

EPHA Meetings Academic Year 2020/2021

Spring term 2021

N-EAST	Wednesday 3 March	online
SOUTH	Thursday 4 March	online
WEST	Wednesday 10 March	online
MID	Thursday 11 March	online

Summer term 2021

N-EAST	Wednesday 16 June	venue tbc
SOUTH	Thursday 17 June	venue tbc
WEST	Wednesday 23 June	venue tbc
MID	Thursday 24 June	venue tbc

Contact your Area Chair with any concerns, questions or issues you would like to discuss with colleagues.

CONTACT EPHA

www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk

Contact Pam Langmead, Professional Officer, at

pam@langmead.me.uk

Harriet Phelps-Knights EPHA Chair,
via Janet Duke Primary

What a difference a year makes!

In March 2020 the termly EPHA meetings were held in the usual venues across the county, and the main discussion focused on “lessons learnt” from recent Ofsted inspections along with the introduction of the new SEND teams. However, Clare Kershaw did give headteachers early information on the emerging Coronavirus – she reported that on the 9th March 2020 there were 5 confirmed cases in Essex. By the 23rd March, schools were (partially) closed and life changed for us all – of course no one realised for how long this would continue.

The negative impacts of the pandemic are too many to list, not least of course the unfathomable number of deaths and sickness, which continue to increase every day. Everyone has been impacted both personally and professionally and headteachers have carried the emotional burden of many families whose lives are turned upside down, as well as coping with their own anxieties. In addition, there seems to be an apparent belief that there is infinite staffing capacity in primary schools and the workload is greater than ever, and we continue to be plagued by confusing and contradictory guidance, often delivered late via the media.

However, clutching at positives, schools can currently enjoy a SATs-free period, some respite from Ofsted inspection, and exclusions are at an all-time low! Let’s hope that the vaccination roll-out continues apace and that this time in a year we can look back and marvel at how we all coped with this extraordinary moment in history.

EPHA Executive Meetings

The spring term EPHA Executive Meeting took place on 21 January 2021. The agenda included a discussion with Sue Baldwin, Regional Schools Commissioner, about the work of her office and, in particular, questions about the future of Ofsted, assessment and the arrangements for half term!

The main focus of the meeting was on the impact of the partial closure of schools, as well as the recent introduction of Lateral Flow Testing in primary schools. Questions and concerns were taken forward to the meeting with the Education Director later in the morning. That agenda included:

- Questions and views about the current lockdown and the support available to schools, including for those children with EHCPs
- Discussion around how schools can carry out welfare checks and what part social care and other agencies (should) play
- An update on the Headteacher Wellbeing programme
- A summary of school funding decisions for 2021/22

The minutes of the Executive meetings are available on the EPHA website

<http://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/meetings>

EPHA Executive membership

It is important that every district of Essex is well represented on the EPHA Executive. We currently have vacancies for headteacher reps in Chelmsford South and for Mid Vice-Chair. If you are in one of these areas/clusters, please consider joining the Executive to make sure your local voice is heard.

EPHA CONFERENCE NEWS

HEADTEACHERS’ CONFERENCE

Friday 19 March 2021 online – *key note speakers: Rt Hon Michael Portillo, Mary Myatt, Drew Povey and Susie Dent. There will be no charge for the conference this year.*

There are still places available, but we are restricting the conference to Essex primary headteachers, acknowledging the annual subscription that is paid by their schools. Please contact Pam if you would like to attend.

This year’s **Deputy Heads’ conference** will be held on **Friday 8 October 2021** at the Colchester Football Stadium.