

EPHA Meetings Academic Year 2021/2022

Spring term 2022

Local Authority update	Tuesday 1 March	online
N-EAST	Wednesday 2 March	Colchester Football Stadium
SOUTH	Thursday 4 March	Greenwoods Hotel
WEST	Wednesday 9 March	Manor of Groves
MID	Thursday 10 March	The Lion Inn, Boreham

Summer term 2022

N-EAST	Wednesday 15 June	Colchester Football Stadium
MID	Thursday 16 June	The Lion Inn, Boreham
WEST	Wednesday 22 June	Manor of Groves
SOUTH	Thursday 23 June	Greenwoods Hotel

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

Small Schools Support Group

There are 59 schools in Essex with fewer than 120 pupils on roll; the smallest currently has just 44 children. Running a small school comes with its own unique challenges, the size of the budget being just one.

Other problems include the limited number of staff, including the size of the leadership team, the fact that a small-school head often has a timetabled teaching commitment, lacks administrative and support staff, and often has no caretaker – all of these pressures have to be managed and it is usually the headteacher who fills the gaps.

In addition there are logistical challenges, including how to deliver and lead the curriculum, educational visits and trips and so on. Parents of children with special educational needs often feel that a small school will offer a nurturing and secure space for their child – and they often do – but this adds hugely to the pressure on an already limited budget. Many of these schools are rural and the difficulty of accessing support from other services adds to their workload.

Finding and recruiting good governors is a challenge for all schools, but may be even harder in a small school in a rural location, with a limited local population.

EPHA recognises all of these issues, and so has decided to set up a Small Schools group, to support these headteachers and to offer a regular forum for discussion, as well as a chance to share ideas and expertise. The first meeting of the group will be on Thursday 17th March at 3.30 pm – the Professional Officer has sent an invitation out to the small-school heads; we look forward to developing the group and offering support to these schools.

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

EPHA Executive Meetings

The spring term EPHA Executive Meeting took place on 20 January 2022. The main focus of the meeting was a discussion of the continuing pressures on schools, particularly in relation to Covid and the impact of staff shortages, as well as the ongoing challenges around SEND funding and provision. The Executive had an update from Juniper about payroll, and a discussion about headteacher wellbeing support. Questions and concerns were taken forward to the meeting with the Education Director later in the morning. That agenda included:

- an update on the SEND Strategy
- the plans for the Essex Year of Reading
- a safeguarding update from Jo Barclay

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

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

Managing Complaints

As you know, we have had a key focus this term on the management of complaints, recognising how challenging and time consuming they can be for headteachers.

Alongside two training sessions, delivered by Natasha Taylor, EPHA has developed a number of resources:

- Refreshed model complaints policy/procedures;
- Updated concerns/complaints leaflet;
- Rewrite of the Complaints Toolkit, now in line with the DfE 2019 guidance;
- A 7-minute staff meeting on managing complaints.

All of these resources are available on the EPHA website.

The online training session was also recorded – please contact the Professional Officer for the link.

EPHA CONFERENCE NEWS

HEADTEACHERS' CONFERENCE

Friday 25 March 2022 Chelmsford City Race Course
key note speakers: Lady Marie Stubbs, Gillian Bridge and Ben McBean.

There are still places available and we are really looking forward to holding an in-person annual conference once again. Please contact Pam if you would like to attend.

Date for the diary: This year's **Deputy Heads' conference** will be held on **Friday 7 October 2022** at the Colchester Football Stadium.

Presenters will include Jonathan Bond and Lee Parkinson (of Mr P fame).