

**LA /ESSEX PRIMARY HEADS' ASSOCIATION NORTH EAST AREA  
WEDNESDAY 21 JUNE 2023**

**MEETING SUMMARY: ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Agendas and minutes for these meetings available at [www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk](http://www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk)

<b>Attendance List</b>	
<p><b>DISTRICT AND EPHA AGENDA (a.m.)</b> <b>(Notes below)</b> <b>Nick Hutchings, Chair</b></p> <p><b>NAHT update</b> <b>NEEPHA meeting and AGM</b> <b>Election of Officers and Local Delivery</b> <b>Group representatives</b> <b>EPHA updates</b></p> <p><b>Headteacher wellbeing</b></p>	<p><b>Welcome to the following Headteachers:</b> Tina Bourne Kate Nunn</p> <p><b>Farewell to the following headteachers:</b> Gavin Bradley Tracey Caffull Susan Locke Kate Moore Clare Sampson Nicky Sirett Sam Wilding</p> <p>Alan Garnett Nick Hutchings</p> <p><b>Chair</b> <b>Vice-Chair</b> <b>Treasurer</b> <b>Colchester West</b> <b>Colchester East</b> <b>Colchester South</b></p> <p><b>Tendring Mid</b> <b>Tendring North</b> <b>Tendring South</b> <b>Harwich &amp; Dovercourt</b></p> <p>Round table discussion to gather ideas that support wellbeing</p>
<p>p 1</p>	<p><b>AREA AGENDA</b> LA updates on current priorities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director's welcome and update</li> <li>• National Policy updates</li> <li>• School Communications update</li> <li>• School improvement traded offer</li> <li>• SEMH support offer</li> <li>• LA Strategic Priorities</li> <li>• North East quadrant update</li> </ul>
<p>p 2</p> <p>p 2-6</p> <p>p 6</p> <p>p 6 -8</p> <p>p 8 -10</p> <p>p 10</p> <p>p 11</p>	<p>Clare Kershaw</p> <p>Stephen Chynoweth Steve Whitfield Clare Kershaw Philippa Holliday</p>
<p>p12 -14</p>	<p><b>Essex Year of Numbers</b> Gareth Honeyford and Ian Fisher</p>
<p>p 15</p>	<p><b>Key dates</b></p> <p><b>NORTH EAST headteacher meetings 2023/24</b> Wednesday 15 November 2023 Wednesday 6 March 2024 Wednesday 19 June 2024</p> <p><b>Deputy Headteachers' Annual Conference 2023</b> Friday 13 October 2023 Colchester Football Stadium</p> <p><b>Headteachers' Annual Conference 2024</b> Friday 22 March 2024 Chelmsford City Race Course</p>
<p>*Page numbers refer to the full minutes (posted on the EPHA website) of the Summer term Area meetings with LA Officers and Headteachers.</p>	

**LA /ESSEX PRIMARY HEADS' ASSOCIATION NORTH EAST AREA**  
**DISTRICT AND AREA MEETING**  
**WEDNESDAY 21 JUNE 2023**  
**ATTENDANCE**

**Present**

Sue Bardetti	Holland Haven Primary
Natasha Bennett	Millfields Primary
Suzie Bliss	Walton-on-the-Naze Primary
Sally Blunden	Frinton-on-Sea Primary
David Bome	Copford Primary
Charlotte Brown	Messing Primary
Sarah Bryson	Alresford Primary
Toby Bull	The Bishop William Ward CE Primary
Tracey Caffull	Great Bentley Primary
Alex Candler	Lexden Primary
Mark Carter-Tufnell	Mistley Norman/St Osyth Primaries
Gemma Chester	Dedham CE Primary
Judith Dale	Baynards Primary
Paula Derwin	Hazelmere Juniors
Ellie Eames	White Hall Academy
Abbie Fairbairn	Lawford CE Primary
Diane Fawcett	St Andrew's CE Primary, Weeley
Belynda Fellows	St James CE Primary
Alan Garnett	North Primary & Nursery
Claire Holmes	Monkwick Infants & Nursery
Nick Hutchings	N East Chair/ Hamilton Primary
Ellie Jaggs	Boxted St Peters CE Primary
Chris Joy	Engaines Primary
Becky Keitch	St George's CE Primary, Gt Bromley
Laura Khine	Brightlingsea Primary
Samantha King	Tiptree Heath Primary
Marie Kelly	St Teresa's Catholic Primary
Rebecca Loader	Stanway Primary
Susan Locke	Milldene Primary

**LA Officers**

Clare Kershaw	Director of Education
Philippa Holliday	Assistant Director, North East
Stephen Chynoweth	EY and Education Manager, N East
Jo Barclay	Head of Education Safeguarding
Steve Whitfield	ECC
Gareth Honeyford	ECC
Ian Fisher	ECC
Janine Hanson	SEND Quadrant Manager, North East
Jeni Noakes	ECC Attendance Specialist
Sue Thomas	ECC Attendance Specialist
Kerry McGrory	School Effectiveness Partner
Carole Farrer	School Effectiveness Partner

Ian MacDonald	Elmstead Primary
Becky Maguire	St Joseph's Catholic Primary
Kathy Maguire-Egan	Oakwood Infants
Joanna Marshall	Tendring Primary
Carl Messer	St George's Primary
Rebecca McCutcheon	Monkwick Juniors
Mark Millbourne	Prettygate Infant and Juniors
Gail Morgan	St Michael's Primary & Nursery
Martin Moriarty	Tiptree St Luke's Primary
Matthew Moseley	Holland Park Primary
Samantha Moseley	All Saints CE Primary, Dovercourt
Louise Parkinson	Doucecroft School
John Poulson	Iceni Academy
Clare Sampson	Roach Vale Primary
Katie Siggery	Burrsville Infants
Nikki Sirett	Alton Park Juniors
Susan Shipp	Friars Grove Primary
Darren Smith	Brinkley Grove Primary
Sarah Stevenson	Langenhoe Primary
Steven Turnbull	Hazelmere Infants and Nursery
Jamie Whiteside	St Clare's Catholic Primary
Karen Wright	Broomgrove Juniors

**In Attendance**

Pam Langmead	EPHA Professional Officer
Emma Flin	St Andrew's, Great Yeldham
Stephanie Newland	St Margaret's, Toppesfield
Becky More	Rivenhall Primary
Gemma Havord	Home Farm Primary

**Apologies**

Liz Bartholomew	The Mayflower Primary
Gavin Bradley	White Hall Academy
Bridgette Gough	St Andrew's CE Primary
Amanda Mitchelson	Old Heath Primary
Richard Potter	Home Farm Primary
Sam Wilding	St Andrew's CE Primary, Marks Tey

Note: If your attendance or apologies have not been noted please contact the EPHA Professional Officer at [pam@langmead.me.uk](mailto:pam@langmead.me.uk) for amendment.

## NORTH EAST EPHA AREA MEETING MINUTES 21 JUNE 2023

### 1. WELCOME

Nick Hutchings, the North East Area Chair welcomed headteachers to the meeting.

#### **Welcome to the following Headteachers:**

Tina Bourne	Ardleigh St Mary's Primary (Co-interim headteacher)
Kate Nunn	Willow Brook Primary

#### **Farewell to the following headteachers:**

Gavin Bradley	White Hall Academy
Tracey Caffull	Great Bentley Primary
Susan Locke	Milldene Primary
Kate Moore	Birch CE Primary
Clare Sampson	Roach Vale Primary
Nicky Sirett	Alton Park Juniors
Sam Wilding	St Andrew's CE Primary, Marks Tey

If you are leaving please make use of the EPHA new heads' checklist, and complete it for your successor. This is available on the EPHA website at

<https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/info-and-documents/good-practice/>

### 2. NAHT UPDATE

Alan Garnett gave an update about the NAHT conference and the current ballot of members in relation to potential industrial action. He noted that he attended the NAHT conference in May, which was well attended by members. The issues that are affecting Essex headteachers are replicated nationally, and the NAHT was disappointed with the outcome of the first ballot, when insufficient members voted to support a strike or action short of a strike.

The NAHT has four focus areas of concern:

- Pay and funding
- Workload and wellbeing
- Recruitment and retention
- Ofsted

As Gillian Keegan, Secretary of State for education, has referenced these, they can be included in the negotiation discussions between the Union and Government. However, in common with other pay negotiations, the Government is taking a hard-line stance, at least for the time being.

Alan noted that all four unions (NAHT, NEU, NASUWT and ASCL) are engaged in industrial action balloting. The NEU have announced two further days of industrial action, on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> July. This is widely regarded as unhelpful for senior leaders, and many would have preferred to wait until the autumn term when joint action might be organised by the four unions (assuming their members vote to strike).

Alan encouraged headteachers to vote for industrial action, whether or not they themselves planned to join in a strike. He also noted that some headteachers had gone to London to visit their MP, and also asked headteachers to coordinate a staff meeting later in the week. He stressed that no headteacher actually wants to go on strike but said that the current conditions and pressures in schools are having a hugely negative impact on health and wellbeing.

*(NB NAHT branch officers, Matt O'Grady (South) and Dida Burrell (Mid) spoke at their area meetings giving similar messages.)*

### 3. NORTH EAST EPHA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

#### a) CHAIR'S REPORT

Nick Hutchings, Chair of North East EPHA, gave the following report.

##### **Review of the year**

Last year I wrote that I was lost for words. This year I don't think I can find the language needed to sum up how hard another year in Education has been.

Well maybe I can: S\*\*T

We have all been working longer and harder and trying to do our best for the children and community we serve. We are working with ever tightening budgets, being asked to do more with less and trying to retain or recruit staff into a system that is now very clearly broken. The uptake of staff into senior leadership roles is dwindling and heads in this room are spending more and more time talking about early exit, escape plans or reviewing what their skills set could be used for in other employment. I don't blame anyone for thinking that at all.

A highlight of the year must be the return of the 'critical worker list' to remind us that even though a strike is taking place, we must be made to feel guilty about how this impacts the rest of society.

Our new Secretary of State for Education has done little to support schools and short of placing a massive injection of money into SEMH provision, I just don't think there is an answer.

Many of us in the room have had to carry out redundancies or trim budgets to ensure our survival for another year - these are some of the hardest decisions we have to make.

I could continue on this horror story for pages and pages, but to what end?...

We must seek out the 'bright spots' of our weeks; the raison d'être for us being headteachers. The child that 'finally gets it', the dysregulating child that has learnt to re-regulate by themselves without the support of a member of staff, the non-attending child who has returned to school, the staff who have followed an instruction without the need for follow up, the smiles and tears that we have shed as a team and the sense of making a difference, however small.

These are the reasons that we continue in the job. This is why we chose to do what we do.

Throughout this year EPHA has been there for colleagues again. We are unlike any other Local Authority in the way we come together as one voice in Essex. Our combined drive to improve outcomes for children and staff, as a group, is unmatched. At this point I would like the members of the Executive to stand up and be congratulated for representing schools of the North East at county level. Please give them a round of applause!

I would also like to thank Pam for her support and hard work for the heads of Essex again this year. From being the 'google' of Essex to a shoulder to cry on, from finding that document we have lost, to recalling what was said in a schools forum meeting, from providing the termly briefing to training governors - we could not manage our jobs as well without you. Please put your hands together for Pam!

### What is to come?

This year I am not sure. I didn't predict the strike action, or the depth of debt coming from the energy crisis. I didn't predict that COVID would raise its head in schools again and I didn't predict that we would have so many changes in government. I guess this year we just need to be prepared for anything!

For some reason you keep voting me in as the chair of this group. I am more than happy to stand down to allow someone else to take the role on if they would like. I think I have been your chair for 9 years now. If this is something you would like to do, please speak to Pam or myself. I am very proud to work with you all and represent you at meetings to get the best that we can for the children of North East Essex. I think I might also have just managed my speech without crying for once!

## b) ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND LOCAL DELIVERY GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

<b>Chair</b>	Nick Hutchings (Hamilton Primary)
<b>Vice-Chair</b>	Richard Potter (Home Farm Primary)
<b>Treasurer</b>	Bridget Harris (St Thomas More's Catholic Primary)
<b>Colchester West</b>	Nick Hutchings (Hamilton Primary)
<b>Colchester East</b>	Paula Derwin (Hazelmere Infants)
<b>Colchester South</b>	Ceri Daniels (Holy Trinity Primary, Eight Ash Green)
	Sarah Stevenson (Langenhoe Primary)
<b>Tendring Mid</b>	Ian MacDonald (Elmstead Primary)
<b>Tendring North</b>	Becky Keitch (St George's CE Primary)
	James Newell (Wix and Wrabness Primary)
<b>Tendring South</b>	Sue Bardetti (Holland Haven Primary)
<b>Harwich &amp; Dovercourt</b>	Liz Bartholomew (The Mayflower Primary)

The officers and Local Delivery Group representatives were thanked for the hard work that they do on behalf of headteachers in the North East Area and for agreeing to continue in their roles or taking on new positions.

## 4. EPHA UPDATES

- a) **The Summer term EPHA newsletter**, including dates for the 2023/24 school year, was circulated to headteachers in advance of the meeting -these can also be found on the EPHA website [www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk](http://www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk).
- b) **EPHA Annual Subscription**  
Funding for EPHA will be continue to be top-sliced from the Delegated Schools Grant. Area meetings will continue to be "free" to all primary headteachers, as will the website, headteacher briefings and advice and support from the Professional Officer.  
<https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/files/what-headteachers-get-in-return-for-their-epha-contribution-2022-23.pdf>
- c) **EPHA County Annual General Meeting**  
The EPHA county AGM will be held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October at the Lion Inn, Boreham.
- d) **Conferences**  
Headteachers were reminded that the Deputy Headteachers' conference will be held on Friday 13 October 2023, at the Colchester Football Stadium (key note speakers Andrew Moffat and Bobby Seagull) and next year's annual Headteachers' conference will be held on Friday 22 March 2024 at Chelmsford City Race Course.

The programme and booking form for the Deputy Conference will be emailed to schools at the end of June.

There will be a conference for the Small Schools Support group on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at the Lion Inn, Boreham.

**e) Governor and staff online training**

We're pleased to report that around 250 governors, trustees and staff have attended recent online training focused on exclusions meeting a real need in the county.

The Professional Officer will be running another session on the latest suspensions and exclusions guidance, with a particular emphasis on the governor's role in the process.

The date/time of the **exclusions training** is Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023, at 6.00 pm – 8.00 pm.

She will also run a training course on **managing complaints**, again focused on the role of governors.

Two dates are available (course repeated, pick one):

- Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023, at 6.00 pm – 8.00 pm; OR
- Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023, at 4.00 pm – 6.00 pm.

**5. HEADTEACHER WELLBEING – ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION**

At each area meeting headteachers were asked to identify what activities actually help to support headteacher wellbeing – has the partnership, or have you as an individual, found something that really works? The following suggestions were collated, and will be included within the EPHA Support Directory:

**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 Fararr – 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

### 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

### 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 – breathwork
- ✓ 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!

### 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?)

#### **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

## **6. FUTURE DATES**

### **NORTH EAST headteacher meetings 2023/24**

Wednesday 15 November 2023

Wednesday 6 March 2024

Wednesday 19 June 2024

### **Deputy Headteachers’ Annual Conference 2023**

Friday 13 October 2023 Colchester Football Stadium

### **Headteachers’ Annual Conference 2024**

Friday 22 March 2024 Chelmsford City Race Course