Leadership Update – April 2025

Leadership Update and Schools Bulletin: <https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/>

**Quality of Education**

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| **Item** | **Committee/individual** |
| [**Deployment of Teaching Assistants**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/deployment-of-teaching-assistants/)  This guidance is designed to help you make decisions about how to deploy your teaching assistants. Its five recommendations are drawn from the evidence base on teaching assistant (TA) deployment practices and how these can lead to improved outcomes.  This web page contains more information and links to the guidance from Education Endowment Foundation. |  |
| [**STA Assessment Update April 2025**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/sta-assessment-update-april/)  This web page will link you to the full updates for Reception, Key stage 1 and Key stage2 from the Standards and Testing Agency. |  |
| [**Sign up for feature testing of the new National Curriculum**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/sign-up-for-feature-testing-of-the-new-national-cu/)  Following Pearsons work and research into the New National Curriculum the next step is for Pearson to carry out user engagement activities. If you are interested in taking part and would like to receive more information, please complete an [expression of interest form for Pearson’s user testing](https://www.us17.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8088a92c9c7454749d4a06114&id=2763c44f85&e=f13ac66262) by following this link. |  |
| [**2025 Reception Baseline Assessment**](%20https:/www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/2025-reception-baseline-assessment/)  Guidance from the Standards and Testing Agency are linked from this web page. This document sets out the statutory requirements for the reception baseline assessment (RBA) and reporting arrangements for the academic year 2025 to 2026.  It is relevant to the following schools with a reception cohort: \*maintained schools \*academies, including free schools  \*special schools, including maintained special schools and special academies  \*Ministry of Defence (MoD) schools |  |
| [**Multiplication tables check: IT guidance**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/multiplication-tables-check-it-guidance/)  It is a statutory requirement for schools to administer the multiplication tables check (MTC).  We recommend reviewing this guidance in advance of the MTC service opening, to ensure sufficient time to resolve any compatibility issues if they occur.    This web page provides links to MTC dates, [2025 key stage 2 assessment and reporting arrangements (ARA)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-assessment-and-reporting-arrangements-ara) and IT Guidance document. |  |
| [**National Curriculum Assessments: key stage 2 tests**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/national-curriculum-assessments/)  Guidance for headteachers, teachers and test administrators involved in administering the key stage 2 (KS2) national curriculum tests is available via this link. |  |

**Personal Development**

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| [**Pupil attendance in schools**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/pupil-attendance-in-schools/)  The Department has published updated official statistics on attendance levels, including overall, authorised, and unauthorised absences, in state-funded primary, secondary, and special schools.  This web page will link you to the headline facts and figures, and GOV.UK publication Pupil attendance in schools: 9 September2024 to 4 April 2025. |  |
| [**School Food: Guidance for Governors & Trustees**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/school-food-guidance-for-governors-trustees/)  Ensuring that every pupil has access to nutritious and high-quality food is a crucial responsibility for school governing bodies.  This web page will link you to the full DfE guidance. |  |
| [**2025 to 2026 high needs operational guide**](%20%20https:/www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/2025-to-2026-high-needs-operational-guide/)  This web page will link you to further information regarding the updated the [high needs funding 2025 to 2026 operational guide](https://news.esfagov.uk/7B662E8E9E3F945F828E88AA2672B6710EC08A99D2402926ED098286AC905F65/2961DD2A6CF574E1B92853487B158816/LE35) in the following areas:   * information about the distribution methodology for the additional funding to compensate employers for the increase in National Insurance contributions * updated information following the introduction of the Procurement Act 2023, which took effect from 24 February 2025 * references to updated [arranging alternative provision commissioning](https://news.esfagov.uk/AADA3FB9B3301500F523D646CD2CEF2EE464D8FD2519F948381D2EDCEF4017D7/2961DD2A6CF574E1B92853487B158816/LE35) guidance for local authorities and schools. |  |
| [**Updated DfE Guidance: Alternative Provision**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/updated-dfe-guidance-alternative-provision/)  The DfE has published updated statutory guidance on [arranging alternative provision](https://nga.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=61b50c958d6d8bdc66ca58bbd&id=8c4a26032c&e=efe1c84100) designed to support schools and local authorities understand their statutory duties, powers and best practice.  This web page link will take you to the Statutory guidance for Alternative Provision. |  |

**Leadership and Management**

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| [**Getting Information About Schools Platform Enhancement**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/gias-platform-enhancement/)  The DfE have successfully soft launched a new feature on the GIAS platform. This update allows for the inclusion of clerk/governance professionals' details, including clerks, on the platform. While it is not yet mandatory, it is strongly encouraged that governance boards to input their clerk/governance professionals' details into GIAS so that they can stay informed about the department’s priorities and receive key information efficiently. |  |
| [**Ofsted chief rejects call for fewer inspection grades**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/ofsted-chief-rejects-call-for-fewer-inspection-gra/)  Ofsted chief inspector Sir Martyn Oliver has pushed back against calls for the watchdog to give schools one of three grades, instead of one of five as planned.  This web page will link you to more details. |  |
| [**New DfE guidance on SEND for governing boards**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/new-dfe-guidance-on-send-for-governing-boards/)  This guidance aims to help boards with their role and responsibilities in relation to pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities and to empower governors and trustees to hold their schools to account.  This web page will link you to the full guidance from GOV.uk |  |
| [**Curriculum and Assessment Review interim report**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/curriculum-and-assessment-review-interim-report/)  On Tuesday 18 March, the Curriculum and Assessment Review team published their [interim report](https://www.us17.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8088a92c9c7454749d4a06114&id=4ef197da58&e=f13ac66262). The Review will publish its final report in autumn 2025.  This web page will link you to the full interim report. |  |
| [**Pupil premium allocations**](%20https:/www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/pupil-premium-allocations-1/)  We have published the initial [pupil premium allocations for 2025 to 2026 financial year](https://news.esfagov.uk/C887BDA99389C3004B6CA8DC9B845803E08714350A6A0A4FFEFEC08B734A5A8E/2961DD2A6CF574E1B92853487B158816/LE35). We will confirm these in June and will make first payments to academies on 8 July 2025.  This web page will link you to further information re allocations and the [customer help portal](https://news.esfagov.uk/28B3A2BBD7123BD09405D048A37679DC6F5590AB983C7354F1A22A864ABFABBB/2961DD2A6CF574E1B92853487B158816/LE35) if needed. |  |
| [**A new way to buy energy for your school**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/a-new-way-to-buy-energy-for-your-school/)  The [Department for Education’s Energy for schools](https://news.esfagov.uk/3D2B32D90EC67DC5CDC9319C6685EF226E5C9F3151B2EA6C9E7DFE5460A90A94/2961DD2A6CF574E1B92853487B158816/LE35) is a new way to buy energy for your school or trust. Offering full DfE oversight and support, removing the burden of complex procurement processes from schools. This web page will link you to full details about how it works and what you could do next.  Follow this link for further information. |  |
| [**Get information about schools**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/get-information-about-schools/)  We want to remind you of the Department of Education’s (DfE) requirement to ensure that your record on the ‘Get Information about Schools’ (GIAS) service should be updated as changes occur, and at a minimum of once a month if required. Ofsted systems rely on accurate information being recorded on GIAS to ensure that important documents relating to Ofsted inspections are copied to the correct organisations.  Further information about updating GIAS can be found through this web link page with DfE [guidance](https://www.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=46387df40cbf78623e0679b2f&id=538f17879c&e=8a49f0856b) and [frequently asked questions](https://www.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=46387df40cbf78623e0679b2f&id=97bfca2d42&e=8a49f0856b). |  |
| [**National Insurance Update**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/national-insurance-update/)  The methodology for the National Insurance contributions (NICs) grant. This includes guidance on how we will allocate funding for the 12-month period April 2025 to March 2026.  For full details follow this link. |  |
| [**Academy Resource Management Self-Assessment Checklist**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/academy-resource-management-self-assessment-checkl/)  The [school resource management self-assessment checklist](https://news.esfagov.uk/B2E3A710450780FABC983172B38A89EE8E67228FEE1A1253DE4648BF8B7A43F4/2961DD2A6CF574E1B92853487B158816/LE35) is now open for academy trusts to complete and  return by Friday 14 March 2025. (Time is of the essence!)  All academy trusts with an open academy on Tuesday 31 December 2024 must submit a checklist.  The check list is available via this web page. |  |

**Behaviour and Attitudes**

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| [**Consultation on the Use of Reasonable Force**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/consultation-on-the-use-of-reasonable-force/)  The Department for Education has committed to updating the [Use of reasonable force in schools guidance](https://news.service.education.gov.uk/29C5EC103DE68AEAF571D0FEDDF9A53694FBC87400E22756F4E26707AE6D76F4/26CAA300657940B31FEDB2E86B63B897/LE35) and commencing legislation which mandates schools to record and report each significant incident where force is used.  This web page link gives you access to the DfE Guidance and the consultation document on revisions to the guidance. |  |

**Safeguarding**

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| [**Operation Encompass**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/encompass-teachers-national-helpline/) **– National helpline**  This page contains more information about the dedicated Operation Encompass National Teachers’ Helpline, and the Helpline number.  For FREE advice from an Educational or Clinical Psychologist about how best to support children experiencing domestic abuse, call the Operation Encompass Professionals’ National Advice and Guidance line on **0204 513 9990**. Monday to Friday, 8am-1pm |  |
| [**New Update Basic Awareness Slides for Schools**](%20%20https:/www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/new-update-basic-awareness-slides-for-schools-2024/)  Follow this page to download updated AfC Child Protection Safeguarding slides. |  |
| [**Child on child abuse toolkit**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/new-child-on-child-tool-kit/)  This page contains a link to the page on Leadership Update containing our child-on-child abuse toolkit and further resources and links for schools. |  |
| [**New Prevent Duty**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/new-prevent-duty-1/)  This page links to the DfE’s guidance and risk assessment templates, to support designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) working in education settings. |  |
| [**Single Central Record guidance**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/single-central-record-guidance/)  Which checks to record, plus a downloadable checklist. |  |

**Schools' Bulletin - updated for the Summer Term 2025:** <https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/schools-bulletin/>

**Governance Training Link:** https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/core-training-programme-for-governors-and-clerks/