Leadership Update – January 2025

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

**Quality of Education**

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| **Item** | **Committee/individual** |
| [**SEND training through Universal SEND Services**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/send-training-through-universal-send-services/)  The Department for Education’s Universal SEND Services programme provides Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) specific Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for school and further education staff.  This web page contains more information and links to the online training. |  |
| [**Ofsted Annual Report**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/ofsted-annual-report-1/)  HM Chief Inspector published his annual 2023/24, one of the key findings were……most children are well-served by the education sector and, in social care, life-changing work is being done for children and young people every day. However, education and social care professionals are working hard under immense pressure. Where systems are under strain, it is vulnerable and disadvantaged children who are most affected.  This web page will link you to the full report. |  |
| [**Curriculum Review**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/curriculum-review/)  This web page will link you to further information regarding the curriculum and assessment review. |  |
| [**STA Assessment Updates**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/sta-assessment-updates/)  Primary assessment update/dates from the Standards and Testing Agency are linked from this web page. |  |
| [**NEW – Support Staff Pay Increase (RBWM)**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/new-support-staff-pay-increase-rbwm/)  The support staff pay award from 1 April 2024 has finally been agreed. This pay award is for all school but excludes academies.   * Flat rate increase of £1,290 on all pay points on the national pay spine up to £52,805. * Locally agreed pay points above £52,805 increase by 2.5%. * All allowances increase by 2.5%, e.g. Outer Fringe Allowance.   This web page link will take you to the updated pay scales. |  |
| **[Academy Conversion](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/academy-conversion/)**  Academy conversion grant ended on 1st January 2025. This web page link contains more information. |  |

**Personal Development**

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| [**Uplift to UIFSM and FE free meals per-meal rate**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/uplift-to-uifsm-and-fe-free-meals-per-meal-rate/)  Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) and Further Education free meals (FEFM) rate has been agreed and will be increased from £2.53 to £2.58 for 2024 to 2025, backdated to the start of the academic year.  This web page contains further information re payment schedule. |  |
| [**Specialist SEND places to be created in mainstream schools**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/specialist-send-places-to-be-created-in-mainstream/)  The Secretary of State announced £740 million capital investment to create more specialist places in mainstream schools via classroom upgrades and adaptations.  This web page will link you to the full report. |  |
| [**School-based nurseries**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/school-based-nurseries/)  DFE has announced the first round of funding for up to 300 school-based nurseries as part of government’s opportunity mission to give every child the best start in life. Primary schools can now apply for up to £150,000 of £15 million capital funding, with the first stage of the plan set to support up to 300 new or expanded nurseries across England.  This web page will link you to further information regarding applications. |  |

**Leadership and Management**

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| [**Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/childrens-wellbeing-and-schools-bill/)  On Tuesday 17 December 2024, the Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill was introduced to Parliament, it is central to delivering on the government’s Plan for Change, which will put children’s futures at the centre of rebuilding public services and break down barriers to opportunity.  This web page link will take you to details presented by Department for Education and Bridget Phillipson MP |  |
| [**Complete the school census**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/complete-the-school-census/)  The Department for Education has updated the guidance for schools and local authorities on what data is needed for the school census and how to submit it.  Follow this web page link for the summary and technical links. |  |
| [**Ofsted to trial new inspection**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/ofsted-to-trial-new-inspection/)  Ofsted will trial “a new approach to inspections” ahead of a consultation on its new inspection framework. A “small number of volunteer schools” have been selected to “informally test” a revised inspection model from the start of the spring term.  This web page will link you to further information regarding Ofsted and its response to the Big Listen exercise. |  |
| [**Spending reform needed for SEND**](ttps://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/spending-reform-needed-for-send/)  Earlier this week, the Secretary of State announced £740 million capital investment to create more specialist places in mainstream schools via classroom upgrades and adaptations. Policy recommendations include streamlining processes for EHCP assessments, shifting focus to early intervention and investing in mainstream school inclusion.  This web page will link you to further information. |  |
| [**Budget announcement SEND**](http://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/budget-announcement-send/)  The Budget announced an additional £2.3 billion for mainstream schools and young people with high needs in 2025 to 2026.  The department is now in the process of calculating the schools and high needs national funding formula (NFF) for 2025 to 2026, to inform local authorities and schools of the funding they can expect to receive next year.  This web page will link you to further information and guidance from the Education and Skills Funding Agency. |  |
| [**What you need to know regarding the budget**](http://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/what-you-need-to-know-regarding-the-budget/)  This web page link will take you the highlights of the Education and children’s social care budget distribution. |  |
| [**Breakfast club rollout**](http://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/breakfast-club-roll-out/)  The pilot scheme will invite up to 750 state funded schools with primary aged-pupils to become early adopters and begin the roll out of free breakfast clubs.  This web page will link you to further information if you are considering signing up to become an early adopter. |  |
| [**Sports grant allocations**](http://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/sports-grant-allocations/)  We have published the 2024 to 2025 allocations for PE and sport premium on the manage your education and skills funding (MYSEF) service. |  |
| [**NEW – Pay Scales**](http://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/new-pay-scales/)  The Department for Education (DfE) has confirmed the new pay scales for 2024-25, following the government’s decision to implement a 5.5% salary increase for teachers and school leaders. The DfE has stated that schools will need to use some of their own budgets to cover the funding shortfall. While local authority-maintained schools are required to adhere to these pay scales, academies and free schools have the flexibility to set their own.  This web page link will take you to the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document and Guidance 2024 |  |
| [**NEW – SEND report**](http://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/new-send-report/)  The National Audit Office (NAO) has just published itsreportassessing the effectiveness of support for children and young people with SEN in England, it highlights significant financial pressures, with increased high-needs funding not translating into better outcomes. The headline is that the special educational needs (SEN) system is financially unsustainable unless reformed.  More detail can be accessed through this web page link. |  |
| [**Updated Autumn 2024 – what to publish online**](http://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/updated-what-to-publish-online/)  The Department for Education has updated its guidance for maintained schools, and for academies and Further Education colleges, on what information must or should be published on their websites.  This page contains the relevant links. |  |

**Behaviour and Attitudes**

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| [**Strong Attendance**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/strong-attendance/)  **Action for schools: Back to school preparation to ensure strong attendance next year.**  The DfE has revised the attendance toolkit originally produced for the national attendance campaign it began earlier this year, with top tips for schools on preparing during summer term for 'back to school' September 2024.  For families facing complex barriers, schools are reminded to refer to the guidance to put support in place for individual needs.  This page also contains information monitor your school attendance tool. |  |
| [**Mobile phones in school**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/mobile-phones/)  The DfE has published guidance (February 2024) for schools on prohibiting the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. This page contains more information and a link to the guidance. |  |

**Safeguarding**

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| [**Operation Encompass**](http://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/operation-encompass/)  Operation Encompass is a police and education early information safeguarding partnership enabling schools to offer immediate support to children experiencing domestic abuse. Operation Encompass ensures that there is a simple telephone call or notification to a school’s trained Designated Safeguarding Lead /Officer (known as key Adult) prior to the start of the next school day after an incident of police attended domestic abuse where there are children related to either of the adult parties involved.  This web page will link you to further information. |  |
| [**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 |  |
| [**National Safeguarding Review**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/national-safeguarding-review/)  Protecting children and responding to child sexual abuse within the family environment. The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel has published a national review about 193 children sexually abused by family members.  This web page will link you to the National Review. |  |
| [**Guidance: Sharing of Nude and Semi-nude Images**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/guidance-sharing-of-nude-and-semi-nude-images/)  Non-statutory guidance for safeguarding leads in schools on how to respond to incidents involving the sharing of nude and semi-nude images. Advice covers conducting risk assessment and recording of incidents and liaison with partner agencies and with parents / carers. |  |
| [**Cyber Attack**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/new-cyber-attack/)  **Information: Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) members – if an incident were to happen, is your school cyber secure and are you covered?** In a Buying for Schools blog post, Katy O’Connor, RPA Future Projects Strategy and Delivery Lead, checks in on progress to complete the four conditions to make sure your school is covered. |  |
| [**Prevent review**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/new-prevent-review/)  Schools Week reports that the Shawcross review of the Prevent programme finds that it is well-embedded in schools. However, oversight falls to the DfE and Ofsted is too often reactive, resulting in some ambiguity about compliance and monitoring. This page contains a link to the Schools Week article. |  |
| [**Child on child abuse toolkit**](https://www.leadershipupdate-rbwm.co.uk/child-on-child-abuse-toolkit-resources-for-schools/)  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. |  |
| [**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 Spring 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/