



GEP ACADEMIES WEEKLY BULLETIN WEEK COMMENCING 15 JUNE 2020

Reminders for this coming week:

GEP PRIMARY SBMs

16.06.20
09:00 – 12:00

GEP SECONDARY SBMs

18.06.20
8:30 – 10:30

GEP&AST ALL HEADS

18.06.20
09:30 – 12:00

Forthcoming meetings:

CEO BRIEFING TO GLACS

23.06.20
17:30 – 18:30

GEP EDUCATION COMMITTEE

30.06.20
15:30 – 17:30

GEP RESOURCES COMMITTEE

01.07.20
15:00 – 17:00

GEP AUDIT COMMITTEE

07.07.20
17:30 – 19:00

GEP EDUCATION COMMITTEE

15.07.20
10:00 – 12:00

GEP BOARD

16.07.20
17:30 – 19:00

Balancing now and the future...

Secondary Schools join primary schools in wider re-opening this week. Hearing primary colleagues share their learning has been beneficial for our secondary teams, even if the nuance of secondary advice from government is slightly different, although equally challenging. It has been impressive and heartening to see how well schools have been adapting provision and welcoming children into school.

The vital role school communities play has never been as clear or present than in these current circumstances. Whether through key worker and vulnerable learner provision, on-line learning delivery, virtual assemblies and parents' evenings, our work has always remained active, engaging and vital.

We also recognise more, the social glue we provide to our families and children. Organising computer access for our vulnerable children, delivering food parcels or lunch vouchers, following up pastoral support calls and liaising with social services - this wider role of education has been exposed more clearly than before. It is often this side of our work that is slightly lost and it has been heartening to see that all schools have not forgotten this core aspect of our work. Thank you for all that has been achieved here, and continues to be undertaken, despite sometimes being unseen.

While we have been striving to get the balance right with provision now, I am also aware that planning for the future is well underway. Our old normal and new normal combine in the sense that work planning for next academic year always takes place at this time of year, and this year is no different. We are struck by the challenge that what the next academic year looks like remains uncertain. Whether we are fully 'back' or in some reduced, socially distant capacity is unclear. What is clear however is that we need to plan for delivering the best for our young people.

Thank you to headteachers for continuing to plan timetables, engage in SEF discussions with SIPs and share development aims for the coming year. We look forward to sharing our plans as a wider group of colleagues at our joint GEP & AST Heads meeting this week, where we can identify the support schools require and clarify the roles schools and their leaders will play in shaping the trust to benefit the requirements of their schools.

As always, our eye is on the present and the future. Enjoy the week ahead.

Actions for Heads:

- In response to requests from colleagues, please note the change of start time of the GEP/AST All heads meeting. The secondary heads will be meeting first at 09:30, with the primary heads joining the meeting at 10:30.
- Ensure all Business Managers have submitted final budgets by Friday 19th June for trustee review.
- Review the proposed special leave provisions and respond with any comments or queries to Jo Coles by 19th June.

Actions for Governors:

- Look out for details of a briefing session on 23rd June at 17:30 from Jack Mayhew, from your head, chair or clerk.

School Improvement Update:

School Improvement Partner visits: Please can HTs liaise directly with Carol and Jane to organise the summer term SIP visit as discussed in the recent meeting. The focus for this meeting will be to review progress against the SDP and to undertake a review of the SEF.

Safeguarding: Revised KCSIE guidance will be published in June 2020, to come into force on 1st September 2020. We are in the process of arranging dates for the postponed external safeguarding audits - further details to follow. The deadline for the SCC audit of safeguarding arrangement is due 30th June 2020.

EYFS: An interesting diagram outlining the EYFS curriculum is available [here](#).

School Operations:

Budget Planning

The COO and Director of Education have held review meetings with each Headteacher and SBM, to work with schools in meeting the following four financial targets (KPIs) set by trustees:

1. Surplus/balanced budget – in-year for each year
2. Staff costs 80% or less of total expenditure (or income of criteria 1 not met)
3. Self-generated income 3% or more total income by year 2 (2021-22)
4. Local contribution to trust-wide revenue reserve: 1 month's payroll and operating expenses (circa 1/12th income)

Our first draft of long-term budget planning was submitted for central review by School Business Managers on the same day that the Department for Education announced that the ESFA budget submission only needed to cover one year. That said, long-term financial planning critical for us as an organisation to decide on affordability in the coming year, in the context of our long-term financial plan. By the ESFA delaying the deadline until the end of September, this may enable us to tweak the upcoming year's plans in light of the evolving COVID-19 situation. Thank-you to all for focusing on our business-critical budget planning process during the busy time of expanding school onsite provision. Revised submissions are due on Friday 19th June, to enable trustee review at the 1st July Resources Committee.

Finance Policy

The updated Finance Policy went live on 1 June and is accessible within the Policy section of GEP Shared Documents. This policy is aimed at all school staff, central staff, governors and trustees involved either in financial processing or the management of financial budgets. Thank you to all trustees, governors and staff involved in shaping this policy through input into the consultation process.

Updated Period End Procedures

New period end procedures and supporting documents have been issued to School Business Managers (SBM's). These aim to:

- enhance local reporting in order to provide visibility of restricted and designated funds at a local level, as well as reporting on schools' contribution to trust-wide reserves;
- provide schools with greater guidance and documentation on month end procedures; and
- further enhance financial controls and ensure a consistent approach across the trust.

Support is being provided to schools in June/July on training and implementation.

Teachers' Pension Scheme Audit

The Central Finance Team are coordinating the Teachers' Pension Scheme External Audit on behalf of all schools, which commenced on 8th June 2020.

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Jack's (virtual) visits this week:

Maths School meeting	17.06.20	15:00
CST Executive Leaders meeting	17.06.20	12:00
GEP/AST Joint All Heads meeting	18.06.20	09:30
Fullbrook	19.06.20	09:30
Surrey CEOs meeting	19.06.20	12:30