

COMPOSITE MINUTES OF THE 2016 SUMMER TERM AREA MEETINGS OF THE LA AND ESSEX PRIMARY HEADS' ASSOCIATION

North East Wednesday 8 June 2016
South Thursday 9 June 2016
West Wednesday 15 June 2016
Mid Thursday 16 June 2016

Action

1. WELCOME, THANK YOU AND NOTICES

- a) Clare Kershaw, Director for Commissioning Education and Lifelong Learning, (North East and West meetings) and Alison Fiala, Head of Primary Improvement (South and Mid meetings), the Area Lead Commissioners and the Area Chairs, welcomed those present to the meetings, extending a particular **welcome** to the new (or new in post) headteachers in each area, who are:

North East

Claire Healey	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Dovercourt
Becky Keitch Bromley	St George's Church of England Primary School, Great
Mark Millbourne	All Saints C of E VA Primary, Dovercourt
Belinda Fellows	St James CE Primary, Colchester
Suzy Ryan	Fingringhoe CE Primary

West

Karen Cayford	St Mary's CE Primary School, Saffron Walden
Charmaine Ward	Water Lane Primary Academy

Mid

Gill Cunningham	John Ray Infants, Braintree (Acting Head)
Lyndsey Devlin	St Cedd's CE Primary, (Head of School)
Nicky Rusby	Southminster CE Primary, (Head of School)
Pam Smart	Terling Primary
Sandra Way	Rayne Primary and Nursery (Acting Head)
Kate Moore	Tolleshunt D'Arcy CE (VA) Primary

- b) **Thank you and farewell** to those headteachers who are retiring or leaving their current post at the end of term:

North East

Benedick Ashmore Short	Hamford Primary
Craig Duncan	Queen Boudica Primary
Matthew Fuller	Broomgrove Juniors
Heather Hann	Holy Trinity CE Primary, Eight Ash green
Nigel Hookway	Highwoods Primary
Nick Hutchings	St John's CE Primary
Clive Reynolds	Hamilton Primary
Heather Tetchner	Dedham CE Primary
Stuart Wainwright	Fordham All Saints CE Primary
Lorraine Oldale	Wix and Wrabness Primary.

South

Sue Dawson	Kelvedon Hatch Primary
Ryan Duff	Glebe Primary
Sasha Furze	Maple Grove Primary
Louise Hoskyns	Runwell Primary
John Peoples	St Peter's Catholic Primary
Karen Phillips	Ingrave Johnstone Primary
Mario Rodgers	Holt Farm Juniors
James Rogers	Vange Primary
Ann Stewart	Ashingdon Primary
Andrew Gillett	Margaretting CE Primary

West

Kate George	Thaxted Primary
Cheryl Macleod	Nazeing Primary
Gillian Napier	Rickling and Farnham Federated Primaries
Barbara Coates	Leverton Infant
Emma Johnson	RA Butler (Acting head)
Deidre Mooney	Waltham Holy Cross Primary

Mid

Denise Burrell	Ridgewell CE Primary (moving to Suffolk)
Marianne Cartwright	Gosfield Primary
Maddie Cowley	John Ray Juniors (Acting head)
Pat Dowsing	Cold Norton Primary
Jane Gates	Great Bradfords Infants
Karen Harden	Southminster CE Primary
Louise Hoskyns	Runwell Primary
Sophie Massey	Tolleshunt D'Arcy Primary
Kate Mills	Barnes Farm Infants
Jan Myers	Wentworth Primary
Helen Ryan	Beckers Green Primary
Sharon Tyler	Springfield Primary
Verity Boreham	John Ray Juniors
Sandra Way	Rayne Primary (Acting head)
Jane Pomeroy	Feering CE Primary
Helen Roberts	Woodcroft Nursery School

2. A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

**Clare Kershaw, Director for Commissioning Education and Lifelong Learning
(North East and West meetings)**

Alison Fiala, Head of Primary Improvement (South and Mid meetings)

a) STANDARDS AND EXCELLENCE TEAM CHANGES

Alison Fiala has been appointed as interim Head of Primary Improvement, to support Clare and add capacity to the team. Graham Lancaster's role will also change from September – he will be working part time, focusing on strategic development linked to the implications arising from the White Paper. Graham will continue to lead on the recruitment and retention strategy.

b) EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE EVERYWHERE – RESPONSE TO AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE WHITE PAPER

Seven key elements

- Great teaching – improving the standard of teaching
- Great leaders running schools – ensuring schools have stronger leadership and governance
- A schools-led system with empowered parents – freeing schools from local authorities
- A focus on school improvement – led by schools, supported by schools, rather than by local authorities
- High expectations and a world-leading curriculum – building on the recent reforms to GCSEs
- Fair but stretching accountability
- Fair funding – introducing a new national funding formula to remove the huge disparities in funding per pupil and per school in different parts of the country

The aim is for every school to be an academy within a Multi Academy Trust (MAT).

Clare noted that, despite a partial change of policy by the Secretary of State – now not forcing mass academisation on all schools – it is clear that the Government aim is that all schools should become academies. Cllr Ray Gooding has written to Nicky Morgan expressing the Local Authority's views and she has agreed to visit Essex to discuss education policy.

A key question that remains unanswered is what is meant by a “critical mass” of academies, and what is the definition of a “high performing local authority”?

Clare stressed that, as more and more school move into Multi Academy Trusts, there is an increasing need for effective sponsors. Sir David Carter (Schools Commissioner) is suggesting that an established MAT comprises of 5 schools, while a mature MAT would include around 15 schools. A secure MAT could offer consistent quality of teaching and learning, shared back-office

There are revised responsibilities for Local Authorities, namely

- Ensuring every child has a school place, including sufficient school, special school and alternative provision places to meet demand. Local authorities will also work with schools and parents in developing local school transport policies, giving schools the opportunity to provide school transport services where that makes sense locally; and take a lead in crisis management and emergency planning
- Ensuring the needs of vulnerable pupils are met – this covers SEND duties, duties to provide alternative provision which schools can commission, the statutory role of the Head of the Virtual School and a proposed consultation to consider if this should be extended to children who leave care post adoption, children educated at home and children missing education.
- Acting as champions for all parents and families – support families to navigate the system through a continuing role in admissions, SEND, championing high standards and where necessary call for action from the Regional Schools Commissioner. The paper proposes considering if local authorities should co-ordinate all in-year admissions.

Implications arising from the White paper include:

- Academy Conversion and critical mass / successful authorities
- National Funding Formula
- Parent Governors
- Withdrawal of Education Services Grant (ESG)
- Role of Regional School Commissioners (RSC)
- Property and land transfers
- Home to school transport
- SEND
- Pupil Place Planning

Clare stressed the LA's concern that the White Paper suggests that support for schools will be provided by TSAs and MATs, but that this assumes that an effective, mature system will be in operation well before 2022. The ESG (Education Services Grant) which funds LA school improvement activity is being withdrawn in 2017, leaving a potential gap of five years without a functioning cross-county school improvement service; the LA will lose around £7 million which currently funds school improvement and support services.

The White Paper shifts the responsibility for school improvement from local authorities to system leaders. It will be important to improve how National Leaders of Education (NLEs) and Local Leaders of Education (LLEs) are deployed, introducing a more sophisticated approach based on timely and accurate data, rather than relying mainly on Ofsted judgements. There will be a need to provide targeted funding for system leaders to build capacity through school to support mechanisms, and for Regional Schools Commissioners to intervene in failing and coasting schools.

Clare explained that, following a request by EPHA, the LA has listed the services that are currently provided to Essex schools, and funded in a variety of ways. Broadly they are:

Standards and Excellence Service – funded by the ESG

- Informed challenge and support for every school by a named SEC against an agreed RAG rating
- Support for headteachers / headteacher recruitment and support for new headteachers
- Support for leadership staff
- Preventing Ofsted decline / Support during Ofsted Inspection
- Learning Walks
- Observing Teaching
- Book Scrutiny
- Statutory Assessment and moderation processes
- External validation through reviews
- Supporting SEF writing / school action plans
- Supporting Governors on Improvement Boards and Strategic Intervention Boards
- Undertaking Headteacher PMR where required
- Analysing data – in school and published (ROL, FFT)
- Analysing progress of Pupil Premium Children
- Safeguarding reviews
- Critical incidences

- Partnership support (LDGs, Consortium Meetings and SLIS)
- Investigating safeguarding and other Ofsted complaints
- Support for structural solutions, including academy conversion and amalgamation
- Sharing best practice
- Strategic development
- Brokering support from TSAs etc

Other core services – funded by ESG or ECC

- Core support for Governors excluding training and RAG rating
- Governance reviews
- Media Support
- Infolink
- School Communications
- Data and intelligence
- Safeguarding
- EMTAS (Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service)
- Working for Essex, workforce census and teaching awards

Services funded by top-slice from the DSG (Dedicated Schools Grant)

- Subscription to EPHA
- Specialist teachers
- Behaviour support
- Conferences – Primary Heads, PPG,
- Schools in intervention
- Peer Review and School Lead Improvement (as part of SCC budget)
- SACRE
- Assessment of Key Stage 1 and 2 tests
- Supporting Governors on IBs and SIBs
- School Broadband
- Growth Fund
- Termination Costs
- School Meals Advisory Service
- Family Solutions
- Capital Maintenance contribution
- PFI (costs associated with historic Private Finance Initiatives)

Traded Services

- Training (EES)
- Health & Safety
- Educational Visits
- Legal Services
- HR
- Governor Services
- Music
- Staff Recruitment (administration)
- School Admission Appeals
- Outdoor Education
- Utilities
- Admissions Appeals

It was **AGREED** that Clare and Yannick Stupples-Whyley will produce a checklist of all services, identifying funding streams and whether services are available to both maintained schools and academies, and this will be circulated to primary schools by the EPHA Professional Officer. Headteachers are asked to consider the list of services with their staff and governors, and to identify which they regard as “must haves”, “nice to have” or considered unnecessary. The responses will be used to inform the future planning and shaping of services.

The following questions and observations were made:

Is the LA considering the development of a LA MAT? Clare noted that the LA is considering this, but this does not offer a solution for all maintained schools as a MAT would be likely to be limited to up to 15 schools. In common with all MATs, it would be ultimately responsible for the performance of all schools and so would need to include a range of schools, not solely those that are deemed to be failing.

At the North East meeting it was noted that schools are currently working in numerous partnerships and so their support and collaborative systems are somewhat fragmented.

One headteacher noted the importance of having an over-arching and informed support system (i.e. currently the LA) that can broker support for schools in need.

Another head noted that his current major concern is funding, and a reducing budget. As a small school he is looking at a deficit budget and in the short term, without additional funding, the school is not financially viable. Reference was made to a model funding indicator, based on possible outcomes from a National Funding Formula. All the scenarios suggest that small schools will be particularly vulnerable. However, until the NFF is agreed, it is not possible to know the actual impact on all schools.

In the South, one headteacher explained that he is within a very effective cluster of schools that share resources and work collaboratively. However, he stressed that church schools are limited in how they can become part of a MAT and may lose many benefits upon conversion.

c) DEVELOPMENTS IN WAYS OF WORKING IN 2016/17 FOR THE STANDARDS AND EXCELLENCE TEAM

- Developments in ways of working in 2016/17 for the Standards and Excellence Team Team will be maintained for 2016/17
- Align work with SLIS partnerships
- Allocated number of days per cluster/partnership of schools based on number of schools in a partnership and the RAG rating
- Discussion with cluster/lead headteachers on the use of days to support and challenge schools within the cluster/partnership
- Wherever possible current SEC linked to schools will remain the same
- Greater flexibility in use of SEC visit time across the cluster/partnership
- All current core services remain unchanged at this time eg Media, Data and Intelligence
- Ongoing discussions of ways of working from 2017

d) TRUANCY AND PENALTY NOTICES

Julie Weddell, EWS County Manager, has updated schools on the position following

the Isle of Wight 'v' Platt case that was heard in the High Court which ruled in favour of Mr Platt. Whilst the High Court ruling is only guidance the LA is obliged to take note of this. In this case the child was removed for a 7 day/14 sessions unauthorised holiday and the period considered was the whole academic year. This ruling has understandably sent shock waves across the education system. Cambridgeshire LA took a case to court the following week and lost the case with the court citing the Platt ruling. Nick Gibb wrote a helpful letter to all headteachers, however schools and LAs need DfE National Guidance on the matter and the Local Authority is lobbying the DfE and MPs for this outcome.

Clare confirmed that Essex took a case to court in June and won that case. This was a term time holiday lasting 11 days / 22 sessions so a significantly longer holiday than in the case of Mr Platt, however the magistrate considered that this deemed irregular attendance over the course of one term.

At this stage, the EWS team members are reviewing all of the requests for Penalty Notices that were suspended following the Platt case. Cases where the absence is one period of term time holiday are going to be difficult to take further if they are 7 days or less but each case will be considered on its facts, and holidays of 10 days or more will be issued with penalty notices, given the magistrate ruling last week. In relation to those cases that fall in the middle, the team are looking at where there are other periods of unauthorised absence as well as the term time holiday. We are also proceeding to prosecution in a number of cases and we are not refunding penalty notices that have already been paid. Cllr Gooding is adamant that attendance at schools remains of paramount importance, and the LA is very concerned by the ruling in the case of Mr Platt. It will continue to support all schools as much as possible ahead of (hopefully) some national clarification on the matter.

e) SEND CAPITAL UPDATE

- 5 work streams
- EHC Plans
- SEN provision
- Joint Commissioning
- School-led SEND
- Preparing for adulthood
- Cross cutting
- The Local Offer
- Co-production

Clare asked headteachers to give their feedback about their experience of working with the Statutory Assessment Service.

The LA is anticipating an inspection of SEND services, conducted by Ofsted and the CQC. This will involve nine agencies and the 5 CCGs (Clinical Commissioning Groups).

f) WELFARE REFORMS – THE IMPACT ON SCHOOLS, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

- The Welfare Reform Act 2012 introduced a wide range of reforms to the benefit system – some of which were implemented in April 2013
- The Act legislated for the biggest change to the welfare system for over 60 years.

- It introduced a wide range of reforms with a purpose to make the Benefits and tax credits systems fairer and simpler by:
 - creating the right incentives to get more people into work
 - protecting the most vulnerable in our society
 - delivering fairness to those claiming benefit and to the taxpayer.

The changes have had implications in Essex for people, place and services, although the implementation of some changes has been incremental

- Universal Credit - one single monthly payment - April 2016
- Benefit Cap – total benefit capped at £500 per week for families and £350 for individuals
 - Includes housing benefit, child benefit, carers allowance, income support and child tax credit
 - 348 families affected, 40 losing between £400 - £600 per month and 77 between £200 and £400
- Size Criteria – spare bedroom tax
- Tax Credits – restrictions for larger families from 2017
- Social Fund – essential living fund
- Ongoing changes
- Further work to identify the most vulnerable families affected in conjunction with districts

The full presentation made to the Children’s Partnership Board in June is available on the EPHA website.

3. RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGY

Graham Lancaster explained that the LA has recognised that there are insufficient teachers in schools in Essex, in all sectors including the special schools. Therefore, the LA has established a Task and Finish Group working with the three Headteacher Associations and the National College, to roll out an effective recruitment and retention strategy.

Actions since January 2016

- Promotion campaigns – Essex as a great place to work – and live
- Data survey – just how bad is it, where are the pressures greatest, how are schools covering vacancies, why are teachers leaving?
- Recruitment from overseas – Australia and Ireland
- Incentives – support towards rental costs, key worker housing
- Graduate intern programme
- Liaison with ITT providers
- Repeat survey – up to date information following resignation date - and with particular focus on retention.

Broadening the focus on retention

- National lobbying
- Individual schools strategies:
 - culture
 - work/life balance
 - marking and planning
 - performance management
- Partnership working

At the EPHA meetings, a questionnaire was circulated, asking headteachers to give feedback about recruitment challenges, and to share in particular retention strategies. The results of the survey will be collated and will be used to inform the work and direction of the Recruitment and Retention task and finish group.

Initial feedback from headteacher highlighted the problem of teacher workload, the expectations on teachers and senior leaders. One head also remarked that initial teacher training lacks pedagogy and fails to teach effective teaching skills.

4. FEEDBACK ABOUT THE INTRODUCTION OF NELFT – DELIVERING CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Background

- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) were previously provided by a number of different health and social care organisations across the county of Essex
- The services young people received were different depending on where they lived
- NELFT – North East London Foundation Trust – has been chosen to provide these services
- From 1 November 2015, “CAMHS” will be called the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service (EWMHS)
- Provision for Essex, Thurrock and Southend, for young people aged 0 to 18 - and up to age 25 for young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

The service has gone through a process of handover, including the TUPE of all staff and ongoing recruitment.

Headteachers gave feedback on a number of aspects of the service that they had concerns about, including:

- A significant number of children turned down, despite apparently meeting the criteria –one headteacher told a child was “too unstable to work with”. Another child at high risk of Child Sexual Exploitation was offered art therapy, which was never forthcoming anyway as the therapist was off sick.
- A long wait for referral decisions, 10 weeks and 18 weeks given as examples
- Too many people and agencies involved in determining what action will be taken, and contradictory advice given – cases bounced between NELFT and Behaviour Services
- Concern about staff absences.
- In one case, school told that NELFT will not work with a child unless they have a named social worker.
- Lack of timely communication.
- One Inclusion Leader made a serious complaint about the service his school had received; was told that NELFT would respond, 2 months later the school has not heard anything.

Other feedback and concerns about the service should be sent to Clare Hardy, Commissioner for Vulnerable Children
Clare.Hardy@essex.gov.uk

5. EARLY YEARS UPDATE

Liz Norton, Stav Yiannou and Joe Eastoe

Changes to Ofsted registration Ofsted fact sheet – Registering School Based Provision (February 2016)

This factsheet sets out when a maintained or independent school must register its early years or childcare provision with us, where this provision is made directly by the school and managed by the governing body.

Available on the EPHA website
<http://new.essexprimaryheads.co.uk/info-and-documents/supporting-papers>

From September 2015, schools that take two-year-olds as part of their early years provision will no longer need to register that provision with Ofsted.

- Some governor-run early years provision have continued to be separately registered with Ofsted
- These provisions have been using the staffing ratios and qualification requirements appropriate to registered Early Years providers
- Schools may continue to use these ratios and do not need to make any changes to their staffing mix as a result of becoming exempt from Ofsted registration

Why is governor-run Early Years provision exempt from separate registration?

- If a school's EY provision meets the criteria for exemption from registration with Ofsted, it should not be registered on the EY register.
- As governor-run EY provision, this type of provision automatically meets the requirement to be directly run by the school (under the auspices of the governing body) and linked to the school's activities.
- The other requirement is for at least one child attending the school's EY provision to be a registered pupil of the school
- A place in the schools EY provision cannot be used as a guarantee of a space in reception class, the normal admissions criteria must continue to apply

Lowering school age range

- Maintained schools can run a nursery for children aged 2-4 years old, and can lower their age ranges by up to two years without having to follow a formal statutory process.
- If a maintained school, academy or free school is changing its age range by more than two years (for example, moving from a 5-11 age range to a 2-11 range) a formal process still needs to be followed.
- Schools with existing Early Years provision that lower their age range will continued to be paid the same FEEE rate
- Schools that lower their age range and open a new early years provision will be paid at the preschool FEEE rate

Private Voluntary Independent Early Years Providers on school sites

- These are independent of the school and have their own Ofsted registration
- Schools who are planning to establish their own EY provision or require more space to accommodate an increase in school population may consider displacing the PVI by issuing notice.

- PVI's will have a lease with the LA or the school. The governing body should seek legal advice before issuing notice.
- Schools need to bear in mind that where there is current PVI on site and the school wishes to establish its own, TUPE may apply to the current staff.
- Schools that take over a PVI on their site will be paid at the FEEE rate that the PVI was paid at

Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE)

Who sets the funding rate for governor-run exempt provision in maintained schools?

- FEEE funding is paid via Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), Early Years block
- Funding rates for all types of early years providers are set locally, by LAs in conjunction with the Schools Forum, who may apply different funding criteria to different types of provider to reflect unavoidable costs
- Governors will need to be sure that the EY provision will be sustainable as sustainability funding is not available through the Schools Forum or EYCC

ECC Early Years and Childcare website

www.essex.gov.uk/earlyyearsandchildcare

The full presentation can be found on the EPHA website

<http://new.essexprimaryheads.co.uk/meetings/termly-area>

7. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Area Heads Meetings

Autumn term 2016

N-EAST	Wednesday 9 November	Weston Homes Community Stadium
SOUTH	Thursday 10 November	Holiday Inn, Basildon
WEST	Wednesday 16 November	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 17 November	Chelmsford City Football Club

Spring term 2017

SOUTH	Wednesday 22 February	Holiday Inn, Basildon
N-EAST	Thursday 23 February	Weston Homes Community Stadium
WEST	Wednesday 1 March	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 2 March	Chelmsford City Football Club

Summer term 2017

SOUTH	Wednesday 14 June	Holiday Inn, Basildon
N-EAST	Thursday 15 June	Weston Homes Community Stadium
WEST	Wednesday 21 June	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 22 June	Chelmsford City Football Club

Conferences

Deputy Headteachers' Conference

Friday 14 October 2016 Weston Community Homes Stadium

Headteachers' Conference

Friday 17 March 2017 Stock Brook Country Club, Nr. Billericay

Pam Langmead

EPHA Professional Officer

pam@langmead.me.uk

01621 786359/ 07791 143277