

COMPOSITE MINUTES OF THE 2018 AUTUMN TERM AREA MEETINGS OF THE LA AND ESSEX PRIMARY HEADS' ASSOCIATION

South	Wednesday 7 November 2018
North East	Thursday 8 November 2018
Mid	Wednesday 14 November 2018
West	Thursday 15 November 2018

Action

1. WELCOME, THANK YOU AND NOTICES

- a) Clare Kershaw, Director for Education, and the Area Chairs, welcomed those present to the meetings, extending a particular **welcome** to the new (or new in post) headteachers in each area, who are:

South

Liz Benjeddi	Doddinghurst Juniors (Executive head)
Richard Green/Gary Soars	William Read Primary (Acting)
Andy Gowland	Doddinghurst Juniors (Acting)
Terry Flitman	Wickford Primary (Newly amalgamated)
Veronica Wallace	Kingswood Primary

North East

Andy Bear	Ravens Academy
Abbie Fairbairn	Lawford Primary
Diane Fawcett	St Andrew's Weeley (Head of School)
Donna Gaffney	Layer-de-la-Haye Primary
Chris Joy	Hamford Primary
David Larner	Dedham Primary
Sarah Stevenson	Langenhoe Primary
Michelle Wright	Montgomery Juniors
Tania Wright	Mersea Island School (Acting)

West

Jeanette Allen	The Downs Primary & Nursery
Kirsty Clark	Little Parndon Primary (Head of School)
Amy Dias	Freshwaters Primary Academy (Head of School)
Jackie Diggle	Little Parndon Primary (Head of School)
Alison Farquharson	Buckhurst Hill Primary (Associate Headteacher)
Elizabeth Gelston	Hatfield Heath Primary
Jane Harvey	Staples Road Primary
Kirsty Johnson	The Alderton Junior School
Rebecca Pine	Newport Primary
Fiona Reid	St Mary's Saffron Walden (Interim Head)
Marios Solomonides	Magna Carta Primary Academy
Sue Spearman	Fawbert and Barnard UNDL Primary
Hannah Wheatcroft	Farnham and Rickling Federated Primaries

Mid

Jayne Adams	Rettendon Primary (Acting)
Nikki Batt	Howbridge Juniors (Acting)
Andy Cumpstey	St Michael's CE Primary, Braintree (Acting)
Terri Fitter	Southminster Primary (head of school)
Emma Flin	St Andrew's Primary, Great Yeldham

Natalie Hawkes	Newland Springs Primary
Jacqui Phillips	Woodville Primary
Emma Johnstone	Templars Academy (Head of School)
Kelly Koller	The Beaulieu Park School
Aedin Lipski	Highwood Primary (Head of School)
Charlotte Newley	Templars Academy (Head of School)
Matt Poyton	Lawford Mead Primary (Head of School)
Karen Riches	Kings Road Primary (Head of School)

b) Thank you and farewell to those headteachers who are retiring or leaving their current post this term:

South

Jackie Avis	Doddinghurst Juniors
Nikki Kadwill	Jotmans hall Primary
Paula Masters	Holly Tree Primary

North East

Nicky Sirrett	Mersea Island School
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Mid

Lynsey Wood	St Cedd's Primary, Bradwell-on-Sea
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2. LOCAL AUTHORITY UPDATE

Clare Kershaw, Director of Education
Philippa Holliday (North East meeting)
Lisa Fergus (South meeting)
Liz Cornish (Mid meeting)
Nicola Woolf (West Meeting)

















a) HEADLINE DATA FROM 2018

Clare thanked headteachers for their hard work (and that of their staff) which has resulted in excellent outcomes once again at the end of 2018. At primary level all of the results are either in line with national or above.

She reminded everyone that, given the size of Essex (the second largest authority in the country), the results are particularly impressive and impact on a huge number of children.

Primary phase results



Measure		2017			2018		
		Essex	England	Essex v England	Essex	England	Essex v England
EYFS	% good level of development	74	71	 3	74	72	 2
Yr 1 Phonics	% pupils at required level	82	81	 1	84	82	 2
KS1	% expected standard in Reading	78	76	 2	77	75	 2
	% greater depth in Reading	29	25	 4	28	26	 2
	% expected standard in Writing	70	68	 2	71	70	 1
	% greater depth in Writing	18	16	 2	18	16	 2
	% expected standard in Maths	76	75	 1	77	76	 1
	% greater depth in Maths	23	21	 2	23	22	 1

Sources: All 2017 data from local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT). 2018 EYFS and Phonics from NEXUS, 2018 KS1 from SFR published 27 09 18.

It was noted that Liz Cornish (Mid Assistant Director) and Alison Fiala (Mid head of Early Years and Education) met recently with Nick Gibb, Schools Minister, and Priti Patel (Witham MP). They had assumed that the meeting had been convened to discuss the results in her constituency, but in fact the main focus from Nick Gibb was on phonics results and questions around which reading schemes are used in Essex.

One of the successful SIF (School Improvement Fund) bids has funded a reading and phonics project in Braintree and this is starting to have a positive impact on pupil outcomes.

Primary phase results



Measure		2017			2018		
		Essex	England	Essex v England	Essex	England	Essex v England
KS2	% expected standard in RWM	63	61	2	65	64	1
	% higher standard in RWM	10	9	1	11	10	1
	% expected standard in Reading	74	72	2	77	75	2
	% higher standard in Reading	25	25	0	28	28	0
	% expected standard in Writing	78	76	2	79	78	1
	% greater depth in Writing	21	18	3	22	20	2
	% expected standard in Maths	77	75	2	76	76	0
	% higher standard in Maths	23	23	0	23	24	-1
KS1-2 progress scores	Reading	-0.2	0.0	-0.2	-0.1	0.0	-0.1
	Writing	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Maths	-0.2	0.0	-0.2	-0.3	0.0	-0.3

Sources: All data from local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT), 2017 is revised data but 2018 remains provisional. Progress data yet to be published but sourced from NEXUS.

Measure		Mid	North East	South	West	Essex	England	Mid v England
EYFS	% GLD	74	72	75	74	74	72	2
Year 1 Phonics	% required level	84	81	84	84	84	82	2
KS1	% Reading exp+	76	75	80	76	77	75	1
	% Writing exp+	72	69	73	71	71	70	2
	% Maths exp+	76	74	80	77	77	76	0
KS2	% RWM exp+	66	59	68	67	64	64	2
	Reading progress	0.3	-0.7	-0.1	0.0	-0.1	0.0	0.3
	Writing progress	0.3	-0.6	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.3
	Maths progress	0.2	-1.4	0.2	-0.1	-0.3	0.0	0.2

Sources: EYFS, Year 1 phonics and KS1 collected from schools and processed in NEXUS
KS2 data from DfE and is provisional

It was noted that, whilst the results continue to be positive, the national outcomes improved at a faster rate than those in Essex this year. The progress outcomes for mathematics made less progress in particular.

Clare noted that the continuing challenges that schools face, including a significant influx of pupils from other authorities, some of whom are particularly vulnerable. The results by district were also shared at the meeting.

	EYFS - % Good Level of Development	Year 1 Phonics - % working at required standard	Key Stage 1 - % achieving at least the expected standard			Key Stage 2 RWM - % achieving at least the expected standard
			Reading	Writing	Maths	
England	71.5	82.5	75.4	69.9	76.1	64.4
Essex	73.9	83.6	76.9	71.4	76.8	65.2
Mid	74.3	84.3	76.4	71.5	76.2	66.1
North East	71.9	81.2	74.8	68.7	74.1	58.8
South	74.9	84.3	79.6	73.3	79.4	67.6
West	74.0	84.3	76.1	71.3	76.7	67.1
Basildon	73.3	82.7	78.1	71.4	77.9	66.0
Braintree	72.9	86.3	76.7	70.6	76.3	63.0
Brentwood	77.1	88.4	84.8	77.8	83.2	72.3
Castle Point	73.4	81.8	79.4	72.8	78.5	65.9
Chelmsford	74.7	82.8	75.4	71.1	75.3	66.9
Colchester	73.0	82.6	76.4	69.6	74.6	62.9
Epping	74.0	83.8	74.9	69.6	74.9	63.3
Harlow	71.2	81.8	74.6	70.3	76.2	66.6
Maldon	77.3	83.8	78.7	75.3	79.1	72.4
Rochford	78.3	87.4	78.6	74.7	80.7	69.2
Tendring	70.2	79.1	72.4	67.4	73.3	53.2
Uttlesford	77.8	88.1	79.5	74.7	79.8	72.6

Comparisons against England average:  Performance lower than England  Performance higher than England

Data Sources:

EYFS, Phonics and KS1 collected from schools and processed in NEXUS. England averages are emerging figures as generated by NEXUS. KS2 pupil file from DfE downloaded from NCA Tools on 4th July 2018. England data published by DfE in interim SFR on the same date. Data valid as at 21st August 2018.

Finally Clare also shared the secondary phase results and confirmed that she is discussing these with secondary colleagues.

b) EDUCATION TEAM RESTRUCTURE, INCLUDING ATTENDANCE AND EDUCATION ACCESS TEAM

Clare noted that the restructure of the LA Education teams was implemented at the beginning of the summer term and is now in the implementation phase. The four Assistant Directors have been appointed and are all in post:

Nicola Woolf – West

Lisa Fergus – South

Liz Cornish – Mid

Philippa Holliday – North East

Interviews have taken place for the remaining posts of Head of Early Years and Education, in the West and South quadrant teams. Maz Norman has been appointed to the substantive role in South, and Karla Martin takes over from Jacky Castle (interim head) in West starting in January. Jacky Castle will remain as a School Effectiveness Partner in West. This will leave two SEP vacancies across the county, which the LA will aim to fill.

MECES (Missing Education Child Employment Service) has been restructured to ensure a clearer and more targeted focus on critical aspects of the work. There will now be four teams:

Attendance Compliance Team

The Attendance Compliance team (within SEND Tribunal, Strategy and Innovation) – consists of a Senior Attendance Compliance Specialist, 4 Attendance Compliance Officers, 2 Attendance Compliance Support Officers. This team deals with all legal aspects of attendance – all Penalty Notice and prosecution referrals are received by this team – this team is an enforcement team.

Tel: 03330322988

attendancecompliance@essex.gov.uk

Children Missing Education/Elective Home Education

Children Missing Education/Elective Home Education (sits under Education Access) - Senior CME/EHE Specialist, 4 CME/EHE Officers, 2 CME/EHE Support Officers. If a school completes a Missing Pupil Checklist it will get sent to this team for investigation. They also deal with all students who are not on a school roll or who are EHE. Anita Patel-Lingam is Senior for this team.

Tel: 03330322962 cme@essex.gov.uk

The updated policy document can be found on the Infolink at https://schools.essex.gov.uk/pupils/Education_Access/Pages/Children-Missing-from-Education.aspx

Quadrant Attendance Specialists -

Quadrant Attendance Specialists (sits under Education & Early Years) – in each quadrant there is one Senior Attendance Specialist and one Attendance Specialist (there are currently some vacancies in the quadrants, which are being recruited to). They will work with schools to offer strategic support around policy and process. They will not be holding any cases. They will

- Work directly with schools and families to find solutions to poor attendance in each quadrant.
- Advice to schools re the referral to compliance process through partnerships and direct contact via telephone and email.
- Develop strategies, initiatives and incentive programmes to raise attendance and support schools to achieve performance targets.

Tel: 03330322968

- MidAttendanceSpecialistTeam@essex.gov.uk
- NorthEastAttendanceSpecialistTeam@essex.gov.uk
- WestAttendanceSpecialistTeam@essex.gov.uk
- SouthAttendanceSpecialistTeam@essex.gov.uk

Child Employment and Entertainment

Child Employment and Entertainment team (sits under Strategy and Planning) – three Support Officer responsible for the administration of work permits for all children in employment 13 years + and all licensing of child performers, including carrying out inspections of work place and entertainment premises.

Tel: 03330322968

Attendance Compliance

Clare Kershaw (North East and South) Jo Hickey (Mid and West) gave guidance about some specific attendance issues.

Irregular school attendance, Penalty Notice and Prosecution Referrals

Criteria for issue/referral:

- Single point of entry – online referral form on ESI
- 10 unauthorised sessions in 10 school weeks
- Evidence within the last 8 weeks demonstrating how the school have worked with the family/parent to eradicate barriers to attendance.
- Legal Action Warning Letter is in addition to this evidence.
- Does the parent have a statutory defence?
- Attach the last 18 weeks school attendance

Schools are asked to access the 'online referral form' on the Infolink and select the relevant drop down and complete all details as requested.

The referral criteria has not changed (10 unauthorised sessions over the last 10 school weeks), the team expects the referrer to provide evidence that they have attempted to eradicate the barriers to attendance, but must now attach your evidence to the portal in the first instance; schools are required to attach all letters and minutes of meetings held within the last 8 weeks prior to the referral being made.

It may be that a specific date has not been given for a parent/carer to meet with the school, however the letters sent to the parent/carer must evidence that the school has reached out to them to address the barriers to attendance prior to the action being requested/taken.

The Attendance Compliance Service is an investigative and enforcement service and schools should not be making referrals if another agency is more suited to support the family to address the cause of poor attendance.

This pre-referral work must be in *addition* to the legal action warning letter being sent (this letter must also be attached).

The portal lists the statutory defences and asks the referrer whether or not any apply, if they do they will not be able to submit the referral. If the time between the issue of the warning letter and the request for a Penalty Notice, or the issue of the Penalty Notice is over 18 weeks schools will not be able to submit the referral/notification.

1. the child is prevented from attending school due to sickness or other unplanned or unavoidable causes
2. the child is absent due to a day of religious observance in the parent's/carer's religion
3. the school has granted and authorised the leave
4. the child lives more than 2 miles if under 8 years or 3 miles if over 8 years from the school and the local authority has failed to provide transport.

(It is not a defence where parents have chosen to register a child at a school outside the catchment area and no transport has been provided)

There are also mandatory fields for the DOB of the parents, the LA requires this information to be able to take a case through to prosecution, particularly in relation to the higher offence (S.444 1A); this is not a new request of schools, but it is appreciated that this may not be held in all instances. Schools are asked to take all reasonable steps to obtain this information as without it the LA cannot proceed to prosecution on the higher offence and therefore the referral may be declined.

Advice previously given to schools is to update the 'contacts' form to include a field for 'DOB' for each parent to be listed on the schools system. If a school does not have the DOB they should enter the date the referral is being made so that it is obvious this is unknown.

The form asks the school to 'tick' that the Headteacher is in agreement to prosecution should the Penalty Notice remain unpaid; the school also has to agree to pass on any relevant information to the Attendance Compliance Team if any circumstances change that would affect the case progression.

Unauthorised leave of absence

Criteria for issue:

- Single point of entry – online referral form on ESI
- 6 sessions in the first two weeks of September or
- 10 consecutive sessions

- Unauthorised by the headteacher as reasons for absence is not considered exceptional
- Absence is G coded

The parent/carer must have been warned about the possibility of receiving a penalty notice, even if the holiday is taken without an application – if an application is received the response must be sent in a timely manner (within 5 school days) so that the parent/carer has the opportunity to change their plans if the absence is to be unauthorised. An untimely response can mean that the LA is unable to proceed.

If there is no application but the school believes the child to be absent for the purpose of a holiday, they should write to the parent once the child has returned, giving them the warning and give the parent/carer to opportunity to respond by a specific date. If absence remains unauthorised due to the holiday the school can request a fine.

A request for a penalty notice in respect of holiday should be received by the Local Authority within 2 weeks of the child's return.

It was noted that so far this academic year there have been 1,651 penalty notices issued.

Further advice and letter templates can be found on ESI
https://schools.essex.gov.uk/pupils/Attendance_Compliance/Pages/EducationWelfareService.aspx

At the West meeting the issue of conflicting term dates set by neighbouring authorities was raised. This impacts on recruitment and retention of teachers, as well as pupil attendance. There also continues to be some conflict between the decisions made by neighbouring secondary and primary schools when authorising absence, and the Professional Officer **AGREED** to raise this at the next meeting of the Headteacher Association representatives.

EPHA
PO

c) SEND CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND PROVISION REVIEW

The provision of effective support for children with special educational needs and disabilities is a huge challenge for all schools and the Local Authority. The SEND capital programme and investment was designed to address some of the ongoing challenges and pressures on the SEND system and estate, including:

- Annual spend of c.£22 million on independent school provision, with place costs increasing;
- ECC unable to identify an appropriate school place for over 300 pupils with SEN;
- Pupils not educated in their local community;
- Difficulty of monitoring provision and outcomes at a distance;
- Not making the most of our successful special schools;
- Rising numbers of permanent exclusions from Essex schools;
- Rising numbers of pupils with SEND in Essex PRUs;
- Rising ASC cohort not having their needs met in Essex mainstream schools.

Schools Forum investment has been used to expand existing special schools, create boarding places and develop mainstream based provision for autism and SEMH; ECC funding utilised to expand Essex special schools and create boarding places and an investment in the PRU estate; Free school funding has been successfully won to create three new special schools with a further application in the pipeline.

Outline of SEND estate development in each quadrant

Mid

- Two new special free schools in Chelmsford for pupils aged 7 – 16 years (one SEMH, one autism and moderate learning difficulties) with boarding;
- One new special free in Witham for pupils aged 4 – 16 for autism and severe learning difficulties;
- New SEMH provision at Newlands Spring;
- Expansion of Southview School in Witham with new boarding places.

North East

- Expansion and relocation of Lexden Springs School including 30 new boarding places – aged 3 -19;
- Expansion of Kingswode Hoe School to include Key Stage 1 provision;
- Expansion of Langham Oaks to include primary-age pupils;
- New Grow provision at Monkwick Junior School.

South

- Glenwood is expanding to offer boarding places – 20 for children aged 3-19;
- Creation of bespoke provision for SEMH at Briscoe Primary School;
- New primary places at Ramsden Hall School.

West

- Expansion of Oak View School in Loughton – additional 24 places for children and young people with autism;
- Cooks Spinney is developing 8 places for SEMH;
- New SEMH provision in Uttlesford (Magna Carta) and Epping Forest (TBC);
- A free school application is being made in Wave 13 for a 60 place school for children with SEMH.

A comprehensive review is underway of the SEND services, including the Education Psychology team, the Statutory Assessment Service and the Specialist Teacher team, as well as some aspects of the tribunal service. Clare explained that service members are aware of the review; there are around 400 people in the service, but inevitably there are some concerns about the restructure. The review needs to respond to the consultation that took place last year and the aim is to have a new SEND service in place by Spring 2020. Headteachers, school staff and SENCOs will be consulted and closely involved with the redesign. Recent surveys and consultation discussions have revealed that the service isn't fit for purpose, despite there being some excellent teams and individuals with the system. It is argued that the system has never been purposefully designed, but has rather developed over time as a response to demand, reform and funding (including cuts) over the years.

The timeline for the redesign and introduction of a new system is:

- Draft structure proposed – December 2018
- Consultation period – February – April 2019
- Recruitment process – summer and autumn 2019
- Phased implementation of a new service – spring 2020.

It is important to acknowledge that a new service will operate differently, involving not just a change of structure but also of approach. The LA will engage and involve parents in the development of a new service. Clare stated that no other local authority is investing so much in partnership with schools, and it will be important to ensure that other partners including health and social also support the system.

At the North East meeting one headteacher asked about whether more ASD hubs will be created, as he argued that there are insufficient places within the system and children within mainstream schools who need this kind of specialist support. It was noted that currently admission to ASD hubs can be problematic, particularly while the settings are becoming established. However, the LA is keen to continue to work with mainstream schools to meet the challenges of supporting pupils with SEN.

School Led Inclusion Strategy

Ruth Sturdy is leading on the SEND school-led inclusion strategy which has a number of key threads.

An Inclusion Statement has been developed by headteachers and LA officers on the SEND Headteacher Roundtable, and schools have been asked to sign up to the values in order to agree a collective approach to inclusion in Essex. The Roundtable has reviewed the sign-up, and also considered a number of issues that have been raised by schools. One concern was that the statement would be a legally binding contract, and it was stressed that this is a statement of principles and aspiration, and does not commit schools to anything more than the existing SEN Code of Practice and DfE behaviour and exclusion guidance. The statement is designed to hold the system to account, not individual staff members in either schools or the LA.

The Partnership SENCo role is being developed and expanded. Partnership SENCos (formerly known as Super SENCOs) will play a key part in supporting schools, undertaking peer review and helping build capacity and expertise in mainstream schools. Headteachers were asked to put forward SENCos in their schools who had sufficient capacity and experience, and would welcome the professional development that this role offers.

The SEN Peer Review project is under development and has been trialled in a number of schools. There is training available for senior leaders and SENCos who wish to become reviewers.

Another piece of work underway is the development of an Outcomes Framework to help schools evidence the progress of children with SEND.

Ruth Sturdy can be contacted at ruth.sturdy@essex.gov.uk

Helen Wall (SEND Operations Leader) is carrying out an appreciative enquiry asking schools what is going well in the annual review, so that this can be included and developed in future practice. Helen can be contacted at helen.wall@essex.gov.uk

There was a long discussion at the North East meeting about children with special educational needs and how mainstream school can meet their needs, particularly in the current climate of reduced funding and staffing capacity. A view was put forward that parental preference seems to override all decisions about where children should be schooled, and it was argued that sometimes parents are not even informed about the option of a special school place if that is available.

The SEND lead in the area said that information should be shared with parents as part of their child's plan, but that Special Schools are already full or over-full.

The LA Officers were questioned about outreach support by special schools and whether there was a plan in place to develop this. It was noted that this is being considered by ESSET, but currently only some special schools still receive funding for outreach. This funding is limited and special schools do not have unlimited capacity or

resources to support mainstream schools. However, mainstream schools should discuss the possibility of support with special schools in their quadrant.

Another query was made around Section 23s and whether only paediatricians are able to write these up. It was confirmed that this was currently the case, but agreed that this was an area where it would be helpful to work closely with health colleagues.

On headteacher asked if there was ongoing research into root causes of the apparent growth and complexity of special educational needs. It was explained that ECC doesn't commission national research itself, but certainly considers research that has been undertaken, and uses it to develop practice and programmes, for example the models of GROW and THRIVE. Steve Whitfield, Senior EP, is developing a training programme based on Trauma Induced Practice (in partnership with Lyons Hall TSA).

A headteacher asked who has taken the lead on the development of support for the mental health of children and young people in the county. Clare Kershaw explained that she is taking the lead on co-ordinating the response to the Government Green Paper on mental health, agreed at a recent meeting of the Children's Partnership Board.

At the South meeting a member of the EPHA Executive noted that, at the last meeting, there had been a discussion about the lack of provision for children under 7 years old. Clare acknowledged this and agreed that part of the redesign must take into account the need to have the right provision for the Early Years and infant pupils.

d) PROGRESS OF THE SALE OF EES

Clare Kershaw reported that the announcement about the sale of EES has been delayed, as the process is not yet complete. She confirmed that she will inform schools of the result by the end of this term by the latest, recognising that schools will need to make decisions about traded services to help inform their budget planning process for 2018/19.

e) ESSEX SCHOOL MEALS SERVICE

Current position

- All LA Schools currently supported, have received an email briefly detailing the offer, service level and pricing for school meals service support from April 2019
- The email has an automatic response facility into the managed inbox school.meals@essex.gov.uk where the team is collating replies of intent on a central data base.
- The information was highlighted on the Education newsletter and explained how the schools would receive the information.
- A deadline of November 2nd has been given to schools to respond by – it is clear that the response is only an indication of intent, the results of which will form the basis of the structure of the service in the future.
- Information on the ESI has been updated and the offer pricing detail is in the process of being put on the secure Infolink site.
- A final reminder email is planned for after half term as the cut-off date approaches

Responses so far:

The services has had replies from 80% of LA schools that they currently support (168 out of 211 schools). Of the 80% the responses are as follows:

- 81% are intending to take up the service based upon the prices given
- 10% are undecided (a variety of reasons – waiting to meet with Governors, looking for discounts etc.)

- 9% are not going to be taking up the service – various reasons, mostly around budget/value for money.

Activity:

The support managers are actively meeting heads/finance managers etc. to answer questions and enable decisions and are in regular contact to ensure they have as many responses as possible back by 2 November. Where decisions are being made after this date they are being flexible, although there will have to be a final cut off soon after to enable decisions to be made and the future planned.

Feedback and evidence so far would indicate that the service is priced right and is of interest and need to schools.

f) SMALL SCHOOLS CONFERENCE

A Small Schools Conference has been arranged for 20th November 2018 at Hamptons, Chelmsford for headteachers and governor representatives to meet with LA and Diocese and review the Small Schools Strategy, options for sustainability and 'future proofing'. The conference, funded by Essex School Governors Association (ESGA), will be exploring federation and structural solutions with case studies from Essex and other LAs.

g) FFT DATA WORKSHOPS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

Each school is invited to apply for a free place at a FFT data training organised by the LA as part of the annual subscription to promote the full use of the features and functionality of the latest developments to strengthen data analytical expertise for school leaders.

We aim to show all attendees the significant benefits which make the annual subscription irresistible including student explorer, collaborate and the range of self-evaluation reports for groups of children as well as subjects for each phase.

The FFT events for school leaders will focus on two key challenges facing schools – **the impact of a new baseline assessment on school accountability** and the ongoing issue of **effective tracking and measurement of pupil progress** including a **first look at FFT's new interactive progress tracking tool**.

Further details of the content of each session and application process will be emailed to all schools and also advertised in Education Essex. There are spaces for between 25-40 participants at each session which will be allocated on a first come basis.

28th Nov 1.30pm or 3.45pm (West – Passmores School, Harlow)

29th Nov 1.30pm or 3.45pm (NE – Braiswick School, Colchester)

4th Dec 1.30pm or 3.45pm (South- Lee Chappel School, Basildon)

5th Dec 1.30pm or 3.45pm (Mid – Hamptons, Chelmsford)

h) 2019 ESSEX TEACHING AWARDS

The nominations for the 2019 Essex Teaching Awards are now open and close on Friday 16 November 2018. Entries are accepted from anyone in respect to individuals working or volunteering within maintained schools and academies in the Essex.

The event will take place at Hylands House on Tuesday 5th February 2019.

The categories for this year's awards are:

- New teacher of the year
- Teaching assistant of the year
- Primary teacher of the year
- Secondary teacher of the year

- Special school teacher of the year
- Primary headteacher of the year
- Secondary headteacher of the year
- Governing body of the year
- School team of the year
- Childminder of the year
- Early years and childcare practitioner of the year (in the PVI sector) – new this year
- Lifetime achievement
- Student choice

For more information, email teaching.awards@essex.gov.uk

g) SCHOOL LED IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM UPDATE (West meeting)

Nicola Woolf gave an update on the current progress and achievements of the School Led Improvement System in Essex.

Development of SLIS Partnerships

Following the 2015/16 engagement sessions with schools, 37 SLIS Partnerships were established. Many of these built on existing groups of schools, and some were new groupings established by schools. Each SLIS Partnership was invited to make an initial assessment of their partnership capacity as part of a bid for up to £25,000 to support their development.

SLIS Partnerships each identified a lead from amongst its headteachers. These volunteers stepped forwards for two years and agreed to chair meetings, co-ordinate activity, and support the work of the other school leaders across their Partnership. Essex has invested in developing the skills and capacity of these leads by organising a programme of development meetings to support their roles as Essex system leaders. One of the key activities undertaken by all the SLIS Partnerships has been a programme of peer review. All Partnerships were invited to be trained in the Education Development Trust's School Partnership Programme to develop peer review skills, provide a structure for engagements, and share a set of tools to facilitate peer reviews. The majority of the SLIS Partnerships have now undertaken at least one cycle of peer review.

The SLIS Project Board agreed to establish four Quadrant meetings across Essex during 2018. The key aims of the Quadrant discussions will be to:

- i *Review the health and capacity of the SLIS partnerships within the Quadrant. Identify strengths and agree actions as needed*
- ii *Ensure each partnership has a robust MoU, agreed ways of working and appropriate systems and structures to achieve their aims and objectives*
- iii *Confirm strengths and areas of vulnerability of schools (maintained and academies) within the quadrant*
- iv *Ensure that school improvement needs are identified and addressed within SLIS partnerships (particularly for vulnerable schools) and then broker support where needed from outside schools' SLIS partnerships from TSAs and other sources*

Essex partners have been consistent in their aims for the SLIS strategy: helping schools to support children to achieve their potential; further improving outcomes and the proportion of 'good' schools; developing partnership and system leader capacity; and strengthening school improvement support across Essex and reducing the number of schools that are isolated from engaging each other.

Already the work of Essex school-level partnerships has been recognised in Ofsted inspections. Christine Gilbert mentioned the development of the SLIS strategy in Essex amongst examples across England of the development of area-based local partnerships (*Optimism of the Will: the development of local area-based education partnerships*, 2018) in her recent thinkpiece.

By 2018, the SLIS strategy - that has been jointly developed by schools, the Local Authority and other key players across Essex - is maturing into a multi-layered approach to school-led improvement across the County:

1. **School-level SLIS partnerships**...for peer review, building trust and mutual support, moderation, leadership and staff development opportunities, building system leadership capacity, enabling efficient procurement of school improvement support, and broadening the offer for children
2. **2. Quadrants**...to review the maturity and support the development of SLIS partnerships, share data and intelligence, identify school improvement needs, broker and deploy support from TSAs, develop system leader capacity, monitor and evaluate impact.
3. **SLIS Project Board**...to identify authority-wide priorities, develop the shared vision, involve key players, promote effective communications, link to other key priorities, review impact, promote sustainability, grow the maturity of the system and build capacity.

3. KIDS INSPIRE

Vicky Haylock and Sue Bell attended the meetings to give information about the Kids Inspire support service. Vicky explained that she is a former Essex headteacher, who left headship a year after a series of traumatic and challenging events at her school which made her question whether she could balance her work and family. After a short period of being jobless she joined Kids Inspire, which supports children, families and schools.

Kids Inspire was set up by Sue Bell, a former secondary teacher who explained that her PGCE simply didn't equip her for coping with emotional trauma. She subsequently training as an Integrative Art, Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist.

Kids Inspire supports young people across Essex who are at an educational, social and/or economic disadvantage resulting from trauma or emerging mental health issues. For example they may have experienced sexual or domestic abuse, separation anxiety or significant loss. Many young people are referred to Kids Inspire because other support agencies consider them 'too complex' to help.

Sue explained that the team now consists of 100 staff, including 45 accredited therapists who offer:

- Specialist Psychotherapy services
- Creative therapies (art, music, drama, play)
- Psycho-Educational support for parents
- Complimentary therapies
- Systemic family therapy
- Emotional wellbeing training and consultation services

Kids Inspire has run a successful support service with a group of Brentwood schools, which has cost £12 per pupil. This has proved invaluable to these schools.

A number of projects, including Emotional Trauma training has been delivered in the Mid and South quadrants funding by FIF (Family Innovation Funding).

Contact Vicky Haylock at vickyhaylock@kidsinspire.org.uk 01245348707

4. RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGY GROUP REPORT

Introduction

The Recruitment and Retention Strategy group was established early in 2016 following a survey undertaken with schools in 2015. The group includes representatives from the Local Authority, EPHA, ESSET, ASHE, HR, Teaching Schools Council and Initial Teacher Training. The Schools Forum agreed a set up fund of £235k to support strategies to promote recruitment and retention.

Recruitment and retention strategies

The Strategy Group has largely focused on recruitment strategies, with some support for retention in schools. The various initiatives have included:

- Heads in Waiting programme – this continues to offer valuable professional development for schools leaders and around 50% of graduates so far have progressed to headship. The R&R fund also supports the secondary equivalent – Heading for Headship
- Support for Recently Qualified teacher groups – three primary partnerships are running 2:4 programmes to support teachers in years 2 to 4 of teaching, one of the critical periods for teacher retention. Feedback is positive from these groups.
- Return to Teaching programme – just under 70 candidates in the programme, around 50% of whom have returned to teaching so far, some on a part-time basis
- Communications strategy to promote Essex jobs – development of the Essex Schools Jobs website – continues to be the main tool for recruitment in the county.
- Overseas recruitment – projects researched recruitment from Australia, New Zealand, Ireland etc however recruitment from overseas is generally monopolised by agencies, making it difficult to support small numbers of recruits.
- Affordable housing – discussions with District Councillors and some support for housing projects. Large developers are required to offer some affordable housing but this is not restricted to key workers in education.
- Support for ITT recruitment fairs – this has proved helpful and the group continues to offer some funding.
- Supporting the development of a North East Essex (Coast2Coast) recruitment service –the plan is to share this with TSAs to see if this can be developed elsewhere in the county.
- AirSupply – the group investigated this online supply programme, but didn't invest any funding.
- Workload Charter - not agreed by EPHA, ASHE and ESSET that this was needed - however an agreement to a principle of managing workload in schools and from the LA
- Retention ideas from "Top tips for retaining your best teachers"

Future direction of the group

The Strategy Group has considered the purpose and value of the group and has agreed that it should continue, but with more of a focus on research and developing guidance for Essex schools, rather than directing and funding projects. The remaining funding will be used to undertake research projects, by commissioning individuals, Teaching Schools or partnerships to consider a range of strategies to promote recruitment and retention (including, but not exclusively):

- The implementation and usefulness of the DfE workload reduction toolkit;
- The use of flexible working and job-shares to encourage retention;
- Marketing and advertising;
- Researching current literature and case studies.

Headteacher were asked to give the EPHA Professional Officer any feedback and

ideas to feed into the priorities for the Strategy Group.

A supporting paper giving details and links to Recruitment & Retention national strategies and initiatives, was circulated at the meeting.

5. HR UPDATE

Nicki Harris (North east, Mid and West meetings)

Tula Smith (South meeting)

a) Teacher's Pay Grant

The teacher's pay grant has been announced by the DfE and will be paid to the ESFA and LAs by 31 October 2018 for distribution to schools.

- 3.5% has been added to the minimum and maximum of the main pay range and unqualified pay range
- 2% to the minimum and maximum of the upper pay range, leading practitioner pay range and all allowances
- 1.5% to the minimum and maximum of the leadership pay range.

These are national increases and schools are only obliged to apply these increases at the minimum of each range/allowance. As in previous years, it is for schools to determine if, and how, to apply the award above the minima.

The funding covers the difference between 1% and the pay award as the Government assumes schools budgeted for 1% increase. The way the money is being distributed and depending on how many staff each school has on each pay range, will impact on how much of the cost is actually covered for each school.

The DfE have already issued guidance on the methodology for the teachers' pay grant, based on a per-pupil amount, based on the October 2017 census (January 2018 for early years). Nicki confirmed that there is no information about funding beyond March 2020.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-pay-grant-methodology>

b) Pensions contribution

The outcome of the re-evaluation of the Teacher's Pension Scheme is that the implementation of the change to the employer contribution rate will be from 1st September 2019 (rather than 1st April 2019) due to the delay in this outcome. This has not been confirmed but it is estimated that the employer contribution rate will be increasing to 23.6% (from 16.48%) for the period of 1st September 2019 until 31st March 2023.

It is likely that funding from the DfE for the financial year 2019/2020 will be available to help maintained schools and academies meet the additional costs resulting from this and a consultation process will take place to determine final funding arrangements.

c) Local Government Pay Award 2019

Nicki reminded headteachers that a two year Pay Award was agreed earlier this year for the period April 2018 to March 2020. The April 2018 award has been applied.

The April 2019 Award is complicated. Because of increases in the national minimum and living wages, the bottom end of the LG has rapidly increased, squeezing the differentials between points and scales. So from April 2019 the LG pay spine national has been reconfigured to merge some of the lower points and therefore ensuring differentials are maintained.

As you will also be aware since Single Status in 2001, each employer has determined locally (usually at Local Authority Level) how the national pay spine will be applied locally. In Essex we have Pay Bands and these have remained unchanged since Single Status (other than pay awards).

NB any Schools outside of Essex will need to look to their Home Local Authority for the application of the Award to their scales. Academies may have their own local agreements.

In **Essex** for April 2019 HR has needed to look at the impact of the changes to the National Pay Spine on the local Pay Bands. Any changes to the Pay Bands must be determined in negotiation with the Trade Unions and a Collective Agreement reached. In beginning discussions with Trade Unions, they have expressed concerns about the length of the Pay Bands, in particular the potential for them to be discriminatory on the grounds of age. Although pay progression on the Essex Pay Bands is by performance not "time served", this does not rule out a discrimination challenge.

In any case, the Unions will not make an agreement on the changes for the April 2019 pay award (which primarily impacts Band 1 and 2), unless HR looks at the pay bands in their entirety.

The LA will be working with the Trade Unions during the Autumn Term to seek a Collective Agreement.

It is likely that a new structure will have more Bands, with fewer points in each and that staff will assimilate across on their current points in April 2019. It should be noted however that any review of grading boundaries means that some staff will fall into a lower or higher range so there will be some anomalies where pay protection may apply. Nicki noted that HR was extremely mindful, in entering these negotiations, of the need to minimise disruption, administration and cost. To this end HR will consult with schools during the negotiations.

Who will be affected?

Although all schools, and most academies, operate under Local Government Terms and Conditions, the Local Authority is only empowered to reach a collective agreement on behalf of Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools.

The Local Authority will encourage Foundation and Voluntary Aided Schools to also accept the Agreement, but this will have to be agreed by each Governing Body. The alternative will be for each Governing Body to negotiate its own agreement, which we imagine is not an attractive prospect.

Academies, similarly could agree to adopt the Local Agreement, or alternatively negotiate their own agreement with the Trade Unions.

At each of the area meetings, the headteachers from all categories of school agreed that HR should negotiate with unions on their behalf, whilst understanding that (unless they are community or VC schools) they will not be bound by the final agreement.

Nicki Harris **AGREED** to circulate a draft pay structure and rationale for consultation with primary schools.

d) Apprenticeship Levy

Maintained schools (and schools/academy trusts with a pay bill of over £3 million) are currently paying a levy of 0.5% of their salary bill into a digital account. It is estimated that maintained schools are utilising about 17.5% of the available funding, and this funding will return to the treasury if it is not used for apprentice programmes.

The LA lead on the Apprenticeship Levy is Amanda Rawlings and she can be contacted at amanda.rawlings2@essex.gov.uk to give advice about what the levy can

be used for. Headteachers were reminded that the levy can be used for existing staff, as well as new staff, and this can include senior leaders, teachers, school business managers, LSAs and so on.

The 20% non-contact rule does not mean that schools must offer a day a week out of school, and if feasible staff may undertake this in the holidays or after school hours, although it was accepted that they would then need to be on a 52 week contract.

A number of headteachers and deputies are undertaking master's degrees funded by the Apprenticeship Levy and some schools are using this to encourage and develop middle and senior leaders.

e) DfE Supply Teacher Framework

This is now live. This is a tool for schools to access supply teachers through "approved" agencies that adhere to certain rules around safeguard checks, charges, temp to perm fees etc.

A DfE communication containing a version of the agency selection tool has been sent to every school via their registered email address.

Full information about the deal and how to use it can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/deal-for-schools-hiring-supply-teachers-and-agency-workers>

f) DfE free advertising portal

This is now live and being rolled out across the Country, with full coverage expected by December 2018.

<https://teaching-jobs.service.gov.uk/>

Schools have to register on the site (this can be done at any time – not just when a vacancy arises). To date there are around 49 vacancies being advertised on the site.

g) Right to work checks and applying for settled status following Brexit

The current position that EU nationals have the automatic right to live and work in the UK will change as a result of the UK's decision to leave the EU.

This will mean that some employees will need to apply for "settled status" to evidence their ongoing right to live and work in the UK. This guidance gives an overview of the EU Settlement Scheme and the checks employers must carry out when recruiting EU citizens following Brexit. This is not intended to be exhaustive guidance and employees should seek their own advice on obtaining settled status.

Right to work checks until the end of 2020

Current right to work checks apply until the end of 2020. There will be no change to the rights and status of EU Citizens living in the UK until 2021.

Even if there is a no-deal Brexit in March 2019, the immigration minister has now confirmed that no additional right to work checks on EU citizens will be required. Any employers offering jobs to EU nationals post-Brexit will be expected to ensure they are eligible to work in the UK (using the current right to work checks). There will be no need for employers to differentiate between recent arrivals in the UK and settled residents when carrying out such checks.

What is the EU Settlement Scheme?

If EU citizens want to stay in the UK beyond 31 December 2020, they and their family members will need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme ("the Scheme").

The Scheme will allow the EU citizen and their family members to continue to live and work in the UK. It will mean they are eligible for:

- public services, such as healthcare and schools;
- public funds and pensions; and
- British citizenship, if they want to apply and meet the requirements.

Who needs to apply?

EU citizens from all member states can apply. They will not need to apply if:

- They are an Irish citizen
- They have indefinite leave to remain in the UK
- They have indefinite leave to enter the UK - for example, they have a Returning Resident visa

However, all family members from outside the UK and Ireland will need to apply. Rights for citizens of Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland are still being negotiated.

Eligibility for settled status

To be eligible for settled status, the individual will usually need to:

- be an EU citizen, or a family member of an EU citizen
- have been living in the UK continuously for 5 years ('continuous residence')
- have started living in the UK by 31 December 2020

If they have lived in the UK for less than 5 years, they will generally be eligible for 'pre-settled status' instead.

They will need to apply even if they are an EU citizen married to a British citizen. Further details on eligibility are available from: <https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families/eligibility>

Timescales

The Scheme will be phased in later this year, and will gradually open more widely until it is fully open by the end of March 2019.

Residents from EU member states have a deadline to apply for "settled status" which will then prove their right to remain and work in the UK. Those who are resident in the UK by 31 December 2020 will have until **30 June 2021** to make an application. Their rights will remain unchanged until then, provided that they were resident in the UK by 31 December 2020.

It is estimated that 3.5 million people will need to go through this process once it has been fully opened (which is due by March 2019). It may therefore be advisable to apply as early as possible.

Employer responsibilities

Although there is no legal obligation to communicate information about the Scheme to employees, employers may wish to notify employees about the Scheme and provide them with the relevant information. The Government have issued a toolkit for employers. This includes leaflets and briefing guides for informing employees about the Scheme.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-employer-toolkit>

Employees who need to apply will find checklists of the documents they will need to produce and the process in the applicant leaflets:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728676/Leaflet_2_-_How_Do_I_Apply.PDF

Fees for the Scheme

Employers are not expected to pay or support the cost of the Scheme although if they wish to do so they can. The cost for applying under the scheme will be £65 for those aged 16 or over (£32.50 for children under 16).

It will be free to apply if:

- The EU citizen already has valid indefinite leave to remain in the UK or a valid permanent residence document (see below)
- Applying to move from pre-settled status to settled status

Evidence of settled status

Settled or pre-settled status will mean that the individual has the right to work in the UK. It will also mean they can:

- use the NHS
- enrol in education or continue studying
- access public funds such as benefits and pensions, if you're eligible for them
- bring family members to the UK after 31 December 2020
- travel in and out of the UK

All successful applicants will get proof of their settled status through an online service. They will not get a physical document.

Once an applicant has been granted settled status, it will remain valid unless they leave the UK for a period of more than 5 years.

Employees with indefinite leave to remain in or enter the UK

If an employee has indefinite leave to remain they can continue to live and work in the UK without applying for settled status. However, they can apply to change their indefinite leave to settled status (without a fee) if they wish which will mean they can live outside the UK for 5 years* (rather than 2 years with indefinite leave). They will not have to pay or prove they have 5 years' continuous residence.

Employees holding a valid permanent residence document

Any permanent residence document will not be valid after 31 December 2020. Individuals can change their permanent residence document for settled status by applying to the EU Settlement Scheme. They will not have to pay or prove they have 5 years' continuous residence.

**this period is still subject to parliamentary approval and may change.*

Right to work checks on academy trustees and members

It has recently come to HR's attention that although Academy trustees and members are volunteers (and therefore would normally not be covered by right to work checks) under provisions in the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 there is a requirement to carry out such checks.

This is not included in the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education either in the current version or any previous versions. HR has contacted the Department for Education for clarification of whether such checks are required and, if so, why this is not set out in the statutory guidance. They have confirmed that right to work checks are required on Academy members and trustees (not members of local governing bodies). The Department are looking into why this is not included in the statutory guidance.

Next steps for Academies:

1. Carry out a right to work check

All Academies should now ensure that their trustees and members have been appropriately checked to ensure they have the right to work in the UK. Academies must obtain original versions of one or more acceptable documents and check the document's validity in the presence of the holder. The documents that can be provided are available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/acceptable-right-to-work-documents-an-employers-guide>

In many cases, a UK/EEA passport will have been provided for either an identity check or to complete a DBS check and if this is the case the individual will have the right to work in the UK and appropriate evidence of the check should be retained (see below). If appropriate documents have not been seen/retained for any existing trustees/members **this check should be carried out retrospectively**. This check must be completed for all new Academy trustees and members going forward.

[Comprehensive guidance](#) is available which includes requirements and processes for checking right to work in the UK.

2. Retain evidence of the right to work checks

Where a new right to work check is completed, evidence must be retained with the records for the governor/trustee. A clear copy of the right to work document must be retained and the person who checks the document must write on the copy "This Right to Work document was checked on [insert date]". It is also recommended that the name of the person who has carried out the check is recorded on the copy document. The document retained can be a hard copy or a scanned and unalterable copy (e.g. jpeg or PDF).

If a copy of the UK/EEA passport has been retained for an existing trustee/member (from a previous identity/DBS check) this will provide evidence of their right to work but the document should be annotated as set out above.

3. Record the check on the Single Central Record

The Academy's Single Central Record should be updated to include a right to work check column for Academy trustees and members.

The date of the right to work check must be recorded on the SCR (and ideally the initials of the person who completed the check).

6. ESSEX MONITORING AND MODERATION SERVICES FOR ACADEMIES 2018/19

If academies wish to take advantage of LA moderation, they can buy into a service agreement. They must choose which LAQ is responsible for monitoring the KS2 test results and phonic screening check and monitoring their KS1 and KS2 teacher assessment and must then have a written agreement in place with their chosen LA. By entering into the agreement, the academy accepts that it will be included in the LA cycle of monitoring and moderation as prescribed by the Standards and Testing Agency. This means that the academy may receive no monitoring or moderation visits, or one or more in any particular year. The academy will be charged only for those visits that take place.

For more information contact Jacky Castle 07717867147 jacky.castle@essex.gov.uk

7. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Area Heads Meetings

Spring term 2019

N-EAST	Wednesday 6 March	Weston Homes Community Stadium
SOUTH	Thursday 7 March	Holiday Inn, Basildon
WEST	Wednesday 13 March	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 14 March	Chelmsford City Football Club

Summer term 2019

N-EAST	Wednesday 12 June	Weston Homes Community Stadium
SOUTH	Thursday 13 June	Holiday Inn, Basildon
WEST	Wednesday 19 June	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 20 June	Chelmsford City Football Club

EPHA Conferences

Headteachers' Conference

Friday 22 March 2019 Stock Brook Country Club, Nr. Billericay

Deputy/Assistant Headteachers' Conference

Friday 4 October 2019 Weston Homes Community Stadium

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