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Introduction

Dear Colleagues,

I had the pleasure of visiting Horfield CE Primary School for a morning this week. Horfield has been facing some challenges, not least the recent illness and absence of the Head, Rae Harris. Rae has decided not to return to her post and will be relocating to Hong Kong in the summer, so we are supporting the school even more closely than usual. When I arrived I was greeted by Richard Riordan, Head at Golden Valley, who has generously been giving two days a week to support the leaders at Horfield. Louise O'Rourke from our SEND team was working with him and I had the real sense of the Trust's collective capacity to hold a school when times are difficult.

My visit was memorable for another reason too. When we visited the school hall we saw that it had been taken over by an immersive Holy Week experience where children were able to sit at a carefully laid table to hear about the Last Supper and in doing so make a living tableau of the scene. They progressed around other stations including Gethsemane, Golgotha and the empty tomb. All of this had been artfully and musically evoked and members of staff and volunteers from the parish church were leading the whispered explorations. We know spirituality when we meet it and that was the real deal.

In the Staff Room I was pitched a brilliant idea for a whole trust musical celebration at the Bristol Beacon next year; I'm sold! I'm also conscious that the positive visit that I had this week does not lessen the reality of the challenge in the school. Our leadership and SEND support continue to be crucial for Horfield at this moment and a good trust creates both capacity and opportunity. We are on that mission both in this school and in many other ways across LSP.

When I was at Horfield I had the opportunity to say a word of thanks and best wishes to Flora de Ospina, the School's School Business Manager who is moving on to a new role. Flora has played a really instrumental and positive role in supporting the school through its academy transfer and into LSP. She has been a pleasure to work with.

I would also like to thank Debs Woodbridge and Tiff Collard, SBMs at Blagdon Primary School, who are also leaving. Working in a smaller, more rural, school such as Blagdon brings its own unique quirks and challenges. They have both played a key role in keeping the 'wheels turning' and will be missed.

Finally I would like to note the retirement of Clare Welbourne, Headteacher at Easton CE Primary. Clare has made a huge contribution to the community of an inner Bristol school and will have great achievements to reflect on. I wish her the very best for her retirement.

I know that there are many colleagues in our schools who are very ready for a break, so safe travelling and best wishes for a restful and enjoyable holiday. To all of you celebrating Easter, I hope that you meet some of the wonder that I saw at Horfield this week!

As ever,

Gary Lewis, Chief Executive

Proposal on the future of Wraxall School

You will recall that a listening period was held earlier this year on the proposal to [partially close Wraxall School from September 2026](#).

We had been expecting a decision from the Department for Education on this proposal last week, but they have now informed us that a decision will not be given before the end of April 2026.

School staff and wider community have been updated on this delay and as soon as we hear any more from the DfE we will let you all know.

Policy Publication: Uniform (model policy)

As mentioned [in previous bulletins](#) a model Uniform Policy has been created for LSP schools to use. It can be found [on Foldr](#): *LSP Policies\Operational Policies\Model Policies* for schools to adapt.

The Department for Education expects you to have a Uniform Policy published on your website - this is wider than your uniform rules/expectations.

Action: All schools need to ensure you have a Uniform Policy, which has been ratified by your Local Governing Body (LGB), on your websites by September 2026 at the very latest.

A final reminder that from September compulsory branded items of uniform are limited to: three (for primary schools) or four (secondary schools, if one is a tie) and so your uniform expectations will need to reflect these new statutory guidelines.

Policy Publication: Restrictive Interventions and Safe Touch Policy

Trustees have ratified the Trust-wide Restrictive Interventions and Safe Touch Policy. This policy incorporates the new legal regulations and responsibilities which come into force today (1 April 2026) and supersedes any policies you already have in place on these topics.

It has been published on the [LSP website](#) and [on Foldr](#) (*LSP Policies\Operational Policies*) and applies, from today, to all schools within LSP. All school websites should already be linking to our policies to stop duplication issues for Trust-wide policies.

Action: No further administrative actions required. It is **very important** to ensure you are referring to the latest version of this policy and all staff have been made aware of the details and processes within this policy. You may also need to review/update any policies that refer to this one.

Policy Update: Equality and Diversity

The Trust-wide Equality and Diversity Policy is scheduled for review this month. Due to significant changes expected in the coming months (including in KCSIE 2026) Trustees have agreed to extend the review period until December 2026 so that we have time to do a full review, consultation and update the policy when new guidance has been published.

This policy is published on the [LSP website](#) and [on Foldr](#) (*LSP Policies\Operational Policies*)

Action: None. Information only.

Reminder: Parent & Pupil Surveys 2025/26

The window for Parent and Pupil Surveys this year is Monday 20 April - Friday 8 May 2026. By the end of today (Wednesday 1 April), Headteachers will have been sent an email, which contains the full set of instructions and the links to both surveys, so you have everything you need to facilitate the surveys within the timeframe above. Please keep an eye out for this email, and if you have any questions [please get in touch](#).

Please note, pupils are encouraged to put their name/class/tutor group into the Pupil Survey. The Parents Survey is still anonymous, however parents are given the option to include their details if they wish to have their feedback followed up.

Staff Surveys will take place in Term 2 of the 2026/27 academic year.



Budget Planning - New Deployment Model for Primary Schools

As you are aware, we are asking schools to have a draft 2026-27 3-year budget completed by **Tuesday 21 April**. Additionally, primary schools should have an up-to-date Deployment Model for 2026-27 ready by this date. The new version of the Deployment Model has now been updated with 2026-27 GAG funding and is now ready for completion. It can be downloaded from Foldr:

School Business Managers - Trust Wide - Information for 2026-27 budgets - Deployment Model 2026-27

The Deployment Model will need to be updated for 2027-28 and your final budget by Thursday 4 June. The Central Finance Team will review Deployment Models alongside the IMP Master Scenario for both the initial and final budget quality assurance checks.

If you need any support with completion of your Deployment Model, please contact the [Central Finance Team](#).

NJC Support Staff Pay Offer

For the 2026/27 financial year, NJC employers have made a "full and final" offer of a 3.3% increase on all pay points effective from 1 April 2026. Please note that this is an offer only and has not been agreed. IMP is currently projecting a 3% pay award for support staff from April 2025. The Central Finance Team will update IMP with the 3.3% offer on Tuesday 7 April.

Inclusive Mainstream Fund

As you may be aware the DfE have issued the details of the new Inclusive Mainstream Fund to support the SEND Reforms. They have also issued the rates of funding and a funding calculator. Unfortunately, for secondary schools, the amounts generated by the calculator do not tie up with the funding rates that they have issued (the calculator seems to work well for primary schools). This has been raised with the DfE and we await further information. Whilst this funding will be available to support schools in line with the DfE's aims 'for schools to move towards practices that are inclusive by design, providing early support directly to children without the need for diagnosis or statutory process', there are some steps that we need to follow first. It is important that we move towards the new arrangements cohesively, not just as a Trust but in partnership with our Local Authorities (LA). Conversations between LAs and their school leaders are underway and conversations within our Trust will need to follow. In the meantime, please do not start to develop your plans to utilise these resources nor add any estimated income to your draft budgets. We will provide support and guidance on doing so as soon as we possibly can.

PS Financials Version 7 Upgrade and Training

A successful training session was delivered by Tom McGreavy from the Central Finance Team on Thursday 26 March, where the new upgraded platform was introduced and various processes walked through with examples. [Recordings of the session are now available](#) for those attendees to revisit or for those that were unable to attend.

Unfortunately, we were unable to 'Go Live' with Version 7 on Friday 27 March as planned due to technical issues with the servers. As a result, the new Go Live session is planned for **Friday 17 April 2026**, however due to the technical issues it does mean that **the system will not be accessible all day on 16 April 2026**.

As most of the schools are on Easter Break this is likely to only affect our secondary schools and the Central Finance Team. If your colleagues are working through the holidays, **please ensure they are aware that access will not be permitted on 16 April**.

We will therefore be starting Term 5 on **Monday 20 April 2026** using PS Financials Version 7. An email will be sent out confirming when the system is active. If you experience any issues with connection please contact Finance@lsp.org.uk. Please do not use personal email addresses as some members are on annual leave.

Many thanks,

Natalie Fear, Finance Manager



Staff transferring to schools within the Trust

We have a number of employees who are moving from one school to another school within LSP. When this move takes place we need to ensure that personnel and payroll records are retained in iTrent, such as absence records, documents, contact data etc. This move is known as a 'MAT Transfer' in iTrent. It is important that schools do not make a staff members moving to another school with the Trust a leaver.

Guidance on how to transfer an employee to another school can be found in HR Secure in the Guides section: [Guides](#)

Should you require any support in actioning a MAT transfer, please [contact the Central HR Team](#).

Background checks via uCheck

You may have seen new options that have become available via uCheck when processing a DBS check. They have two options; one is for an 'ID check' and the other is for a 'Digital Right to Work' check.

There are additional costs to both checks and the checks also require candidates to have a smartphone and download an app.

The additional cost for each check is:

- ID Check (for DBS only) £4.20 per check
- Digital Right to Work Check: £6.30 per check

We recommend that schools continue to use the current method of gaining ID and Right to Work documents at the interview stage, so they can be checked alongside the candidate.

We appreciate that from time-to-time schools may need to use these new options should candidates not live locally and if they have forgotten to provide these documents at interview, but these should not be used regularly due to the additional costs to schools.

If there are any queries, please contact the [Central HR Team](#).



Reward Gateway - Multi Factor Authentication

Please share the information below with staff:

Reward Gateway (RG) have set up a new Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) process to ensure individual accounts are even more secure. This is a simple step for all employees and adds additional protection without changing the way you use the platform.

What is multi-factor authentication?

Multi-factor authentication is a security feature that requires you to verify your identity using two or more methods before accessing your account. This typically includes:

- Something you know (like your password)
- Something you have (like your phone or an authenticator app)

Even if someone gets hold of your password, they won't be able to access your account without the second verification step. This extra step will protect you against phishing and fraud.

How to set up multi-factor authentication

Multi-factor authentication will go live on 31 March 2026. When staff log in on or after that date, they will be asked to set up MFA. The process only takes a few minutes and the steps will be outlined on the platform. Reward Gateway have also made a step-by-step overview, [check out the user guide here](#) that takes individuals through the process as well.

Fixed term contracts vs Permanent

Further to the [bulletin article last week](#) asking schools to review fixed term contracts, it is important to understand the difference between a fixed term contract and a permanent contract, and which is most appropriate for the post.

We typically appoint roles on a permanent basis, however there are times when it is appropriate to recruit on a fixed term basis.


Examples of when a fixed term contract is more appropriate include:

- Covering leave, including maternity, paternity, adoption or long-term sick leave
- If there is temporary funding for the position
- Project work
- If a role is not required the following year, e.g. a reduction in class sizes (therefore avoiding redundancies for permanent staff).

If you have any questions regarding whether a role should be fixed term or permanent please [contact the Central HR Team](#).

Changes to Support Staff Member Contributions

Please see below the updates to the Avon Pension Fund Support Staff Pension member contribution bands for 2025-26 and 2026-27. The poster can be [downloaded here](#) to be shared in staff rooms:

LSP SUPPORT STAFF PENSION UPDATE

LIGHTHOUSE
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

Changes to Support Staff Member Contributions

Please see below the updates to the Avon Pension Fund Support Staff Pension member contribution bands for 2025-26 and 2026-27:

EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTION BANDS APRIL 2025 - MARCH 26

Band	Actual pensionable pay for an employment	Main section contribution rate for that employment	50/50 section contribution rate for that employment
1	Up to £17,800	5.5%	2.75%
2	£17,801 to £28,000	5.8%	2.9%
3	£28,001 to £45,600	6.5%	3.25%
4	£45,601 to £57,700	6.8%	3.4%
5	£57,701 to £81,000	8.5%	4.25%
6	£81,001 to £114,800	9.9%	4.95%
7	£114,801 to £135,300	10.5%	5.25%
8	£135,301 to £203,000	11.4%	5.7%
9	£203,001 or more	12.5%	6.25%

EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTION BANDS APRIL 2026 - MARCH 27

Band	Actual pensionable pay for an employment	Main section contribution rate for that employment	50/50 section contribution rate for that employment
1	Up to £18,400	5.5%	2.75%
2	£18,401 to £29,000	5.8%	2.9%
3	£29,001 to £47,300	6.5%	3.25%
4	£47,301 to £59,800	6.8%	3.4%
5	£59,801 to £84,000	8.5%	4.25%
6	£84,001 to £119,100	9.9%	4.95%
7	£119,101 to £140,400	10.5%	5.25%
8	£140,401 to £210,700	11.4%	5.7%
9	£210,701 or more	12.5%	6.25%

Operational Review of Primary Site Staff

As you will know, we consulted in January/February on changes to the arrangements for Primary Site Staff. The Trustees reviewed the one response that we received, and considered the way forward at their meeting on Wednesday 25 March. Trustees agreed to implement the proposed new arrangements as detailed below:

Proposals	Outcomes
1. Move all primary school estates staff onto the standard LSP contract of employment	Trustees agreed to implement this proposal immediately for all newly appointed staff. It is proposed to implement this from January 2027 for existing staff following staff consultation from 3 June–3 July 2026.
2. Introduce a standard job description for all primary estates staff	Trustees agreed to implement this proposal immediately for all newly appointed staff. It is proposed to implement this from January 2027 for existing staff following staff consultation from 3 June–3 July 2026. The job description has been amended since consultation to include additional responsibilities and increased from JG3 to JG4. This is due to recruitment issues. The job description will shortly be available in the Job Descriptions folder in LSP - HR SECURE on SharePoint.
3. Transfer of line management of estates staff from Headteachers in primary schools to the Hub Estates Lead in the Central Team	Trustees agreed to implement this proposal immediately for all newly appointed staff. It is proposed to implement this from January 2027 for existing staff following staff consultation from 3 June–3 July 2026.
4. Agree the number of hours per week of estates staff individually with each Headteacher with the intention of meeting at least the model staffing hours and meeting the needs of the school	For schools that are currently, or have recently recruiting site staff, these conversations will have taken place with Hub Estates Leads by 21 April 2026 For schools with existing employed site staff, these conversations will take place with Hub Estates Leads by Friday 15 May 2026 in preparation for consultation starting on 3 June 2026
5. In partnership with the Headteacher, negotiate with contractors providing estates functions to primary schools that the hours are sufficient to undertake the full role	For schools that are currently using contractors, these conversations will take place with Hub Estates Leads by Friday 15 May 2026

Operational review of Primary Site Staff

(Continued...)

Proposals	Outcomes
6. Negotiate with contractors providing estates functions to primary schools to ensure that the same functions are being delivered as by employed staff	For schools using contractors, these conversations will have taken place by Tuesday 21 April 2026
7. Undertake a recruitment drive to increase the number of employed estates staff in our primary schools, reducing our reliance on contractors	Underway and ongoing. Two new site staff have recently been appointed to support four schools. Further recruitment processes will be undertaken after Easter 2026.
8. Set the expectation that repairs and maintenance budgets are considered in line with the model levels and discuss this individually with each Headteacher as part of the 2026-27 budget setting process	These conversations will take place with Hub Estates Leads by Friday 15 May 2026.
9. Hub Estates Lead are given the authority to spend up to the value of £500 from the schools repairs and maintenance budget without direct authorisation from the Headteacher, although immediately reported to the Headteacher	Trustees agreed that this would be implemented as site staff line management moves to the Central Team (i.e between now and January 2027)
10. NEW - Provide safety trousers, boots and high vis vests to all employed site staff in primary schools along with LSP branded t-shirts and fleeces	Trustees agreed to fund the first purchase funded as a one off from Central Team reserves. Replacements, and any school specific branding will need to be funded by schools budgets. We aim to have this in place as soon after Easter as possible.

The consultation with existing site staff will be managed by the Central Team, in line with the timeframes set out above, to ensure consistency of messaging and processes. Heads will be sent the details ahead of the start of the consultation and, other than providing support to your site staff, will not be required to undertake the consultation process.

If you have any questions about these changes please contact [John Finch, Head of Estates](#)

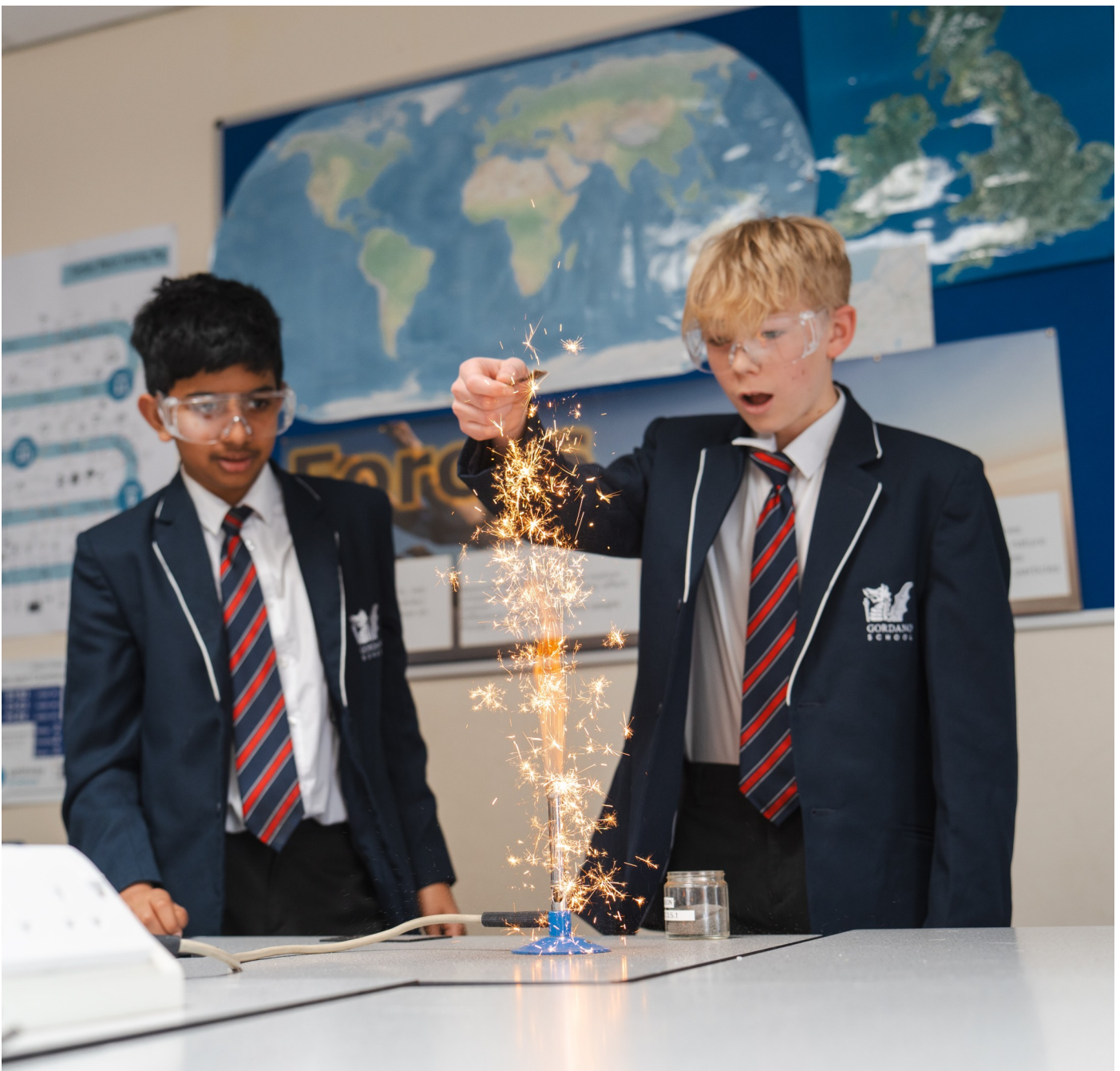
Easter Energy Switch Off

As we are approaching the holidays, can we remind staff to look at switching off your heating over this period to save on your gas and electricity. Also consider any IT, or other specialist devices that don't need to be on during this time, for example classroom screens.

According to Energy Sparks, primary schools can spend over £600 on energy during the Easter break!

Energy efficiency across the school site is an important step in supporting both financial and carbon savings. Energy switch off campaigns can also support your progress against your Climate Action Plans.

If you have any questions, please speak to your Hub Estates Lead.



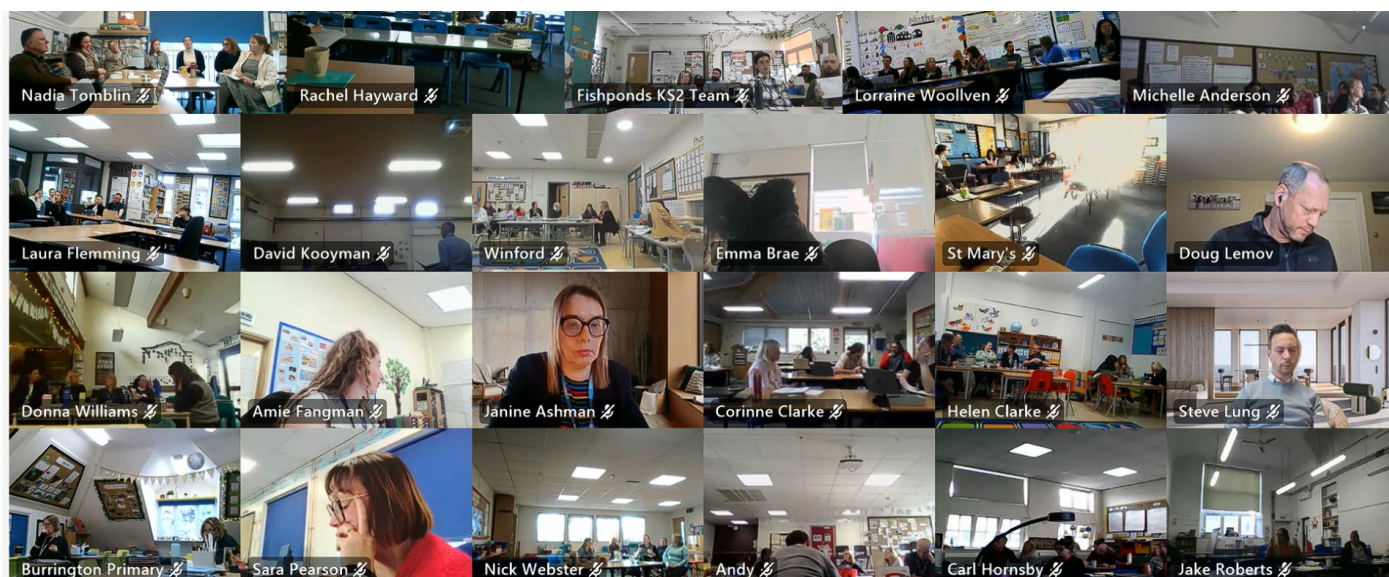
Upcoming Lighthouse Learning Sessions and CPD Networks

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

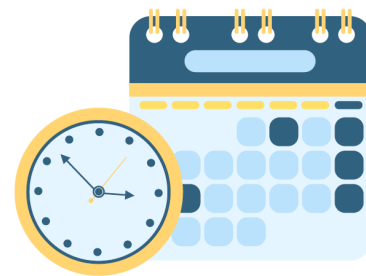
DATE	EVENT	AUDIENCE
TERM 4 DATES		
Monday 20 April 3.30-4.45pm	Primary English Network Online via Teams	Primary English Leads
Monday 20 April 3.30-4.45pm	Primary Maths Network Online via Teams	Primary Maths Leads
Monday 27 April 8.30-11.30am	Primary DHT/AHT Network English Hub Room @ St Peter's Primary, Portishead	Primary DHT/AHTs
Monday 27 April 1.00-4.00pm	Early Years Network English Hub Room @ St Peter's Primary, Portishead	Early Years Leads
Monday 27 April 3.30-4.45pm	Primary Assessment Network Online via Teams	Primary Assessment Leads
Reminders of the dates for late April/May will follow in due course		

TLAC Update and Thanks

Last week our final online Teach like a Champion (TLAC) CPD session took place. We wanted to take this opportunity to say thank you to all those who have taken part and participated in the sessions. Staff have been really engaged and we are already seeing the impact of the TLAC sessions in classrooms.



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



DATE	INFORMATION	FAO
Monday 27 April	Deadline to review and send out Support Staff Pay Progression letters ahead of April pay day.	Heads & SBMs/ OMs

Wishing you all a Happy Easter

Wishing a Happy Easter to all our staff, governors, members and trustees. We hope you all have a restful and enjoyable break!



Happy Easter

Wishing you all a relaxing and enjoyable
break over the Easter holidays



LIGHTHOUSE
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

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