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Introduction

I've very reluctantly had to turn down some lovely invitations to Christmas functions in schools over the last few weeks as my diary just hasn't allowed it, but I've got three that have been (or will be) real delights. One was as traditional a celebration as you can get; Wrington CE Primary School's Carol Service. Wrington is a magical village for such an event. The streets are pitch black and the light glowing through the stained glass church windows is as pretty as a picture. The service was a brilliant reflection of the school and its very musical Headteacher; Sarah Joskey was conducting the orchestra, leading the choirs and accompanying on the harp. Her husband was at the organ console. What was most touching for me was the way that the children were leaning into everything: music, readings and prayers. It was a delight. Thank you, Sarah!

Last Friday I had an even more moving event to attend which was Jo Keeble's leaving celebration at Yatton Schools. The new library has now been named in honour of Jo, which is a lovely way to record the contribution of a Headteacher with a passion for books. The hall was packed as Helen (Clarke) and Sarah (Howard) reflected on Jo's career at Yatton and the school that she has created out of its two distinct and very different predecessors. It is very sad that Jo's retirement has been clouded by illness but she was as joyful as ever and talked of her school as her 'happy place'. I think there is a lesson for every one of us - to be grateful for the wonder of life and learning that our schools are so full of. The glass is more than half full!

Lastly, I am anticipating with excitement tomorrow's celebration of Andreyia Cowan's long and very successful headship at High Down Schools. Andreyia's career has followed a similar path to Jo's as she also went from being the Head of the infant school to Executive Head of an infant/junior federation. Again, two quite different schools have been forged into a new and better whole.

I know just how influential Andreyia was in the very earliest days of our Trust's story. She, Richard (Riordan), Lorraine and Sharon and I were the original Heads and we shared responsibility for setting the course (just you and me left now, Richard!) Andreyia has always been enormous fun to work with. Her sense of humour has never failed, even under enormous provocation at times! A thing that I have learned from Andreyia is to love work but not to allow it to become the whole story of your life. She is always glowing when she talks about her smallholding, animals and self-sufficiency. I know that she is positively looking forward to the next chapter.

So to Jo, Andreyia and all of you who are leading our schools, thank you for your work and very best wishes for a joyful Christmas.

As ever,

Gary Lewis, Chief Executive

Merry Christmas - and thank you!

As this is the final bulletin of this year, we'd like to take this as an opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and to say thank you for all your hard work this year. We look forward to seeing you all in 2026!



Census Day - Thursday 15 January 2026

Further to the email to schools last week, Aspens have emailed the promotional material to all schools in preparation for the Census Day in January.

If you have not received this email, please let [Trust Services](#) know, and we can send you a copy.

More information and reminders will follow in the new year.

Primary Moderation INSET Day—Friday 16 January 2026

Thank you to primary heads who have confirmed the staff lists for attendance at the Primary Moderation Day on Friday 16 January.

The Lighthouse Learning Team will directly email all of those who are attending in the first week of term with key logistics and documents to prepare for the sessions.

Core Services Charge for the 2026-27 Financial Year

We made significant changes to the Core Services Charge in 2024-25 following the Operational Review. Having made these changes, we do not believe that further significant changes are required for the 2026-27 financial year.

One of the changes that was made in 2024-25 was to take a range of costs out of schools' budgets and move them into the Central Services Budget, therefore forming part of the Core Services Charge. One of the areas of expenditure that was moved as part of this change was Estates Compliance costs. There are now a few additional costs associated with compliance that we would also like to move out of school budgets and into the Core Services Charge. The value involved is relatively small but the purpose of proposing this change is to continue our plans to streamline administrative processes and increase consistency in the way that costs are administered.

The Trustees will be asked to agree the Core Services Charge for the 2026-27 financial year at their meeting on Wednesday 4 February 2026. This is in order to ensure that you have this information in time to prepare your budgets for the next 3 year period.

We will be consulting on the proposed Core Services Charge from Wednesday 7 January until 5.00pm on Friday 23 January. The consultation will be issued in the Weekly News Bulletin and the confirmed charges will be issued in the Bulletin on Wednesday 11 February.



Budget Forecast as at 31/10/25

Thank you to School Business Managers, and any other staff involved, for producing your first budget forecast report for the 2025-26 financial year.

The Central Finance Team have now checked your submissions for reasonableness and have reported the collated information to the Board of Trustees' Finance Committee.

The feedback from our quality assurance checks can be found [on Foldr](#):

School Business Managers- Trust Wide - Information for 2025-26 Budgets - Monitoring Feedback - Submission based on 31.10.25

You will need to enter your LA and DfE number to find the information for your school.

Please ensure that this feedback is reported to your next LGB meeting.

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 Finance Team](#).

Outcome of revenue outturn position at the end of the 2024-25 financial year

You'll be aware that the audit and the annual accounts 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 forecast. 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 will prepare the data to share with these schools to support schools with this process in the first week back after the Christmas break, 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 **Tuesday 3 February** in order for an analysis to be reported to the Finance Committee at their February meeting.

LGB Term 3 Agenda & Headteacher's Report

A reminder that the [LGB Term 3 Agenda](#) can be found on the [LSP Governance SharePoint](#).

We have also shared a new template for Headteacher's reports to LGBs, which should be used from Term 3 as well.

Thank you to all Clerks who have submitted LGB minutes to lgbreturns@lsp.org.uk, we look forward to receiving your Term 2 minutes in due course.

Governor Visits to Schools

As Governors, it is easy to become absorbed in the compliance aspects of our roles. This time of year often allows us to attend some of the festive school events, from carol services to Christmas fairs which allows us to see and interact with the school communities we are supporting.

Last week, as part of a planned governor link afternoon, the full governing body at Bishop Sutton and Stanton Drew had the opportunity to visit the school and engage directly with pupils, parents, and staff. We enjoyed a wonderful music performance, during which the teacher even encouraged the governors to join in and sing. The event also created valuable opportunities to speak informally with parents and gain insight into their experiences and perspectives.

Governors met with teachers to discuss current strengths and challenges, including curriculum delivery, workload, and priorities for pupil wellbeing. These conversations were constructive and closely aligned with themes that have emerged through recent governor work.

Overall, the visit provided a meaningful "temperature check" of the school and helped triangulate the information we receive through formal reporting. It was a positive and informative afternoon that served as a reminder of why we choose to be governors.

I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and I hope you all have an opportunity to switch off!

Sarah Cran, Lead on Governance



Reminder: Trustee Vacancies

The deadline for applications to become a LSP Trustee closes on Friday 9 January 2026.

Trustees play a key role in shaping our vision and strategy in a dynamic and rewarding environment. It is a rewarding role which also offers opportunities to develop your own leadership and professional skills.

More information can be found [on our website](#).

We also have some social media posts (LinkedIn and Facebook) scheduled over the next few weeks for these opportunities—please repost these to your networks.

Please share this with anyone you know who could be interested in volunteering with us.



LIGHTHOUSE
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP



**COULD YOU HELP CREATE A
BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR CHILDREN
AND SCHOOLS IN YOUR AREA?**

Becoming a Trustee is a rewarding and enriching opportunity to assist in shaping the future of our schools and helping staff and pupils to flourish

Upcoming Lighthouse Learning Sessions and CPD Networks

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

The full programme of Lighthouse Learning CPD on offer for 2025-26 can be found on the [LSP website](#).

DATE	EVENT	AUDIENCE
Monday 5 January 3.30-4.45pm	Primary Assessment Network Online via Teams	Primary Assessment Leads
Monday 12 January 3.30-4.45pm	Primary English Network Online via Teams	Primary Attendance Leads
Wednesday 14 January 3.30-5.00pm	Secondary Maths, MFL & Curriculum networks Online via Teams (Natalie Wilcox to circulate)	Secondary Maths, MFL, T&L Leads
Thursday 15 January 3.30-5.00pm	Secondary English Networks Online via Teams (Natalie Wilcox to circulate)	Secondary English Leads
Monday 19 January 1.00-4.00pm	Trust-wide SEND network Online via Teams	SENDCos (all phases)
Wednesday 21 January 3.30-4.00pm	Secondary Raising Standards Network Online via Teams	Secondary Progress Leads
Wednesday 21 & 28 January 3.45-5.00pm	Primary Geography Curriculum Training for tranche 3 schools <i>Sign up link to follow</i>	Tranche 3 primary staff
Reminders of the dates for late January/February will follow in due course		

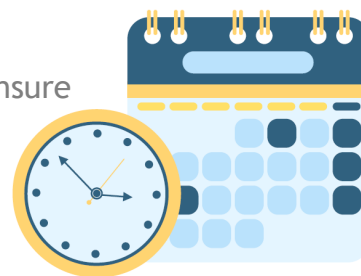
Upcoming CPD for Governors

Please see below upcoming CPD sessions available for Governors. Clerks, please share this with all Governors in your LGB.

DATE / TIME	EVENT	LINK
<p>Wednesday 14 January 7.00-8.00pm</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Thursday 15 January 10.30-11.30am</p>	<p>Chairs' Forum</p> <p>An opportunity to discuss the latest governance themes and developments and share best practice.</p>	<p>MS Teams invitations will be circulated in due course.</p>
<p>Monday 19 January from 5.30pm</p>	<p>IDSR Webinar</p> <p>Online webinar for LSP Primary School Leadership Teams and Local Governing Bodies.</p> <p>This session, run by Chris Chamberlain - Senior Primary Advisor, will look at the School inspection data summary report (IDSR) and how to understand and use the data to challenge and improve your school.</p>	<p>Click here to sign up for this webinar</p>
<p>Thursday 29 January 6.00-7.00pm</p>	<p>Ofsted Preparations</p> <p>Online webinar for all LSP LGBs looking at the new Ofsted framework and how to ensure your school, and LGB, can prepare for inspection</p>	<p>Click here to sign up for this webinar</p>

KEY DATES, DEADLINES & 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
5-15 January 2026	Spring 1 Assessment Window including PSC for Year 1, NFER for Years 2 - 5, 2023 R&M KS2 SATS for Yr6. Data to be uploaded to Insight by 31 January 2026.	Primary Heads
Friday 16 January 2026	LSP Primary Moderation INSET Day	Primary Heads
Thursday 22 January 2026 8.30am-12.30pm	LSP Headteachers' Meeting @ Nailsea Baptist Church	Headteachers
Tuesday 3 February 2026	Deadline for schools to have reviewed their final revenue outturn (2024-25) against their April forecast	Heads & SBMs



KEY LINKS

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 2025/26

Click to view the Annual Planner for next academic year (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