

DIRECTORY OF SUPPORT FOR PRIMARY HEADTEACHERS IN ESSEX

(September 2026)

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Essex Primary Headteachers' Association

The Essex Primary Heads' Association (EPHA) is run by primary heads for primary heads.

EPHA aims to support all primary-phase headteachers - both in maintained schools and academies - in their leadership and management roles and to promote and improve primary education in Essex, in collaboration with the Local Authority and other education partners. The Association is led by the EPHA Executive, a group headteachers elected by their peers, supported by the Professional Officer.

The well-being and resilience of headteachers is a key concern for EPHA, and the Association exists to offer advice, support and guidance, as well as regular opportunities to network and develop supportive relationships with colleagues.

EPHA offers the following support and guidance to headteachers:

- Termly meetings for all primary-phase headteacher, which include information from the Local Authority, as well as development opportunities focusing on school improvement and other aspects of school leadership and management;
- Support, information and guidance from the Professional Officer, including "sign-posting" to other sources of support and advice;
- The opportunity to offer new and existing headteachers free support from our Colleague Supporter programme;
- Free or subsidised training on topical issues;
- A dedicated website for Essex primary heads, offering a huge bank of resources and information.

Key contacts

Pam Langmead	Professional Officer	pam@langmead.me.uk	01621 786359 07791 143277
Harriet Phelps-Knights	Chair of EPHA	Head@Janetduke.essex.sch.uk	01268 543744
EPHA Executive	Elected representatives	Current membership list on the EPHA website	
EPHA website	www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk		

National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)

The National Association of Head Teachers was established on 27th March, 1897, at a conference held at the Clarendon Street Schools, Nottingham.

"The objects of the NAHT are:

- to provide a ready means of communication for all members, to ascertain and give expression to their opinions and to take action when necessary on their behalf;
- to render help to all members in cases of professional difficulty;
- to further the cause of Education generally;
- to uphold a high standard of professional conduct among members, including equal opportunities for all;
- to regulate relations between members and their employers."

To access NAHT advice and support:

Open from **8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Thursday**, and **8.30am to 5pm on Fridays**

NAHT provides a counselling and support line for members. Please contact 0800 917 4055 to access this service.

- Visit www.naht.org.uk
- Email:
 - specialistadvice@naht.org.uk - for professional advice
 - membersupport@naht.org.uk - for membership and subscriptions
- Call 0300 30 30 333 - select 1 for professional advice, 2 for queries relating to membership or subscriptions, or remain on the line to speak to reception

Key contacts

Paul Whiteman	General Secretary	Paul.whiteman@naht.org.uk
Lara Newton	PA to Paul Whiteman	lara.newton@naht.org.uk generalsecretary@naht.org.uk
Lisa Lynch	NAHT Regional Organiser (London and Eastern)	lisa.lynch@naht.org.uk Mobile: 07706 358608
Joanne Gale-Chambers	NAHT – Regional Officer (Eastern)	joanne.gale-chambers@naht.org.uk
NAHT website	http://www.naht.org.uk/	

National Education Union (NEU)

The National Education Union

Combining the expertise and experience of both ATL and the NUT, the **National Education Union** is the UK's largest education union. With more than 450,000 members, the National Education Union (NEU) represents the majority of teachers and educational professionals in the UK.

The National Education Union will offer membership and a democratic voice to all education professionals: teachers, leaders and managers in maintained schools, academies, free schools and independent schools; lecturers, managers and leaders in FE and HE and support staff across every sector in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Members formerly in ATL or NUT will continue to be supported by their union's current staff and lay officials until the end of a transition period on 1 January 2019. Current general secretaries of both the ATL and NUT – Dr Mary Bousted and Kevin Courtney - will continue in place as joint general secretaries of the National Education Union until 2023.

Support for members

Protection for teachers is a major priority for the NEU. It has always offered to members a far higher level of service in the area in which they teach than any other teachers' organisation.

Speak first to your workplace rep for advice and support or contact your local District/Division.

You can also email the [National Education Union advice line](#) or call 0345 8118111 for advice.

NEU offers the following support and guidance to headteachers who are members:

[National Education Union advice line](#) or call 0345 8118111 for advice.

It also offers a useful A-Z Self help guidance on a range of issues

<https://www.teachers.org.uk/help-and-advice/self-help>

Key contacts

NEU website	https://neu.org.uk/
NEU Adviceline	0345 8118111
A-Z self help guidance	https://www.teachers.org.uk/help-and-advice/self-help
Health and Safety A-Z	https://www.teachers.org.uk/help-and-advice/health-and-safety

COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Education Support Partnership

Education Support Partnership is the new name for the joined forces of Teacher Support Network, Recourse and Worklife Support.

“Dedicated to helping organisations and their staff to boost health, happiness and wellbeing through individual support and great management. Whether you’re in crisis, want a bit of coaching, or just want to talk something through, call or email and speak to one of the BACP accredited counsellors. They’re ready to help.”

They have a helpline: When you call you’ll talk to a qualified counsellor who will offer you immediate, confidential emotional support.

Don’t wait for a crisis to call

[08000 562 561](tel:08000562561)

Professional Supervision funded by DfE

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/get-help/help-for-your-staff/wellbeing-services/professional-supervision/>

Key contacts

Caroline Geilnik Education Support	07814 515 980 caroline.Gielnik@edsupport.org.uk
Helpline	UK-wide: 08000 562 561 Txt: 07909 341229 Email support support@edsupport.org.uk
Headrest – free telephone helpline designed to support headteachers	https://www.headrestuk.co.uk/
Head First	www.head-first-cc.com
BeWellTeachWell	http://www.bewellteachwell.org.uk/
Headspace	https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/get-help/help-for-your-staff/wellbeing-services/professional-supervision/

Coaching Services

Coaching is a useful way of developing people's skills and abilities, and of boosting performance. It can also help deal with issues and challenges before they become major problems. Most formal, professional coaching is carried out by qualified people who work with clients to improve their effectiveness and performance, and help them achieve their full potential. Coaches can be hired by coachees, or by their organisations. Coaching on this basis works best when everyone clearly understands the reason for hiring a coach, and when they jointly set the expectations for what they want to achieve through coaching. The following coaches have been used and recommended by Essex Headteachers.

Key contacts

Helen Todd	hsmeeton@aol.com 07742 106153
Integrity Coaching (Viv Grant)	http://www.integritycoaching.co.uk/ 0208 767 7664 enquiries@integritycoaching.co.uk
Simon Tucker	020 8938 2475
Peter Anderson <i>Anderson Wellbeing</i>	07792 886992/01787 269499 www.andersonwellbeing.com
Maria Brosnan <i>Pursuit Wellbeing</i>	https://pursuitwellbeing.com/
Joanna Gledhill	www.head-first-cc.com

ESSEX LOCAL AUTHORITY

People Management (HR)

Helpline (Monday – Thursday 8:30 am – 5:00 pm & Friday 8:30 am – 4:30 pm)

01245 968378

Email: educationhr@junipereducation.org

Safeguarding

Jo Barclay Safeguarding Adviser to Schools

telephone: 03330 131078

mobile: 07775 030021

email: jo.barclay@essex.gov.uk or educationsafeguarding@essex.gov.uk

Health and Safety helpline

Tel: 033301 39818

Email: HS@essex.gov.uk

Occupational Health (Innovate Healthcare)

Tel: 0161 480 5512

Email: enquiries@innovatehmg.co.uk

<https://innovatehealthcare.co.uk/contactus/>

Legal Services

Tel: 01245 506600

Critical Incident Response Team

If an incident has occurred schools should phone: **Schools Communication Team**

01245 434745 (Office hours 9 am-5 pm)

07717 867525 (Out of hours/weekends)

E-DBS Services

Tel: 03330 135890

Website: <http://dbschecks.essex.gov.uk/>

Email: dbs.servicecentre@essex.gov.uk

School Effectiveness Team

Clare Kershaw, Director of Education

clare.kershaw@essex.gov.uk

Assistant Directors

Catherine Hutley (Mid AD)

Catherine.Hutley2@essex.gov.uk

Nicola Woolf (West AD)

07872 869522

Nicola.woolf@essex.gov.uk

Lisa Fergus (South AD)

07557 167962

lisa.fergus@essex.gov.uk

Dan Gee (North East AD)

dan.gee@essex.gov.uk

Essex Schools' Infolink

<https://schools-secure.essex.gov.uk/Pages/EssexSchoolsInfolink.aspx>

[https://schools-secure.essex.gov.uk/info/Welcome to New Headteachers/Pages/default.aspx](https://schools-secure.essex.gov.uk/info/Welcome%20to%20New%20Headteachers/Pages/default.aspx)

Juniper Education

Subscription services for Essex schools

<https://junipereducation.org/>

Essex Clerks Association

www.essexclerks.org

Contact Essex

Main switchboard for Essex County Council 03457 430430

WHAT WORKS FOR HEADTEACHERS

Formal coaching, counselling, supervision

- ✓ DSL supervision
- ✓ Hearth Health programme- Maria Brosnan
- ✓ Professional supervision (this was mentioned a lot)
- ✓ Life coach
- ✓ “Positive” Neil – 2 sessions <https://positiveneil.com/>
- ✓ Counselling sessions from Southend Extended Services – headteacher supervision available
- ✓ Headteacher counselling 1:1
- ✓ “Inside Out” – Maggie Farrar – leadership resilience programme
- ✓ Headspace

Dedicated Leadership Time and work-life balance

- ✓ Non-contact time for headteacher- weekly/fortnightly/half termly
- ✓ Work from home on a scheduled basis
- ✓ One late start “in school” a week – start work at home at 7.00 am/get to school at 10.00 am
- ✓ No evening meetings!
- ✓ Keeping some meetings online, including governors and parents
- ✓ Get the worst things off your list!
- ✓ A target for performance management
- ✓ Not having email on your phone
- ✓ No emails before 8 am, after 6 pm or weekends – making sure you are disciplined about this
- ✓ One day a weekend with no work
- ✓ No parent direct access – emails go through admin
- ✓ Shorter Friday afternoons
- ✓ 2 week October half term
- ✓ Delegate well, but take an interest in everyone
- ✓ Spending time with the children

WHAT WORKS FOR HEADTEACHERS

Networking, partnerships and colleague support

- ✓ Being with other heads and spending time informally, chatting about commonalities – know you all share the same “issues”
- ✓ “Bitch and a Bun” sessions
- ✓ WhatsApp group to share problems
- ✓ Half termly partnership meetings and share experiences – often over lunch.
- ✓ Attending conferences as a partnership group.
- ✓ Very informal meetings- no agenda meetings
- ✓ Partnership meetings
- ✓ Headteacher conferences – including Partnership conferences, EPHA, national
- ✓ Fortnightly Zoom meetings
- ✓ Off-site meetings e.g. EPHA – sharing and meeting
- ✓ Formal and informal networks of headteachers
- ✓ Residential – 2 nights planning for group
- ✓ Pub lunch before partnership meetings
- ✓ Twitter (find like-minded colleagues)
- ✓ Attending conferences e.g. Inspiring Leadership, NGFL, EPHA
- ✓ Setting boundaries – shut the door if you need to
- ✓ Consortium wellbeing event
- ✓ Allocated mentor within the Partnership
- ✓ Shared humour

Support for the role

- ✓ EPHA headteacher briefings
- ✓ Facilitator for the partnership (accepted that this is not financially viable for many schools)
- ✓ Dedicated Mental Health Lead employed across the MAT for staff
- ✓ Supportive Chair of Governors/CEO
- ✓ Making governors aware of wellbeing needs of headteacher
- ✓ EAP (Employee Assistance Programme) – 24 hours staff support service <https://www.hrdept.co.uk/services/employee-assistance-programme/>
- ✓ Welbee survey
- ✓ Phone a friend – formal and informal
- ✓ Diocese “Sabbath Day” for church school heads (maybe a version of this could be run for non-school heads?)

WHAT WORKS FOR HEADTEACHERS

Physical activities

- ✓ Wellbeing Walks – for some, followed by breakfast.
- ✓ 10 minutes' walk during the day – know your signs and regulate
- ✓ Staff wellness package
- ✓ Deep Breaths – we hire a pod at Gridserve
- ✓ Star wellbeing days <https://starwellbeing.co.uk/>
- ✓ Meditation and Reiki – breath work
- ✓ Meditation and prayer
- ✓ Singing in a choir/playing in an orchestra
- ✓ Activities that mean you have to focus and NOT think about school
- ✓ Dog walking
- ✓ Gym
- ✓ Cycling
- ✓ Run twice a week
- ✓ Park Run
- ✓ Playing football
- ✓ Yoga
- ✓ Exercise
- ✓ Sleep well
- ✓ Positive affirmations daily
- ✓ Celebrating what you love about the job
- ✓ Deliberate strategies to try and keep a sense of perspective.
- ✓ Scream pillow!

Tangible rewards

- ✓ Perk Box – commercial package
- ✓ Chocolate and wine (came up a lot, as did swearing!)
- ✓ Stash of healthy snacks in your top drawer
- ✓ Bringing pet into school
- ✓ Taking time for yourself – sketching, riding
- ✓ Animals/hobbies/music playing
- ✓ Rescue remedy
- ✓ Family events – e.g. attending own kids' sports day