Central Team are able to reconcile payroll journals as part of year end processes. The revised guidance is [available to download from Foldr](#):

Foldr Location: School business Managers - Trust wide - Finance Documents and forms - User Guides - Guidance on Internal Recharges

Claiming Gift Aid on Donations

The Trust is registered with HMRC to enable schools to claim gift aid on voluntary donations. Schools will need to ensure that any donations received are eligible for gift aid and we have produced some [guidance on Foldr](#) for more information (see location below). Schools must ensure that a declaration form is completed (either hard copy or electronically) for each donation and these declarations must be retained by schools as a clear auditable record. A hard copy of the declaration form is [available to download on Foldr](#).

The Finance Team will submit an annual claim on behalf of all schools in October for the any eligible donations for the 2023-24 financial year. Schools will need to add details of their donations to the template [available to download on Foldr](#). The gift aid income received will be apportioned back to schools as appropriate, but may take a few months to be processed by HMRC. If you have received eligible donations and have the appropriate declarations in place, please complete the template and return to finance@lsp.org.uk by Friday 27 September. Please do *not* assume gift aid income as accrued income on your Audit Workbooks, but treat as income for 2023-24 once any gift aid income is received.

Documents available on Foldr:

- [Information for schools: SBMS - trust wide - finance documents and forms - Gift Aid - Claiming Gift aid: Information for Schools](#)
- [Gift Aid Donation Form: SBMS - trust wide - finance documents and forms - Gift Aid - Charity_GAD_Single_Donation Form](#)
- [Gift Aid Schedule: SBMS - trust wide - finance documents and forms - Gift Aid - gift_aid_schedule_version_3](#)

Email communication with Central Finance Team

Please can all emails be sent via Finance@lsp.org.uk to enable us to triage your queries and questions to the appropriate member of the team, (unless you are already dealing with an individual member of the team). This is particularly important with new staff members, Pascale, Sally and Lorna joining us this term. Thank you.

Sue Warneford-Thomson

School Finance Support Manager



First LSP Clerks' Network for 2024-25

As outlined in the Lighthouse Learning Governance CPD booklet, I will be hosting Clerks' Network in the second and penultimate week of each term.

Our first session will be held on Wednesday 11 September from 1.00pm. I have already sent the Teams link.

All LSP Clerks are welcome, and encouraged, to attend. In next week's session we will be discussing the LSP Governance SharePoint, minutes and agenda templates and other start of year admin duties.

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

Chris Hills, Governance Professional

LSP SharePoint for Governance

We have been working on our central SharePoint sites; previously we have two - one for Clerks (LSP Clerks) and one for Clerks and Chairs (LSP Governance).

We have amalgamated the sites into one: [LSP Governance](#) - so Clerks and Chairs only need to refer to the LSP Governance SharePoint.

All Clerks and Chairs should already have access to this site. If you have any problems [please email us](#) so we can address any permissions issues as quickly as possible.





Upcoming Lighthouse Learning Sessions and CPD Networks

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

Agendas, Teams links (if required) and other resources will be emailed one week in advance of each network.

The full programme of Lighthouse Learning CPD on offer for 2024-25 can be found on the [LSP website](#).

DATE	EVENT	AUDIENCE
Monday 9 September 1.00-4.00pm	Primary English Network @ St Peter's Primary	Primary English Leads
Wednesday 11 September 3.30-4.15pm	Trust-wide Attendance Network. Online via Teams	All Attendance Leads
Wednesday 11 September 3.30-5.00pm	Secondary Networks for Maths and MFL Both Online via Teams (link to be sent from Natalie Wilcox)	Secondary Maths and MFL Leads
Thursday 12 September 3.30-5.00pm	Secondary Network for English Online via Teams (link to be sent from Natalie Wilcox)	Secondary English Leads
Monday 16 September 3.00-4.30pm	Trust-wide Safeguarding Network. Online via Teams	All Safeguarding Leads
Monday 23 September 1.00-4.00pm	Trust-wide SEND Network. Online via Teams	All SENDCOs
Monday 30 September 3.30-5.00pm	Primary Assessment Network. Online via Teams	Primary Assessment Leads

Walk Thrus

We are entering the second year of using WalkThrus across the Trust. Please can you remember to give new staff logins so they can access the materials. We have also received the information below from John Catt with details of discounts on the WalkThru books for members:

This is just a quick reminder that you can stock up on copies of the **Teaching WalkThrus** books by emailing education@hachette.co.uk (cc-ing as@johncatt.com please) with the ISBNs, quantities required, and invoicing & delivery details.

Remember, all copies of WalkThrus books are **just £6 per copy** for members. See ISBNs below:

- Teaching WalkThrus Vol 1 (yellow): 978-1912906765
- Teaching WalkThrus Vol 2 (blue): 978-1913622473
- Teaching WalkThrus Vol 3 (green): 978-1915261137
- Learning WalkThrus (perfect for your students): 978-1036007263

Early Careers Teachers (ECTs)

All ECTs should be registered and have school mentors and induction tutors.

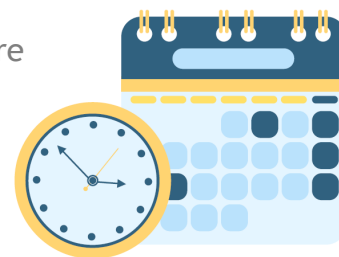
The process for doing this can be found [here](#) but please contact [Janine Ashman](#) if you have any questions.

All LSP schools should use the following providers:

	ECF	Appropriate Body
Primary	EDT	Five Counties
Secondary	Ambition	Five Counties

Key Dates, Deadlines and Reminders

These reminders do not replace the LSP Annual Planner so please ensure you are checking this regularly (link on next page).



Key Dates

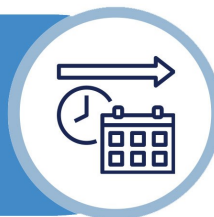
DATE	INFORMATION	FAO
16-27 September 2024	Headteacher Performance Development (Appraisals) to be completed within this timeframe.	Heads & Chairs
Friday 20 September 2024	Deadline for all staff to complete Annual Safeguarding Declaration (and Child Care Deceleration for Primary staff) on ESS	All
Friday 20 September 2024	Deadline for Gifts & Hospitality and Business Interests Declarations to be returned to the LSP Central Team via lgbreturns@lsp.org.uk	Heads, SBMs & Clerks
Friday 4 October 2024	Final deadline for all Governors and Trustees to complete Online Annual Safeguarding Declaration .	Clerks & Chairs
Friday 25 October 2024	Deadline for Teacher and Leadership Performance Development (Appraisals) to be completed.	Heads & SBMs
Thursday 31 October 2024	Deadline for Support Staff Appraisals to be completed.	Heads & SBMs



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 2024/25

Click to view the Annual Planner
(Via Sharepoint)



Bulletin Index

Click to access an index of
previous bulletin articles

Previous Bulletins

Click to access previous editions of the
LSP Weekly News Bulletin



The Beacon

Click to read the latest edition of the
LSP Newsletter: The Beacon



SHARE WITH US

Don't forget, you can submit your school news stories to
be shared in our newsletters and on our social media.

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