



# **COLLEAGUE SUPPORT PROGRAMME**

Pen portraits of our Colleague Supporters

February 2022

# NORTH EAST ESSEX

**Sue Bardetti**

**Holland Haven Primary School**

My name is Sue Bardetti and I have been a headteacher for over 10 years and a teacher for 27 years. I have worked for Liverpool, Havering, Thurrock and Essex authorities in a number of schools. I am passionate about my work and enjoy a challenge. At Holland Haven we have had a long and challenging journey but my staff and pupils are inspirational and it is a joy to work there. I am committed to supporting colleagues especially in the NE quadrant and that is why I am an EPHA Executive member, on the schools' forum and have been the chair of the South Tendring Primary Partnership for two years. On 7<sup>th</sup> November Holland Haven received a Section 8 Ofsted which confirmed our 'Good' grading. Being a head is far from an easy job and I hope that I can be of some help to someone who is starting this role for the first time.

*November 2018*

**Elizabeth Bartholomew**

**The Mayflower Primary School**

I am currently in my sixth year as a primary head teacher, having worked as a head in both Suffolk and Essex, in both Local Authority and Academy schools. I have worked in education since 1994 in a variety of schools and settings, from deprived areas of Harwich to the high expectations of suburban Chelmsford, with a few Church schools in between. I am fortunate to have experienced teaching in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in my teaching career with an additional year as a literacy consultant for Essex County Council. I am also a Specialist Leader of Education for Literacy and a Subject Adviser for a local Teacher Training provider. As a head teacher I led a school from 'Special Measures', through 'RI', to 'Good' in less than three years, having built a dedicated and strong team of teachers, support staff and governors. I have a clear understanding of what is needed to become a 'good' school and have been part of peer to peer reviews, academy reviews and several Ofsted inspections! I believe that I have the ability to inspire and motivate staff, colleagues and pupils alike. It is a difficult balancing act, striving to improve and develop staff whilst at the same time keeping morale high and staff valued; I think that may be the hardest part of a Head Teacher's role! I am a firm believer in reminding people that we are doing it for the pupils', which in today's world, sadly, sometimes gets forgotten!

*November 2018*

## **Tracey Caffull**

### **Great Bentley and Frinton on Sea Primary Schools**

I have taught in primary education for twenty years in Essex and Suffolk. I have taught all year groups throughout the primary age range including EYFS which supports me to raise standards in teaching and learning effectively. Schools I have worked in include rural (small village) and urban social deprived schools with challenging behaviours (Frobisher) as well as church schools in Suffolk and a Junior school in Clacton. One of my strengths, I believe, is building a team in challenging circumstances and leading with honesty, transparency and kindness. As headteacher I have led a school from RI to outstanding in 18 months through creating a strong team of governors and teachers, and raising standards in English and maths while balancing this with provision for 'mental health' and a creative topic inspired curriculum. I also thoroughly enjoy headship and have over the years found a way to find the 'positive' when sometimes it appears to have disappeared!

*November 2018*

## **Nick Hutchings**

### **Hamilton Primary School**

I have been in education since 1998 and have worked only in Essex. For five years I was employed by the Local Authority developing and training the Target Tracker software package. This experience found me working with groups of 2 people to 100 at the same time and also provided me with the opportunity to work outside of the UK supporting British Forces Schools across Europe.

Since 2011 I have been the Headteacher of 2 different schools; a one-form of entry Church of England Primary School and now a two-form of entry Community School in the heart of Colchester. I have been through an Ofsted and SIAM's inspection and I have also piloted Ofsted's new framework for inspection in 2019. I have experience of working with demanding parents and I am a firm believer in a good work life balance. All three of my deputy heads have gone on to Headship. I like coffee, and chocolate, and really want Headship to be a rewarding experience.

*November 2018*

# SOUTH ESSEX

## **Dominic Carver**

### **South Benfleet Primary School**

I have quite unbelievably been a head teacher for the last 15 years. Prior to this I was a deputy for 6 years. I have worked in a Junior school and two primaries but only been a head in my current school, which is currently 'good' in Ofsted terms. I believe that I have learnt the importance of trying to build a sustain systems in school which can lead to continued success. I have experience of being a director of a local MAT which me a chance to visit a variety of other settings. I am also a secondary school local Governor. I was an Ofsted inspector for 4 years until earlier this year when changing inspection routines meant a workforce reduction. I am keen to try to keep developing the curriculum and believe that schools are about more than SATS and need to celebrate and develop a variety of broad experiences. I am still learning and keen to support others whilst still developing my own knowledge and skills.

*November 2018*

## **Kerry Greary**

### **The Phoenix Primary School and Nursery**

I have been teaching in Essex since September 2000 and I am currently the Headteacher of The Phoenix Primary School & Nursery in Laindon which is a member of the Lee Chapel Multi-Academy Trust. This is my first headship which commenced in September 2014.

I have five years of experience as a Deputy Headteacher which was spent at Felmore Primary School and Fairhouse Junior School, both schools are in areas of high deprivation.

During my time as a Headteacher, I have dealt with a full range of difficult situations including official complaints, staff competency issues, pupil exclusions, recruitment, building projects and critical incidents, thus providing me with the experience to provide personal support to all colleagues.

I strive to make school a learning place for all, supporting parents and providing excellent professional development opportunities for all staff.

I also have a proven track record for school improvement at the end of KS2. In 2018, we achieved 89% combined. Reading, Writing & Maths nearly 40% higher than before I was Headteacher.

I am an experienced SCITT and NQT mentor and support senior and middle leaders across the MAT. I am currently acting as coach for one of my AHT's who is undertaking his NPQH.

*November 2018*

**Richard Green****Grove Wood Primary School**

I have been headteacher Grove Wood Primary School in Rayleigh for the past nine years having previously worked as deputy at the same school and in the junior school prior to amalgamation. I am experienced at working with colleagues in other schools having provided support to a number of new headteachers as well as working as an LLE (Local Leader of Education) across Southend LA providing a range of support and challenge directed by the LA and MATs. I very much enjoy working with new heads and helping them to navigate the challenges that early headship can present.

*January 2019*

**Amanda McAuliffe****St Helen's Catholic Infant School**

I am currently in my third year of headship in Brentwood after spending the majority of my career in inner city London. Leading a school community through Covid-19 has been a huge challenge but has given me a wealth of experience dealing with difficult situations in a very short period of time. I have built a strong team through positivity and good CPD and have made dramatic changes to our curriculum to meet the needs of our children and develop their skills as active learners. In addition, I am a trained coach and was an SLE in my previous role and I enjoy working with colleagues in other schools to both support them and bring new ideas back to my own setting.

**Christine Redpath****Robert Drake Primary School**

I have worked in Essex primary schools since 1985. I have been the headteacher of my current school for 13 years and have led the school through two inspections in which the school was judged as outstanding. I have also supported the development of another school which moved from a judgement of RI to good. My school is part of the Benfleet Teaching School Alliance and takes a leading role in Initial Teacher Training. I have a wide range of experience including being a member of the governing body in a special school and mentoring headteachers that are new to Essex. I have also previously undertaken inspections on behalf of Ofsted.

*November 2018*

**Gary Soars****Edward Francis Primary School**

I have worked in schools in Essex and Southend for just over twenty years and have been headteacher at Edward Francis Primary School since 2008. Having been an inexperienced and an acting headteacher, I have a good understanding of the demands

of these roles and would be pleased to offer practical advice and support to those who currently find themselves in either of these positions. I also feel that it is important that a headteacher is able to maintain a network of colleagues in other schools who face similar demands. *November 2018*

## **Sean Tobin**

### **Executive Headteacher/CEO of Berlesduna Trust**

I am currently Executive Headteacher and CEO of Berlesduna Trust. I have been a primary school headteacher for the last 13 years of three different primary schools. After starting a teaching career and an early headship in challenging schools in Barking and Dagenham and Newham I relocated with my family to Basildon after securing a second Headship at Merrylands Primary School. After achieving NPQH I qualified as a School Improvement Partner and also further developed my skills through training others. The role as a SIP in Mid Essex West gave me a taste of the impact that supporting challenging schools can have. In 2013 I was seconded for 2 days a week as a Standards and Excellence Commissioner for Essex. I led The Willows through its first ever Good OFSTED grading in December 2015. I am a founding member of the Basildon Excellence Panel and in 2017 was the Executive Trustee of the Basildon Education Partnership. As Executive Headteacher my intention is to support the substantive Headteachers in their role, assist in the development of staff across the schools and identify ways in which the Trust can facilitate, provide and develop school improvement. In July 2018 I qualified as an Ofsted Inspector.

*November 2018*

## **Michael Wade**

### **Quilters Infants and Junior Schools**

Having worked in Romford, Leyton, Rainham and Billericay, I have been fortunate to learn from brilliant practitioners, in many varied settings. As the deputy head of Brady Primary School, I was fortunate enough to win a Pearson's Teaching Award, helping the school to move from unsatisfactory to outstanding within three years. Here, I learnt how important it is to shape a sense of shared identity for the whole community, a sense of family, pride and togetherness. Happy staff, parents and pupils always excel. I am currently the Executive Head Teacher of both Quilters Junior and Quilters Infant School. I am proud to say that both are outstanding schools, due to the skill, dedication and talent of my staff. They are and will always be my most precious resource.

*January 2019*

# MID ESSEX

## **Amanda Buckland-Garnett**

### **Collingwood Primary School**

I was appointed as Head teacher at Collingwood Primary, in South Woodham Ferrers, in September 2006, following experience working in two different Local Authorities. I have worked in a Junior School and several Primaries ranging from a small Essex Village school with less than 100 pupils to a 500 pupil primary in South London. I have experienced three Ofsted Inspections as a Headteacher including a move from “RI” to “Good” and am well aware of the pressures and anxieties that brings.

I am currently the Woodham Ferrers Rep. for the EPHA Exec and have also been a Governor. Collingwood works regularly with NAHT Aspire and Edison Learning, Billericay SCITT and The Woodham School Led Improvement Partnership which includes five Primaries and our local Secondary school. I have a very positive experience of participating in Peer Review.

I would be happy to share my vast experience of managing pupils with SEND, particularly those with medical needs, analysing and presenting data for different audiences, developing distributed leadership and coaching staff, safeguarding, working together with outside agencies, holding difficult conversations with staff, School Led Improvement Partnership working and recruitment. Equally, I would be happy to listen and support in any of the other unpredictable issues that arise daily in the life of a Headteacher. I also make a great cup of coffee!

*November 2018*

## **Helen Castell**

### **Writtle Infant School**

My name is Helen Castell and I am currently head of Writtle Infant School, taking up the post in September 2014. Previously I was Acting Head/SENCO/Deputy at a church school in Brentwood from 2008 and certainly learnt how to deal with challenging parents and how to juggle several job descriptions at any one time. Prior to that I was 14 years in a challenging Junior school in Hornchurch so I have certainly gained experience of all primary year groups and understand the pressures and challenges each one presents. I have experienced 6 OFSTEDs, 3 as Headteacher/Acting Head/Deputy, those 3 all being good. Whilst not working in a church school at the moment I have experienced SIAMS and the extra challenges that can present themselves in that environment.

I am committed to the child being at the heart of everything we do and the well-being of our staff. We give a high priority to staff training in the key areas to help our children and families which includes speech and language, mental health and well-being. I am lead teacher for the successful Tanglewood Partnership and have mentored a new Headteacher. I try to maintain a work/life balance for our staff and

enjoy visits to the gym and membership of Rock Choir! I would welcome the opportunity to support Headteachers in the way I was so well supported by colleagues when I started.

*January 2019*

## **Mel Gaskin**

### **Westlands Primary School**

Initially EYFS and KS1 trained, I have been a headteacher for seven years. My first headship was at a junior school in Basildon and we succeeded in moving the school from Requires Improvement to Outstanding within two years. Now at Westlands Community Primary School in Chelmsford, we were inspected in October 2018 under Section 8 retaining our 'Good' judgement but with a recommendation for a Section 5 as we had 'improved significantly overall'. I am passionate about school improvement, genuine collaboration and supporting each other because the job is tough. I have experience of supporting schools for the local authority and across a multi academy trust. I am currently on the NPQEL (National Professional Qualification of Executive Leadership) with ASCL (Association of School and College Leaders) and in my second year of Challenge Partners enjoying being a part of teaching and learning review teams all over the country.

*February 2019*

## **Claire Jaques**

### **Powers Hall Infants School**

I started teaching in 1989 in a large infant school in Southend. Since then I have worked in two other Essex schools and have been a Head since 2004. Powers Hall Infant School is a three form entry infant school and is quite unique in that it has a specialist speech and language provision and a nursery. I have a passion for inclusion but understand the challenges that this brings. Over the years, I have dealt with many HR issues in school, including several rounds of restructuring to balance the budget. I have also taken part in LA Reviews as a team member. My school serves a challenging area and I deal with safeguarding issues, of varying degrees of severity, every day. Being a Head can be a lonely role, especially in the early days and I hope that I will be able to provide a listening ear and support to new colleagues in Essex schools.

*February 2019*

## **Marie Staley**

### **Moulsham Junior School**

Hello, I have worked in education since 1994 having trained in London. I have always worked in Essex schools but have an open school approach in that I am always looking for great ideas via reading (short articles!) and often looking at best practice outside of our county too.

I have a passion for working with the most challenging of children, believing that if we can get things 'right' for these pupils we get it right for all. Therefore it is no surprise that my educational passion is SEND with a huge focus on supporting social, emotional and mental health needs.

*November 2018*

## **Mike Williams**

### **Trinity St Mary's Church of England Primary School**

I have worked in four different schools in Essex since qualifying to teach in 2007. I was Deputy Headteacher of a school which successfully moved from RI to Good in 2016. I led on assessment and moderation and am passionate about how it is used effectively to support children in making good progress. I have only been a Headteacher for a year but during that year I experienced lots of challenges which meant I had to learn very quickly. I strongly believe that the support network I built up got me through the year and would like to support new colleagues in what can be a challenging but rewarding role. I have a young family and seek to promote a good work-life balance at all times. Outside of school I am a keen cyclist, avid football and rugby fan and occasional cricketer.

*November 2018*

# WEST ESSEX

**George Athanasiou**

**Great Sampford Primary School**

My career in education has spanned over 15 years with the majority of my time spent in leadership. I have enjoyed various, progressive roles as part of a team within a school. Nothing could prepare me for Headship, the variance of every day is still unpredictable, even now - but reliable support was key to my survival. I am the Head Teacher of Great Sampford Primary School, a rural primary school with an enormous array of qualities. My enthusiasm comes from the children and whilst they are my priority I have developed efficient methods for understanding the successful operation of a school.

*March 2021*

**Mary Evans**

**The Henry Moore Primary School**

I set up The Henry Moore Primary School (my second substantive headship) from new 18 years ago -a huge challenge!

Prior to that I was headteacher at Jerounds Infants, Harlow for 7 years.

I have now been through 6 inspections as HT.

I have worked with two other schools in Special Measures, one as supporting HT and the other as the only HT. Both schools achieved Good in a year.

We were a single school MAT and now sponsor another Harlow school.

I have worked within Essex as a PSCL and LLE.

My personal hobby is music and this has always inspired me to want to ensure a broad, balanced, fun curriculum to benefit the children in my schools.

*November 2018*

**Kim Hall**

**Henham and Ugley Primary School**

My name is Kim Hall and I am in my eighth year of headship. During my time as head I have experienced two school settings; the first being a small village Church of England primary school, ½ form entry and my current community school, another village setting but one form entry with a nursery attached.

I am passionate about ensuring the whole school staff feel part of the team and are committed to moving the school forward with the children always at the heart of everything we do.

I am incredibly passionate and dedicated and have high expectations. I was able to implement changes to EYFS to move from RI to outstanding in 18 months.

I believe that a happy team will always provide the best opportunities for children and place this high on my agenda.

I have experienced many Ofsted inspections, moved from RI to good overall and therefore been part of lots of hoop jumping with Improvement Boards etc.

I have had extensive experience of HR issues, understanding how difficult this area can be for a new HT.

I consider myself 'normal' and call a spade a spade! Honesty and trust are key values and I really believe this approach, along with the ability to not take things too seriously, have enabled me to love the job I do.

*November 2018*

## **Ian Kendal**

### **Executive Headteacher of Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Multi Academy Trust**

I am currently the Executive Headteacher of Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Multi Academy Trust in Harlow, Essex since April 2016. Before this I was a Headteacher for ten years in a one form entry Catholic Primary school in Hertfordshire. I have been in education for 23 years, always serving in Catholic schools. I am a LLE, a trained Coach and I am currently undertaking further study into Executive Leadership. I believe greatly in leadership development, succession planning and delegation. Within the trust we have undertaken work to reduce workload and shared curriculum leadership. The Trust also takes a lead role for Initial Teacher Training.

I am passionate about developing a love of learning, for children to learn to love themselves and to love others.

*November 2018*

## **Linda Todd**

### **Elesenham CofE Primary School**

I have been in primary education for 28 years and a Headteacher for 20 of those. I have been lucky enough to have worked in a range of settings including overseas, village, town and island! I have been a Headteacher in 5 schools, 3 of which have been in Essex, where I returned after 4 years, just over a year ago.

I have a particular strength in building strong, effective (happy!) teams and have led 2 schools from RI to good. I have undertaken Ofsted inspector training to provide me with insight (and no desire to be an inspector!) In the last year I have had a good Ofsted inspection and an outstanding SIAMS.

I have also had experience of an extremely challenging school with significant staff safeguarding and other tricky personnel issues, including restructuring in response to financial pressures. Through such a difficult experience I learnt how important our own workload management and emotional well-being is and can also bring this to the role

of colleague support.

I am passionate about the creative curriculum, school ethos and learning behaviours.

*November 2018*

## **Christine Peden**

### **Pear Tree Mead Primary School**

I have been a teacher for nearly 20 years and have worked in Surrey, Birmingham, Oxford and now Essex. I have worked at my school in Harlow for 15 years and have been the Headteacher for 5. I still remember how it feels to be a new Headteacher and know how moving from being the Deputy to the Head in the same school feels like. My school is a 2 form entry school with a large Nursery and Preschool. Our school is a standalone Academy but we work really closely with the other Harlow schools. I sit on the HET board and enjoy working with the other schools in the area. I am currently learning to become a qualified coach. I have seen the school through 3 Ofsted inspections (1 as the Headteacher) We are always striving to improve and try out new ideas and strategies. I have been the designated safeguarding lead of the school but this year I am overseeing mental health and wellbeing across the school (staff, pupils and parents).

*November 2018*

## **Colin Raraty**

### **Rodings Primary School**

I have been a teacher since 1999 and a Headteacher at Rodings since 2014. I have had a variety of experiences from two form entry schools in towns to small rural schools. Recently, I have become very involved in partnership working, leading the Dunmow Excellence in Education Partnership but also chairing the west quadrant leads meeting. Consequently, working with the Education Development Trust in piloting research on partnership working. I am a great believer in 'real' team work and that you can only develop staff by giving them the opportunities to shine which was recognised in our recent Ofsted.

I enjoy mentoring and showing that headship is a rewarding job.

*November 2018*