

Xentrall Schools & Academies Bulletin – May 2026

Welcome to the May edition of the Xentrall Bulletin. This update provides key information, across all our services, to support your school or academy.

Xentrall Updates

Staff Changes

We are pleased to share the following team updates:

- **Lucy Duffowan** joins Xentrall as our **Business Partner – Systems**, following the retirement of Tanya Dixon.
- **Shawna Batey** has joined as **Business Partner – Improvement**, leading service improvements and overseeing first-line MyHR and Payroll mailbox queries.
- **Emma Kennedy** has been promoted to **Business Partner – Payroll (Academies)**, supporting customers with 25th / 28th pay dates, following Tracy Stephenson's retirement.
- **Val Lee (Business Partner – Pensions)**, is now unavailable on Tuesdays. Please contact the Pensions team for support, contact details available at the end of this bulletin.
- **Ann Robinson (Manager - Payroll and Pensions)**, is unavailable on Fridays. Please contact the relevant service team for support. For Payroll contact Joanne Norman or Emma Kennedy, for Pensions contact Val lee, all contact details available at the end of this bulletin.

Payroll

Key Legislative and Regulatory Updates

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) – from 6 April 2026

Significant reforms include:

- Removal of the lower earnings limit (LEL) - all employees will now qualify.
- SSP set at £123.25 per week or 80% of average earnings (whichever is lower).
- Waiting Days abolished - SSP payable from day one.
- Transitional Protections apply for existing sickness cases.

Action: Review absence policies to ensure alignment. System updates will be applied within Xentrall.

Casuals and Sickness Pay (April 2026)

Casual workers may qualify for SSP where eligibility criteria are met. Employers should ensure consistent application of rules across worker types.

National Living Wage & Minimum Wage (April 2026)

Rates have increased as follows:

- Age 21+ increases to £12.71 per hour (+4%)
- Age 18–20 increases to £10.85 (+8.5%)
- Age 16–17 and apprentices increase to £8.00 (+6).

Statutory Family Leave Payments (6 April 2026)

Weekly rate increased to £194.32.

New day-one rights introduced for:

- Paternity leave (removal of 26-week qualifying period).
- Unpaid parental leave

Bereavement leave provisions expanded (including extended entitlements in specific cases).

Annual Leave Record Keeping (6 April 2026)

Employers are now required to:

- Maintain detailed records of leave taken, pay and carry forward.
- Retain records for 6 years
- Ensure compliance for all worker categories

Non-compliance may result in enforcement action via the Fair Work Agency.

For staff contracted to 52.14 weeks, MyHR provides a compliant digital solution for leave management, for further details, please contact Lee.Shiells@xentrall.org.uk.

HMRC Mileage Rates (April 2026)

The Chancellor announced in late May, an increase to the Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAPs). The rate changes are as follows:

- Increase from 45p to 55p per mile for the first 10,000 miles
- Remain at 25p per mile for miles 10,001 and over.
- Backdated to 6 April 2026 for the 2026/27 tax year.
- Motorcycle and bicycle rates remain unchanged.

Action: Review and update local policies and keep us updated.

TLR updates

From 1 September 2025: Schools may apply proportional TLR payments.

From 1 September 2026: Proportional allocation becomes mandatory.

Payments must reflect actual responsibilities and be agreed between employer and employee.

P60s

P60s for the 2025/26 tax year are available via MyHR.

Contact Xentrall Payroll

If you have any queries, please email our Payroll Department payroll.department@xentrall.org.uk, contact your dedicated Payroll Officer directly or call **01642 528400**.

Pensions

LGPS Changes – Effective 1 April 2026

Absence and Pension Accrual

- Unpaid child-related leave: pension based on Assumed Pensionable Pay (APP)
- Short unpaid leave (14 days or less): contributions continue as normal.
- Long unpaid leave (15+ days): option to purchase lost pension via Qualifying Additional Pension Arrangement (QAPA), members usually have up to one year from returning to work to make this election (while still in the same employment)

Pre-April 2026 absences remain under previous rules.

Employer Actions

- Communicate options to employees during unpaid absence
- Direct staff to LGPS guidance [LGPS - your pension paying-in if-you-are-away-from-work](#)
- Provide information on pension impact and options
- Ensure relevant teams understand updated rules and review internal communications relating to unpaid absence and child-related leave for absences

Calculators

- **QAPA (new rules)** – available via the LGA regulations and guidance site: [LGPS Employer Resources](#)
- Where members choose to buy back lost pension using **Additional Pension Contributions (APCs)**, the existing [LGA Buy Lost Pension calculator](#) should be used.
- Rules relating to absences due to trade disputes or strikes are unchanged, and members may continue to use APCs to purchase lost pension in these circumstances.

Contribution Rate Updates

Teachers' Pension Scheme (from April 2026)

Member contribution bands aligned to CPI (Consumer Price Index). See table below:

Pensionable annual earnings in relevant year (£)	Member Contribution Rate (%)
Up to £36,198.99	7.4%
£36,199.00 to £48,727.99	8.9%
£48,728.00 to £57,776.99	9.9%
£57,777.00 to £76,572.99	10.5%
£76,573.00 to £104,413.99	11.6%
£104,414.00 and above	12.0%

Employer contribution rate remains 28.68%.

Local Government Pension Contribution Rates

The LGPS employee contribution rates have been revised from 1st April 2026, see the table below:

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	5.50%	2.75%
2	£18,401 to £29,000	5.80%	2.90%
3	£29,001 to £47,300	6.50%	3.25%
4	£47,301 to £59,800	6.80%	3.40%
5	£59,801 to £84,000	8.50%	4.25%
6	£84,001 to £119,100	9.90%	4.95%
7	£119,101 to £140,400	10.50%	5.25%
8	£140,401 to £210,700	11.40%	5.70%
9	£210,701 and more	12.50%	6.25%

UK Pensions Dashboard

All in scope pension schemes must connect to the national dashboard's ecosystem by 31 October 2026. This will allow individuals to view all pension entitlements in one place.

Key points:

- Responsibility sits with scheme trustees and providers
- Systems must support "Find" (matching member records) and "View" (providing pension details) requests.
- Regulatory compliance is overseen by The Pensions Regulator and FCA.

Implications for employers:

- Increased data accuracy requirements
- Greater volume of data queries (response expectations within short timeframes).

Action: We would ask that employees actively check and update data held on their pension records, particularly NI number, surname and date of birth.

Teachers' Pensions – Administration Change

Administration will transfer to Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) in late 2026, with a new Employer Portal.

TCS will contact all employers by email with instructions on how to register for the new portal. **It is vital that you register as soon as possible, as it will allow employers to ensure all users have access, ahead of the service transfer.** Access is essential for employers and Xentrall to support making Teachers' Pensions payments, submitting data, uploading templates and support payment processing.

Urgent action required:

- **Ensure the establishment's Primary Contact details are accurate**, as the registration invite will only be sent to that contact [Employer Contact Details](#). Registering will not affect your existing Employer Portal login. Any concerns or questions regarding the transition, contact TCS directly via email: employerquery@teacherscorp.com
- **Primary contacts must register promptly** when invited via email from info@teacherscorp.co.uk. Check junk or quarantine folders to ensure the registration email is not missed.
- The registration email is unique to the Primary Contact and must not be shared or forwarded.
- **Enable system access for Xentrall Pensions Team to maintain service continuity.** This will allow us to carry out our duties from day one of the transfer, preventing backlogs or delays. Please arrange access to the following Xentrall team members:

Users Name	Email Address
Val Lee	Val.lee@xentrall.org.uk
Fiona Yale	Fiona.yale@xentrall.org.uk
Sam Hill	Samantha.hill@xentrall.org.uk
Jessie Emmerson	Jessie.emmerson@xentrall.org.uk
Mahela Mills-Tetty	Mahela.mills-tetty@xentrall.org.uk
Tracy Bartholomew	Tracy.bartholomew@xentrall.org.uk
Ann Robinson	Ann.robinson@xentrall.org.uk
Helen Umpleby	Helen.umpleby@xentrall.org.uk

Continue using the existing portal until the transition is confirmed. Further information and ongoing updates are available in the [News](#) section of the Teachers' Pensions website.

LGPS Year-End Submissions

All Year End pension submissions are complete. Pension providers will now take responsibility for producing annual statements to employees, to meet the statutory deadline of 31 August 2026.

LGPS Monthly Reporting

We will be working with pension providers over the next year or two to transition to monthly reporting for all LGPS customers. We have already transitioned for a few providers, and work continues to make progress with Teesside and Durham Pensions. Further information will follow.

Contact Xentrall Pensions

If you have any queries, please email our Pension Department, pension.department@xentrall.org.uk or call **01642 52 6880**

Systems

MyHR System Upgrade

A scheduled system upgrade will take place on **Wednesday, 29 July 2026**.

All users must log out of the system by **5:00pm**.

The upgrade will run overnight, and we expect the system to be fully operational the following day. A confirmation message will be sent on **Thursday 30 July 2026** to let you know the system is back up and running.

Contact Xentrall System Support

If you have any queries, please email our MyHR Helpdesk Team, myhr@xentrall.org.uk or call **01642 52 4567**.

Improvement

Let us introduce ourselves! We are a newly created improvement team at Xentrall Shared Services. Our goal is to support continuous improvement across our services and strengthen the experience we provide to customers.

Over the past few months, the team has been working to understand key priorities, listen to feedback, and identify opportunities to enhance the way we deliver support. We have been focussing on the digitisation of forms and automation to make our processes more effective and streamlined.

Have you visited the schools and academies webpage recently? [Academies & Schools - Xentrall Shared Services](#). This is your one stop shop for information and payroll updates specifically for schools.

We have also created a new recruitment area for school Jobs bulletins which gets updated every Friday with the latest job vacancies across the Tees Valley area. [Recruitment - Xentrall Shared Services](#).

We are always looking for way to improve our service and how we can better support our customers, if you have any ideas feel free to reach out to us.

Contact Xentrall Improvements Team

If you have any queries, please email improvementteam@xentrall.org.uk, calling **01642 52 8400** or **01642 52 4567**.

Recruitment

Our Tees Valley School advertising scheme provides schools and academies with a simple and efficient way to promote their vacancies. Delivered by Xentrall Shared Services, our Recruitment Bulletins offer extended advertising reach across the region, helping you attract a wider pool of candidates.

The Tees Valley Schools Job Bulletin is distributed every Friday to a large mailing list, covering the Stockton, Darlington, Middlesbrough, Hartlepool, and Redcar & Cleveland areas, and available online [Tees Valley Schools Job Bulletin - Xentrall Shared Services](#).

If you would like to join the scheme and benefit from increased visibility for your vacancies, please get in touch with Alison O'Connell Alison.OConnell@xentrall.org.uk.

Contact Xentrall Recruitment

If you have any queries, please email our Recruitment Team to learn more about our Advertising Support Service recruitmentadvertising@xentrall.org.uk

Key Contact Details

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Recruitment	Recruitmentadvertising@xentrall.org.uk	