

LA /ESSEX PRIMARY HEADS' ASSOCIATION SOUTH AREA

THURSDAY 23 JUNE 2022

MEETING SUMMARY: ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Agendas and minutes for these meetings available at www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk

Attendance List

DISTRICT AND EPHA AGENDA (a.m.)
(Notes below)
Nicky Stone-Riley, Chair

Welcome to the following Headteachers:

Helen Coote	Glebe Primary (Acting Headteacher)
Stephanie Crump	Leigh Beck Juniors (Head of School)
Neil Taggart	Ingatstone Infants (Executive Headteacher)
Jodie Philp	Ingatstone Infants (Acting Headteacher)
Simon Weston	Kelvedon Hatch Primary (Acting Head)
Aaron Wright	Leigh Beck Juniors

Farewell to the following headteachers:

Jo Farrow	Greensted Infants
Caroline L'Estrange	St Thomas of Canterbury CE Infants
Rachel Paulson	Sunnymede Infants
Sam Proctor	Hadleigh Infants
Bradley Saunders	Stambridge Primary
Sarah Sloper	Rettendon Primary
Sue Twaites	Kelvedon Hatch Primary

ESSEX FIRE SERVICE – EDUCATION OFFER
SEPHA meeting and AGM
Election of Officers and Local Delivery Group representatives
EPHA updates

Nicky Stone-Riley, Pam Langmead
Chair Nicky Stone-Riley (Cherry Tree Primary)
Vice-Chair Richard Green (Grove Wood Primary)
Treasurer vacancy
Wickford Heidi Blakeley (Abacus Primary)

Billericay Liz Benjeddi (South Green Juniors)
Rochford Hayley O'Dea (Great Wakering Primary)
Rayleigh Gary Soars (Edward Francis Primary)
Brentwood Matt O'Grady (West Horndon Primary)
Canvey Island Karen Tucker (Canvey Juniors)
Castle Point/Benfleet Diana Mason (Montgomerie Primary)
Basildon East/Pitsea Nicky Stone-Riley (Cherry Tree Primary)
Basildon West Angela Russell (St Anne Line Catholic Infants)

p 2 **AREA AGENDA** Clare Kershaw

LA updates on current priorities including:

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- DfE White Paper, Schools Bill Policy documents and 2022/23 Implementation Plan

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- Education Taskforce: Year of Reading Update

Sonia Barber

p 8

- SEMH Strategy Team – Finding the right support and new CAMHS Service

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SEND update including:

- SEND and Alternative Provision Green Paper

Ralph Holloway

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- Inclusion Conference
- Inclusion Framework and

Ordinarily Available updates	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top-up funding – introduction of a new system for Essex 	
p 13	<p>Key dates</p> <p>SOUTH headteacher meetings 2022/23 Thursday 17 November 2022 Thursday 2 March 2023 Thursday 15 June 2023</p> <p>Deputy Headteachers' Annual Conference 2022 Friday 7 October 2022 Colchester Football Stadium</p> <p>Headteachers' Annual Conference 2023 Friday 24 March 2023 Chelmsford City Race Course</p>
*Page numbers refer to the full minutes (posted on the EPHA website) of the Summer term Area meetings with LA Officers and Headteachers.	

**LA /ESSEX PRIMARY HEADS' ASSOCIATION SOUTH AREA
DISTRICT AND AREA MEETING
THURSDAY 23 JUNE 2022
ATTENDANCE**

Basildon/Billericay/Wickford

Gareth Allen	Millhouse Primary
Rachel Anthony	Runwell Primary
Nicky Barrand	Cherry Tree Primary
Liz Benjeddi	South Green Juniors
Sharon Branch	Sunnymede Juniors
Terri Chudleigh	Briscoe Primary
Nicola Coggin	Briscoe Primary
Aaron Cross	Kingston Primary
Stephanie Crump	Leigh Beck Juniors
Sandra Dorrington	Canvey Island Infants
Donna Dry	Bardfield Primary
Kelly Hamilton	Fairhouse Primary
Lisa Patient	Noak Bridge Primary
Rachel Paulson	Sunnymede Infants
Harriet Phelps-Knights	Janet Duke Primary
Damian Pye	Great Berry Primary
Angela Russell	St Anne Line Catholic Infants
Rachelle Tidiman	Ghyllgrove Primary
Sharon Walker	North Crescent Primary
Nathalie Watson	St Anne Line Catholic Juniors
Aaron Wright	Leigh Beck Juniors

In Attendance

Pam Langmead	EPHA Professional Officer
Louise Curtis	Essex Fire and Rescue
Courtney Freese	Berlesduna AT
Lisa Cracknell	Parkwood Academy
Simon Harbrow	SEAT
Jenny Haken	Millhouse Primary
Claire Winch	Crays Hill Primary
Sonia Barber	Janet Duke Primary

LA Officers

Clare Kershaw	Director of Education
Lisa Fergus	Assistant Director, South
Jo Barclay	Education Safeguarding
Ralph Holloway	SEND Strategy Lead
Maz Norman	Head of EY and Education, South
Lianne Canning	SEMH Team
Bethan Russell	School Effectiveness Partner
Mel Clapton	School Effectiveness Partner

Rochford/Rayleigh/Castle Point/Canvey Island

John Archer	Westwood Academy
Diana Mason	Montgomerie Primary
Sam Murrell	Lubbins Park Primary
Jo Parkes	Kents Hill Juniors
Catherine Stalham	Winter Gardens Primary
Sarah Warnes	Jotmans Hall Primary

Brentwood

Steve Bowsher	Larchwood Primary
Clare Branton	Willowbrook Primary
Russell Davies	Doddinghurst CE Juniors
Jenni Evans	Warley Primary
Amanda McAuliffe	St Helen's Catholic Infants
Dean Moran	St Thomas of Canterbury CE Jun
Nella Murthen	Long Ridings Primary
Matt O'Grady	West Horndon Primary
Louise Putt	Bentley St Paul's CE Primary
Simon Weston	Kelvedon Hatch Primary

Apologies

Richard Green	Grove Wood Primary
Lorraine Ramet	Wickford Primary

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

SOUTH EPHA AREA MEETING MINUTES 23 JUNE 2022

1. WELCOME

Nicky Stone-Riley, the South Area Chair welcomed headteachers to the meeting.

Welcome to the following Headteachers:

Helen Coote	Glebe Primary (Acting Headteacher)
Stephanie Crump	Leigh Beck Juniors (Head of School)
Neil Taggart	Ingatestone Infants (Executive Headteacher)
Jodie Philp	Ingatestone Infants (Acting Headteacher)
Simon Weston	Kelvedon Hatch Primary (Acting Head)
Aaron Wright	Leigh Beck Juniors

Farewell to the following headteachers:

Jo Farrow	Greensted Infants
Caroline L'Estrange	St Thomas of Canterbury CE Infants
Rachel Paulson	Sunnymede Infants
Sam Proctor	Hadleigh Infants
Bradley Saunders	Stambridge Primary
Sarah Sloper	Rettendon Primary
Sue Twaites	Kelvedon Hatch Primary

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. ESSEX FIRE SERVICE – EDUCATION OFFER TO SCHOOLS

Core programmes - collaborative with Essex Police

- Home safety (Fire prevention/Home safety crime reduction)
- Arson and Hoax Call prevention
- RTC/Pedestrian safety
- Cyber safety
- Hate crime
- Gang awareness
- Knife Crime
- Healthy relationships

Annual campaigns

- Sparks and spooks (including firework and bomb safety, and Halloween anti-social behaviour)
- Summer safety/Water safety

Juvenile Fire Setters

- Targeted interventions for children who are known to play, experiment or set fires
- Fire setting can be reported from in the home, school or community
- 2 JFS advisors provide education and awareness of risk to the young person, either at home or in an appropriate setting
- Assessed for risk reduction and/or signposted to other support services

Contact **Louise Curtis**

Business Development Manager

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service
Kelvedon Park, Rivenhall
Witham
Essex
CM8 3HB
Mobile: 07885 249516
Email: louise.curtis@essex-fire.gov.uk

3. SOUTH EPHA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

a) CHAIR'S REPORT

Nicky Stone-Riley, Chair of South EPHA, gave the following report.

Review of the year

Borrowing heavily from Nick's North East Chair's report which he opened with, "This year I am almost lost for words!" I second that. Nick continued: "Frankly I don't think I can remember what's happened since June 2021. Before writing this review I looked, as I always do, at my previous year's report. I was genuinely surprised by what schools had been through. I had a sense of thinking it was all a nightmare - some sort of horror movie that I had watched - not what life had actually been like."

Our Chairs' reports could not be delivered without commenting on the big C. Nick touched on the many confusing elements of COVID: when testing and vaccines had been in place for a long time and isolation periods had dropped from 14 days to 10 days to 5 days. The confusion over when day 1 of the count started and we were still working out how to get isolation notes and whether we needed them or not. The problems relating to periods of isolation and not being able to send classes home. In some schools every member of staff was used at some point to cover lessons in order to deliver some degree of education. In my own school we were working with up to 13 supply agencies at points in time and even the supply staff we were able to get were having to be covered by supply (or not) at times. We were not educating our children, we were child-minding and that, in my opinion, was a disservice to our staff and our children. But we got on with it and followed the seemingly never ending supply of DfE guidance that greeted us on an almost daily basis.

We also had the task of providing home learning, matched to current curriculum content for a minimum of 3-4 hours a day. Great idea DfE but not thought through. What schools began to notice was that children who were at home were not completing the work, which meant they were behind when they came back to school, meaning the whole process was pointless but, if you were lucky, you got some more tech to eventually use in school.

I have experienced many things this year that have been firsts. Some of them have left me quite literally speechless! I am very tired of 'catch-up' and 'recovery' and the seemingly unwavering belief that this can be achieved in a few months with tutoring that concentrates on English and maths and forgets about the broad and balanced curriculum and the social and emotional well-being of our children and young people. I am even more frustrated by the phrase 'returning to normal'. There is no returning to normal as we knew it! There is a new normal emerging and a new normal that is currently fluid and unknown. We are now at the start of a long period of 'normal uncertainty' where schools will be the service that is expected to provide everything that every other service related to us should be doing but can't or aren't.

What we can be sure of is that we are being asked to do more with less for more children and do it without the full support of external services. Where are the school nurses, the speech and language services, occupational therapists, the educational psychologists, social workers etc.? I am sure you have been receiving the letters advising that services are running a contingency only service due to lack of staff. This is something I am considering for the new academic year as it seems professionally acceptable to others to provide this, so why not us too? Perhaps I can choose certain year groups to ignore as I don't have sufficient staff or resources to cope with their needs. My school is not a special school but we are

continually forced to admit children whose needs we cannot meet and I am not talking about SEN support children. We are continually told there are no spaces at special school although we know these children should be at special school but 'you can cope' or 'it's what the parents want'. Our professional judgements, knowledge and experience are not valued or of consequence. Well, we can't cope, staff are suffering from stress and anxiety. Staff are being physically and verbally abused on a more than daily basis in some instances by these children who are frustrated, just as we are, that their needs are not being met. Staff are leaving the profession. I am sure, like you, that you are 'coping' and 'holding' these children but at what cost? I wake up every day knowing that before I even get out of bed and in spite of my best efforts and those of my staff, I am failing, we are failing. I am being forced to feel this because of a broken system which is being eroded further day by day. Very recently, I experienced another first when we were advised that a Y6 pupil with an EHCP could not be found a suitable special secondary place. The solution - stay for another year at primary and they might be able to provide some sensory toys to help him out. The justification for this was that it might help them be more focused on trying to find him a place.

We are also contending with the return of Ofsted since September and some schools have had a torrid time. The latest news from HMCI is sobering. There seems to be a constant desire to knock the confidence of schools. Comparing the 'Outstanding' inspection result to Michelin Stars at restaurants is quite an interesting dynamic. Schools are continually being asked to take on more and more, with less and less. We are the social care hubs, health hubs, education hubs and staff well-being hubs. The role of the Headteacher does not compare to what it was 5 years ago, let alone 10 years ago and what will it look like in the next 5, 10 years?

We are facing a recruitment crisis in schools this year; leaders, teacher, support staff, admin, catering, site. More and more leaders are leaving the job within 5 years of taking it on. The casualty rate this year has been high – who can blame anyone who has had enough. Add to this the number of Heads who are retiring this year after 10s of years of service, we start to see the significant problem in front of us. As head of a school that has had to advertise various roles throughout the year, the calibre and quantity of candidates has, for the most part, been poor and that is at times being generous.

This year has also seen the Government's intention to: further shrink the role of the Local Authority, this can only have a further detrimental impact on services, firmly put forward a future that is all academies and the parental pledge.

Finances this year have been brutal for some schools. Energy and transport costs are crippling what schools can offer and the fact that schools are being expected to absorb this with no significant help from the government has meant very tough choices for schools indeed.

EPHA has been here throughout for you all. We continue to sit at the table with the LA and other professional associations fighting for Primary Education. We stand firm in knowing that our children deserve a great education from our schools and that we do the very best we can with the little we have. EPHA continues to provide Heads with a support network, a place to voice concerns and to offer the support you deserve and ensuring that you are kept up to date with the critical information that you need, to try to make sense of where we are now and the expectations upon us.

At this point I would like to thank Pam on behalf of us all. Without her EPHA would not run so efficiently and cohesively. The termly briefings are both a joy and a terror! Her ability to make us all laugh and provide comfort when needed are second to none. The conferences each year are days to remember and a time for professional development and fun. So please join me in a massive round of applause for our friend and colleague.

What is to come?

It would be naïve to think that in the next academic year things will be easier. It is likely we will see financial hardship increasing across schools, more placement of special school pupils into main stream schools, more academisation, many outstanding schools moving grades and a tighter focus on the

curriculum (because we are back to normal)! The 'School Led Improvement' agenda will continue to grow and I am sure we will have more paperwork to fill in and more challenges from our communities regarding the decisions we make. Our communities will also need us or access to us more than ever as other services continue to shrink and be eroded.

I was asked very recently why and how I do my job as a headteacher. Quite simply, the children. To make a difference to them and for them. Similarly, it is why I am proud to represent you, my colleagues, as Chair of SEPHA. You are brilliant at your jobs. You are all still standing (or sitting) and we will do this all over again next year because of the children. I applaud every single one of you for being you, for still running your schools, for making a difference to the lives of your community and staff. Thank you.

b) ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND LOCAL DELIVERY GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

Chair	Nicky Stone-Riley (Cherry Tree Primary)
Vice-Chair	Richard Green (Grove Wood Primary)
Treasurer	vacancy
Wickford	Heidi Blakeley (Abacus Primary)
Billericay	Liz Benjeddi (South Green Juniors)
Rochford	Hayley O'Dea (Great Wakering Primary)
Rayleigh	Gary Soars (Edward Francis Primary)
Brentwood	Matt O'Grady (West Horndon Primary)
Canvey Island	Karen Tucker (Canvey Juniors)
Castle Point/Benfleet	Diana Mason (Montgomerie Primary)
Basildon East/Pitsea	Nicky Stone-Riley (Cherry Tree Primary)
Basildon West	Angela Russell (St Anne Line Catholic Infants)

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

4. EPHA UPDATES

a) Expanding the Colleague Support programme and other wellbeing support

The EPHA Colleague Support programme currently offers support to new and acting primary, nursery, infant and junior headteachers in Essex. EPHA recognises the importance of supporting new heads in their early days of headship and wants to ensure that every new head feels able to connect with a Colleague Supporter, without having to draw on their school's budget. The Colleague Supporter is an experienced headteacher in an Essex primary school, who is doing the job now, and therefore fully understands the challenges and responsibilities you are facing, as well as knowing the satisfaction and sense of pride that the role gives every head.

Colleague support is free for participating headteachers. At the same time, EPHA remunerates a Colleague Supporter's own school, so that they are able to commit to a professional role knowing that they are contributing financially to their school, as well as benefiting professionally.

If you are an experienced headteacher, but this is your first post in Essex, you may not need or want the full package of the Colleague Supporter programme. However, every local authority does things a bit differently, and you will probably have questions from time to time about the local systems. Your first port of call is the EPHA Professional Officer who can give you advice about the people and structures in Essex Local Authority. If you would also like to link with another headteacher to act as your buddy in the early days, please let us know, and we will match you with a colleague.

EPHA is planning to expand the colleague support offer, and needs help and support from headteachers and senior leaders in Essex schools. We want to:

- Offer colleague support to any headteacher in Essex, to help their confidence and wellbeing – please

contact the Professional Officer if you would like to participate.

- Broker support for occasional and time limited support from headteachers, deputies, senior leaders and SENCos, to help out another school on an ad-hoc basis. This is not intended to solve a long-term staffing problem, but offers a way of sharing expertise and capacity across schools, and perhaps helping out in a crisis. Small schools may be in particular need of support on occasion, but this offer will be considered for any school, on a case-by-case basis.

Headteachers were asked to complete an expression of interest form if they felt that they and their school could participate in the Colleague Support programme.

b) The current HeartHealth programme and potential subsidy from EPHA and the Education Taskforce

Pursuit Wellbeing is running a Heart Health programme, following the successful pilot with Essex primary headteachers. The Education Taskforce is offering support to small school headteachers who want to take part in this programme.

Contact Maria Brosnan at <https://pursuitwellbeing.com/contact/> to find out more.

c) In addition, a new programme has been developed and is being run by Andrew Morrish (Headrest) and Maria Brosnan (Pursuit Wellbeing), called balanced:

The Authentic Leadership, Health & Wellbeing Programme for Headteachers with Maria Brosnan and Andrew Morrish

The Current Challenge

Never before have schools been more VUCA: volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous workplaces. Getting the balance right as leaders has never been so challenging.

Not addressing the impact of this can impede performance, waste resources, and dangerously impact health.

The balanced solution

A leadership development programme combining the following elements:

- Initial needs analysis, induction and training on the use of bio-feedback technology, proven to reduce the impact of stress;
- Health & wellbeing and coaching;
- Leadership performance coaching;
- Ongoing opportunities for deliberate practice application and feedback.

By the end of the programme, you will be able to:

- Reduce anxiety, panic, stress, or feelings of overwhelm the moment they occur;
- Improve your ability to lead yourself and others to bring about meaningful change with demonstrable and sustainable impact;
- Embed the four-part Authentic Leader Model in your school and cultivate a purpose-driven culture where everyone thrives;
- Achieve a sense of balance in the workplace, within yourself, with others, and at home.

Maria and Andrew are skilled educational professionals, using evidenced based tools to help make your life as a School Leader healthier, happier and more balanced.

Contact or visit www.balancedleader.co.uk for an information pack.

Maria Brosnan

Founder of Pursuit Wellbeing

Counsellor, Coach, Author

Email: Maria@pursuit-wellbeing.com

Phone: 07790 054 230

Andrew Morrish

Founder of Makana Leadership

Former Headteacher and CEO of MAT

Email: hello@makanaleadership.co.uk

Phone: 07971 171515

- d) **The Summer term EPHA newsletter**, including dates for the 2022/23 school year, was circulated to headteachers in advance of the meeting -these can also be found on the EPHA website www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk.
- e) **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-2020-21.pdf>
- f) **EPHA County Annual General Meeting**
The EPHA county AGM will be held on Thursday 29th September at the Lion Inn, Boreham.
- g) **Conferences**
Headteachers were reminded that the Deputy Headteachers’ conference will be held on Friday 7 October 2022, at the Colchester Football Stadium (key note speakers Helen Youngman and Adrian Bethune) and next year’s annual Headteachers’ conference will be held on Friday 24 March 2023 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 19th October at the Lion Inn, Boreham.

6. FUTURE DATES

SOUTH headteacher meetings 2022/23

Thursday 17 November 2022

Thursday 2 March 2023

Thursday 15 June 2023

Deputy Headteachers’ Annual Conference 2022

Friday 7 October 2022 Colchester Football Stadium

Headteachers’ Annual Conference 2023

Friday 24 March 2023 Chelmsford City Race Course