

**LA /ESSEX PRIMARY HEADS' ASSOCIATION SOUTH AREA
JUNE 2020**

**THE AREA MEETINGS WERE NOT HELD IN THE SUMMER TERM 2020
DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND LOCKDOWN.
THIS REPORT IS A RECORD OF THE INFORMATION SHARED WITH HEADTEACHERS BY EMAIL.
Agendas and minutes for these meetings available at www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk**

Attendance List

**DISTRICT AND EPHA MEETING
(Notes below)
Nicky Barrand , Chair**

Welcome to the following Headteachers:

Jen Govier	South Green Infants (Acting)
Gill Marrion	Long Ridings Primary
Sue Twaites	Kelvedon Hatch Primary

Farewell to the following Headteachers:

Wayne Harris	Long Ridings Primary
Suzanne Haskins	Buttsbury Infants
Ann Matthews	Canvey Infants
Nikki Paterson	St Teresa's Catholic Primary, Hawkwell

Chair's report

Nicky Barrand

**SEPHA meeting and AGM
Election of Officers and Local Delivery
Group representatives**

Chair	Nicky Barrand (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	Emma Dawson (Hadleigh Infants)
Basildon East/Pitsea	Nicky Barrand (Thundersley Primary)
Basildon West	Angela Russell (St Anne Line Catholic Infants)

**Summer term newsletter and
information**

p 17 **Key dates**

**SOUTH meetings with the Local Authority officers 2020/21 -at the
Holiday Inn, Basildon**

Thursday 12 November 2020
Thursday 4 March 2021
Thursday 17 June 2021

Deputy Headteachers' Annual Conference 2020

Friday 2 October 2020 Virtual event

Headteachers' Annual Conference 2021

Friday 19 March 2021 Stock Brook Country Club, Nr Billericay

SOUTH EPHA AREA SUMMARY June 2020

The termly headteacher meetings were not able to be held at the usual venues in June as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Primary schools have remained open during the lockdown, which started on 23rd March, and are beginning to increase their provision for pupils in various year groups. However, large gatherings are not yet allowed or advisable. We hope to return to normal for the meetings in November, but this term will conduct the business of the EPHA area meetings by email.

1. WELCOME AND FAREWELL – SUMMER 2020

Welcome to the following Headteachers:

Jen Govier	South Green Infants (Acting)
Gill Marrion	Long Ridings Primary
Susan Twaites	Kelvedon Hatch Primary

Farewell to the following Headteachers:

Wayne Harris	Long Ridings Primary
Suzanne Haskins	Buttsbury Infants
Ann Matthews	Canvey Infants
Nikki Paterson	St Teresa's Catholic Primary, Hawkwell

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. SOUTH EPHA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

a) CHAIR'S REPORT

Nicky Barrand, Chair of South EPHA, sent the following report.

Review of the year

In the Autumn term, our meetings were dominated with discussion about the Ofsted Framework and how schools were dealing with deep dives, and what the impact of the first inspections under the new framework were looking like.

Spring term and all schools in the UK were closed to all but 'key worker' children. We had developed a new language around 'social distancing', we were all beginning to provide home learning via electronic platforms and trying to diagnose coughs across the phone!!!

The education climate in the country, county and local area has changed beyond recognition. It is definitely going to take us all some time to start recovering and supporting children, staff and parents.

Some of you may remember the image I shared last year at the start of the summer meeting. I have a new image for this year which resonates over some of the recent challenges we have faced.



I'm particularly thinking of the search for hand sanitiser and other cleaning materials! I was quite determined to get that last bottle on the shelf!

2020 will always be remembered as the year of the pandemic, when headteachers had to respond to unprecedented situations and demands. I would like to acknowledge the fantastic work that all heads and senior teams did in closing schools with 2 days' notice. This had never been done before and I truly hope that it will never be done again. The stratospheric amount of stress that was placed on individuals during this time is a testament to how resilient we are as a group of people.

This has not ended yet and as the pandemic develops and evolves so does our work and how we respond and cope with it. I, as I am sure you do too, feel that I have done nothing else over recent months but read or listen to government briefings, daily updates, DfE daily updates, union reports and letters, scientific advice and argument. I have drafted and re-drafted risk assessments and strategy documents for what my school can provide. I have tried to keep my staff informed but not frightened and anxious when trying to implement wider opening and I have had many conversations with parents who are also frightened and anxious in trying to make the best decisions for their children. There have also been a few conversations with those who have told me that this is a conspiracy and is not really happening but that is for another time!

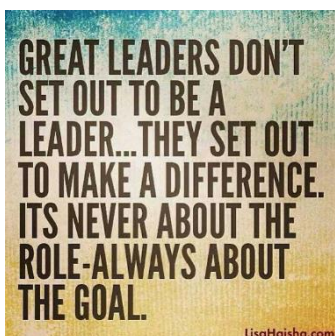
I would like to thank Clare Kershaw, Director of Education, for her daily emails and unwavering support for us throughout this lockdown. Her communications have summarised the key information and actions and given support.

During all of this Pam has been a voice of reason and calm. She has been fantastic in supporting Essex Heads at all the local authority conference calls and keeping us up to date and putting forward heads' views. In the midst of all of this, she also managed to produce the excellent briefing notes to ensure we kept up to date with funding, governance and HR issues. EPHA would not run without Pam and I am sure you will join me in congratulating her for a job very well done! Thank you Pam.

What is to come?

That is the big question for all of us to consider. I am not convinced that anyone has, as yet, really thought through some of the, at times very odd, suggestions that are being put out there. Certainly 2020 could be the year that offers education an opportunity to re-invent itself, to remove elements of practice that are so wrong and inappropriate and to consider

what is of real value in teaching and developing our citizens of the future. I believe it is an opportunity for EPHA to put forward your ideas for a better education system.



The next academic year and those to come are clearly going to be difficult. There will be many demands on Headteachers and how they best deal with the demands from parents, children and staff. How we negotiate with the Local Authority and the various agencies that work with schools will also be paramount to the well-being of pupils and staff.

As always we will have a very tricky route to negotiate. Past lessons tell us we do a pretty good job and that strength is certainly held in numbers. Communicating with each other and choosing a strategy that is agreed by a number of heads, rather than just one, will provide protection and safety for us all.

Now is the time for us to stand strong and ensure our voices, our professional, informed voices, are heard and respected.

EPHA will continue to support you, represent you at meetings and try to get the best deal that it can for children and staff across Essex. It has been a pleasure to chair this group and represent you. I am happy to help in any way that I can.

You have been amazing and deserve to be recognised for your hard work and dedication. I wish you all a restful, safe and happy summer break when it comes. Take time for yourselves and family and friends and hopefully this will be in person rather than via technology.

All four Chairs have agreed to continue in their posts, with the usual proviso that they will be happy to step aside if anyone else wants to take on the role!

On behalf of EPHA and headteachers in each area, I would like to thank the four Chairs for their continued commitment and contribution to the Association and their determination to represent and support their colleagues across the county. They have done an excellent job and have given their time freely and generously – thanks to them all.

b) ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND LOCAL DELIVERY GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

Chair	Nicky Barrand (Cherry Tree Primary)
Vice-Chair	Richard Green (Grove Wood Primary)
Treasurer	vacancy
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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.

c) EPHA Executive report

The EPHA Executive has met more frequently than usual to discuss the challenges and changes that are being experienced by primary-phase schools across the county. Minutes of the meetings are available on the EPHA website at <https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/meetings/executive/>

- d) The Summer term EPHA newsletter**, including dates for the 2020/21 school year, was circulated to headteachers by email -these can also be found on the Newsletter page of the EPHA website www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk.

e) EPHA Annual funding

EPHA continues to be funded by a top-slice from the DSG. The cost to each school is £320. Please see the article "*What do headteachers get in return for their top-sliced contribution to EPHA?*" available on the EPHA website.

<https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/files/what-headteachers-get-in-return-for-their-epha-contribution-2020-21.pdf>

Please remind your Finance Officer that the school does not have to pay a subscription for the financial year.

f) The EPHA county Annual General Meeting – Wednesday 7 October 2020

We plan to hold the AGM as usual at Chelmsford City Football Club. Michelle Winter, Senior HMI for the Eastern Region, will attend the meeting to talk about the future of Ofsted. You will receive the agenda and information about the AGM by email in advance of the meeting.

g) CONFERENCES

Deputy Headteachers' conference - Friday 2 October 2020

Unfortunately, as a result of the continued uncertainty around when large gatherings will be able to resume, the decision has been made not to hold the annual Deputy and Assistant Headteachers' conference this year. This would have been our 15th deputy conference, and we know that for many this is an annual date in the diary that senior leaders value and look forward to.

EPHA plans to hold an alternative, free, virtual event to celebrate and thank Deputy and Assistant heads for the amazing work they do in our schools, particularly in such challenging times. More information in the second half of the summer term.

Headteachers Conference – Friday 19 March 2021, Stock Brook Country Club

You will be aware that the headteacher conference in 2020 was cancelled as a result of the

national lockdown. EPHA is holding bookings for headteachers and will contact you later in the year about the headteacher conference in 2021- we have great hopes that this will go ahead, just a year late!

h) Article in the newsletter - Headship in a time of uncertainty

Whether you are brand new to headship or have many years of experience, one thing is certain – you've never dealt with a global pandemic before! This is the most unprecedented event that school leaders have ever had to face, and the uncertainty stretches into the future, making this challenge even harder to manage. Here are my 5 top tips for you:

1. *Trust your intuition, as well as your experience.* You are not a headteacher for nothing – you are smart, experienced and have proved that you can lead a complex organisation.
2. *Access all the support you can get.* Both professional and personal – this is the time to ask for help and reassurance.
3. *Accept that not all of your decisions will be right.* This is a time of test and trial, and you will probably make the odd mistake.
4. *Give yourself permission to be flexible and change your mind.* Recognising the need to alter course is a strength, not a weakness.
5. *Take a break.* Your job is always too big – at the moment it can be overwhelming, so remember to rest and recuperate. The school will still be there when you return – and the DfE guidance will probably have changed!

Please do contact Pam Langmead if you have any questions or comments about the work of EPHA and the Executive in the last year.

pam@langmead.me.uk

3. FUTURE DATES

SOUTH meetings with the Local Authority officers 2020/21 -at the Holiday Inn, Basildon

Thursday 12 November 2020

Thursday 4 March 2021

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