

**MINUTES OF THE LA AND EPHA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY 4 MAY 2017 starting at 12.30 pm**

In attendance	Representing	email address
Clare Kershaw CK	Director of Commissioning, Education and Lifelong Learning	clare.kershaw@essex.gov.uk
Alison Fiala	Primary Improvement Commissioner Mid	Alison.fiala@essex.gov.uk
Lisa Fergus	Primary Improvement Commissioner S	Lisa.fergus@essex.gov.uk
Nicola Woolf	Primary Improvement Commissioner W	Nicola.woolf@essex.gov.uk
Jacky Castle	Primary Improvement Commissioner NE	Jacky.castle@essex.gov.uk
Ralph Holloway	Manager of SEN, Psychology and Assessment	Ralph.holloway@essex.gov.uk
Elaine White	Manager of SEN, Psychology and Assessment Services	Elaine.white@essex.gov.uk
Lois Ashforth	EPHA Dengie	Head@coldnorton.essex.sch.uk
Dawn Baker	EPHA Chelmsford West	headteacher@lawfordmead-jun.essex.sch.uk
Nicky Barrand	EPHA South Vice-Chair	htpa@cherrytree-pri.essex.sch.uk
Isobel Barron	EPHA West Chair	head@roseacres.essex.sch.uk
Amanda Buckland Garnett	EPHA South Woodham Ferrers	abg@collingwood.essex.sch.uk
Claire Claydon	EPHA Tendring Mid	cclaydon@brightlingsea-jun.essex.sch.uk
Anna Conley	EPHA Witham	head@howbridge-inf.essex.sch.uk
Sarah Donnelly	EPHA Halstead	sdonnelly@richarddeclare.essex.sch.uk
Lyn Corderoy	EPHA South Treasurer/Wickford	admin@grange.essex.sch.uk
Fiona Dorey	EPHA Braintree	Head@greatbradfords-jun.essex.sch.uk
Helen Dudley-Smith	EPHA Colchester East	headteacher@friarsgrove.essex.sch.uk
Melissa Eades	EPHA Billericay	m.eades@sunnymede-inf.essex.sch.uk
Mary Jo Hall	EPHA West Treasurer	Head@stmsw.co.uk
Shelagh Harvey	EPHA Brentwood	headteacher@ingatestone.essex.sch.uk
Nigel Hookway	EPHA Executive Director	nigelhookway@hotmail.com
Nick Hutchings	EPHA Vice-Chair/NE Chair	head@hamiltonprimary.com
Pam Langmead	EPHA Professional Officer	pam@langmead.me.uk
Victoria Marrow	Substitute for John Clements	admin@hatfieldheath.essex.sch.uk
Jacq Martin	EPHA Colchester South	Head@langenhoe.essex.sch.uk
Nicola Morgan-Soane	EPHA Mid Chair	head@trinityroad.essex.sch.uk
Harriet Phelps-Knights	EPHA Chair	Head@janetduke.essex.sch.uk
Amanda Reid	EPHA Chelmsford North	admin@perryfields-inf.essex.sch.uk
Angela Russell	EPHA Basildon West	angelarussell@st-anneline-inf.essex.sch.uk
Matt Woolard	EPHA Epping Forest South	head@hereward.essex.sch.uk

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

Lehla Abbott	North East Vice-Chair
Cheryl Allard	Mid Chair
Sue Bardetti	EPHA Tendring South
Rachel Callaghan	Uttlesford North
John Clements	EPHA Uttlesford South
Julie Lorkins	West Vice-Chair
Kate Mills	EPHA Braintree
Hayley O'Dea	Rochford

Action

Donna Parker EPHA Tendring North
Karen Tucker EPHA Canvey Island
Jonathan Tye Harlow

Clare Kershaw welcomed headteachers and LA Officers to the meeting.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE EPHA EXECUTIVE MEETING

a) Future funding for the Specialist Teacher Team

Clare explained that she did not yet know how the STT might be funded in future, given the uncertainty around the introduction of the National Funding Formula. She noted that current rumours suggest that the NFF might be deferred for another year. However, she stressed the Local Authority's commitment to the team and suggested mechanism would be found to allow the funding to be continued.

b) Safeguarding- Ofsted checklist

Clare confirmed that Alison Fiala is leading a task group to develop resources to support schools in relation to safeguarding. This will include an audit tool that will be used by Commissioners during visits, and the development of a Governors' checklist, which could be used by the nominated governor for safeguarding, to ensure that their school is meeting safeguarding requirements. These tools could also be used during a Peer Review.

She reminded the Executive that 8 schools have been caught out for safeguarding issues, in Ofsted inspections this school year and five of those were judged to be inadequate as a result. The key area of criticism centred on record keeping.

Headteachers noted that they would appreciate a simple check-list of safeguarding requirements, and perhaps a termly calendar of tasks, which could be followed by each school, to ensure compliance and consistency.

HR has undertaken around 154 audits for schools, in relation to the SCR and safeguarding. However, one headteacher noted that an Ofsted inspector had criticised the outcomes of the audit and stated that it didn't meet the statutory requirements. Clare said that she felt this was likely to be an anomaly, but that she would investigate further, as it was vital that the HR audits were Ofsted compliant. She noted that Prue Rayner, Senior HMI, is due to meet with LA Officers soon to discuss safeguarding and Ofsted, and she will check that the checklists and HR audits meet Ofsted standards.

c) CSE Champions – new guidance

It was noted that the Professional Officer had recently sent an email to all primary schools on behalf of Jo Barclay and Phil Picton (Independent Chair of the ESCB), setting out new training and registration requirements for CSE Champions in schools. A number of headteachers have responded, concerned about the potential workload and asking whether the requirements are proportionate and reasonable. The Professional Officer noted that she is on the Essex Safeguarding Children Board but that this matter had not been discussed at Board level. Clare agreed that it would have been helpful if this had been discussed at Board level, although the requirements were considered by the CSE sub-group (which Jo Barclay attends).

d) Participation in the Primary Excellence Board

The LA is considering the next steps in the development of the School Led Improvement System, including aligning with EPHA (as well as Lead Headteachers and the SLIS Board) in relation to supporting schools. This development is needed to ensure that the partnerships sustain and drive school to school support. The EPHA Chair noted that at

the meeting earlier in the day, the Executive had discussed this issue, and some concerns were raised about the introduction of effective school to school, and how it is working in practice. One headteacher had noted that the Commissioners were not always consistent in their approach and did not always seem to trust heads to support or conduct Peer Reviews. In another case, a school's SEC turned up to a Peer Review despite not being invited to be part of the process. Clare agreed that headteachers must be trusted to lead Peer Reviews.

Nicola Woolf noted that the School Led Improvement System Board (and System Leadership sub-group, in particular) has discussed how the current LA system of accountability can be extended to the Partnerships. She referred to a discussion around the possible involvement of primary headteachers and/or EPHA representatives at Primary Improvement Board meetings. These are regular meetings, currently attended by LA commissioners, who discuss and identify schools that may be vulnerable or causing concern. As part of the move towards increasing school to school support, the LA is keen to involve the partnerships or headteacher associations more in this process.

The Chair stressed that EPHA does want to be involved, but the "how" and the extent of the involvement is going to be very important. The Executive has argued that EPHA has worked hard for many years to be regarded as independent from the LA and Unions, whilst working co-operatively with both. The Association would not want to be seen as making judgements about colleagues. However, EPHA also recognises the vulnerability of some schools and heads, and it might be helpful to have information about those who are at risk or causing concern. It was suggested that EPHA might be able to develop a role as adviser or "process observer" on the Primary Improvement Board, whilst not being involved in making judgments about intervention. Clare stressed that decisions around intervention would continue to be made by the Local Authority.

One headteacher suggested that the RAG rating criteria should be developed further with the SLIS partnerships and EPHA, to ensure its credibility and acceptance with headteachers.

As in previous discussions, it was accepted that there is a continuing issue about the capacity and confidence of Lead Headteachers, and a recognition that the SLIS partnerships vary in their maturity. Clare stressed that the plan to focus SEC capacity on clusters has been deliberate, and she argued that the school led support system is at least 2 years away from being fully mature and self-operating, hence the continued support from LA Commissioners. Clusters will have a considerable amount of support from the SEC, at least 10-15 days each year, and this should include a focus on cluster improvement and development. Clare confirmed that this LA support will be offered to all Partnerships, whether or not they include MATs and academies.

It is hoped and expected that the existence of the Memorandum of Understanding will ensure that a Partnership continues to be effective, even when there is a change of Lead Head or membership of the group.

In the meantime, a Cluster Development Tool is being piloted by two of the Partnerships that are assessing the effectiveness of the tool.

The Executive Director noted his continued concern about the lack of engagement of secondary schools in some of the Partnerships, and Clare said that there are plans to address their involvement. However, care needs to be taken so that secondary schools are not being seen as "taking over" a partnership.

The next SLIS System Design Task & Finish group meeting will be held on 9 May, and

will be attended by the Executive Director.

3. **OUTCOMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE REVIEW OF THE SPECIALIST TEACHING TEAM (STT)**

Ralph Holloway, Manager of SEN, Psychology and Assessment, was welcomed to the meeting. He circulated a report from Simon Carpenter, following the review of the Specialist Teaching Team, and noted the following:

Background

The review looked at all of the SST teams, apart from pre-school. Interviews were held with a number of schools and headteachers, from primary, secondary, special, alternative and enhanced provisions, and 115 schools responded to the online survey.

It was noted that EPHA felt that the review had been conducted effectively and fairly by Simon Carpenter and heads had appreciated his approach.

Key responses from schools

Role, vision and purpose

- schools with less SEND capacity may feel that they have more hurdles to jump to get STT support
- The service is increasingly focused on EHCPs, with a tension between high needs and early intervention.

Service delivery and quality

- The survey highlighted very diverse views, although most schools value parts of the service highly.
- Many schools were dissatisfied with support for SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health)
- Positive feedback generally about support for Hearing Impairment (HI), Vision Impairments (VI), Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC), Physical and Neurological Impairment (PNI), Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD), Speech, Language and Communication (SLCN) and INSET training.

Many schools see STT as a source of valuable expertise and schools that invest in that relationship see this as leading to greater value. Inconsistency is seen as the biggest issue, and several respondents raised implications for new headteachers and SENCOs because of the importance of “who you know”.

Leadership, management and organisation

Questions were raised about funding, and the lack of clarity around this.

Schools want more “protocols” and quality assurance to achieve consistency. There is frustration where schools feel that known quality issues are not addressed.

Headteachers want to be involved in shaping the future service.

SEMH

Clearly seen differently by many schools – a varied response.

Concerns relate to:

- Out of date practice
- Impractical advice – e.g. championing one child at the expense of the other 29
- Not acknowledging what the school has already done
- Lack of empathy
- “Teaching us to suck eggs”
- SEMH is very broad – mental health an area where there is less expertise.
- Lack of agreement about the team’s methodology and role – and the STT themselves don’t always know the remit of the service

- Often approached in a crisis, although the STT is not intended to be an emergency service.

Heads/SENCOs reported that it works best when:

- STT advice is practical and grounded
- They are flexible and responsive, adapting their approach to the changing needs/situation of the learner and the school
- It is based on a partnership with the school
- There is skilful coaching of school staff
- The school is clear about what it needs and wants from the STT and the input links to the School Development Plan.

But it works less well when:

- the STT are out of date and the “school itself has moved on and developed capacity, but they haven’t”
- they don’t appreciate the constraints of the school, the classroom and/or the class teacher
- their advice isn’t feasible or practical
- the “tell us what to do”
- the STT don’t have the right training
- they signpost schools to other support or training rather than sharing their own expertise

Main points emerging from schools

- Most say the referral system is effective and encourages specific requests for support
- Many say that they get a quick response, either by a phone call/telephone advice, although there can be delays before full engagement.
- Some schools only engage with STT when seeking an EHCP
- Is there a conflict between STT, SAS and EHCP?
- Many see insufficient Quality Assurance, but also see good practice from individual.
- “STT keeps children in school” – but there is limited evaluation of their input and outcomes
- STT has a one-size fits all package
- Some secondary schools are interested in working with STT

Recommendations to the LA

- Service delivery/quality
- Leadership, management and organisation
- Development of the service and link to strategic priorities
- Effectiveness, outcomes and value for money
- Working with schools to develop speciality teaching support in a school-led system

It was noted that the STT has accepted the recommendations and the outcomes of the review. The LA focus must be on the development of the service and a link to strategic priorities, with a link to research and current practice (for example, in relation to autism).

It was noted that the development of the service links to the wider review and restructure of SEND, and it is critical to bring special schools into the provision for mainstream schools, particularly through outreach support and sharing resources. Clare noted that the 3 special free schools have now been approved, which will extend provision in the county.

The LA has just had a SEND Peer Review and as a result is committed to developing Outcomes Definitions for SEND.

4. **OUTCOMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE REVIEW OF THE STATUTORY ASSESSMENT SERVICE**

Elaine White, Manager of SEN, Psychology and Assessment Services, was welcomed to the meeting. She circulated a report from Simon Carpenter, following the review of the Statutory Assessment Service, and noted the following:

Background

The review looked at the SAS across the county. Interviews were held with 24 schools from primary, secondary, special, alternative and enhanced provisions, and 115 schools responded to the online survey.

Key responses from schools about service delivery and quality

- Schools recognise the huge workload and hard work of individuals, though there were also concerns about the practicalities of how the teams work
- Special schools are more consistently positive about the SAS
- Positive comments are often about people, negative comments are about systems and processes
- Some frustration where schools feel that known quality issues are not addressed
- EHCP decisions are not consistent, and the guidance about documentation varies – schools want guidance, standards and protocols to achieve consistency.
- Frustration about the “notional” £6,000
- Schools do not feel like “co-workers” with SAS, but would welcome this relationship

Communication is schools’ biggest concern and many are negative about communication and responsiveness (e.g. unanswered emails and calls)

Executive members expressed their concerns about how long the EHCP process takes. Elaine noted that this has improved (from 24+ weeks to 20.3 weeks – nearly within the statutory framework) and explained the process:

0 – 6 weeks – once application received, a panel decides whether or not to go ahead with an EHCP.

6 – 12 weeks – reports from social care, therapists, EPs etc – this period may present a challenge

12 – 14 weeks – preparation for the outcome meetings – meeting at end of week 14

14 – 18 weeks – draft plan written and shared with the family

18 – 20 weeks – final EHCP produced.

The writing of plans is now done internally once again by SAS staff, which is resulting in an improvement to quality and timeliness.

Elaine noted that schools no longer attend panel meetings but that headteachers are very welcome to attend. It was argued that the invitation has not been extended to schools for some time and this needs to be re-issued.

Summary of the report and recommendations

- Training and development – culture, systems and processes
- Communication – clear expectations and protocols re-stated and monitored

- Supervision and accountability
- Monitoring and evaluation of impact
- Leadership
- Back to basics with schools in relation to graduated response (one-planning)

5. INTRODUCTION OF ASP – ANALYSE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

The DfE is launching a new service to replace RAISEonline – ASP (Analyse School Performance).

The current RAISEonline service will be available until 31 July 2017, which will allow users to familiarise themselves with the new service and provide feedback before the current one is taken off line.

The new service will be available through “Secure Access” the DfE single sign on route. All schools should already have an ‘Approver’ already for the DfE Secure Access website (schools can each have up to 2 approvers).

There is guidance on setting up approver accounts and end user accounts here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/secure-access-approver-role-guide>

Alison Fiala circulated a print out of the available reports that will be part of ASP.

6. FFT SUBSCRIPTIONS

Alison Fiala reported the FFT subscription is being increased by a modest amount.

Small schools will now pay £93 (up from £89)
 Primary schools will now pay £145 (up from £139)
 Secondary schools will now pay £580 (up from £569)

It was suggested that infant schools should be charged at the same rate as small schools, and the data available to them is limited. This was **AGREED**.

Alison noted that FFT is offering to run free training in the autumn term.

7. TARGET TRACKER SUBSCRIPTIONS

Concerns were expressed about the increased charges for Target Tracker, as well as other EES services. One headteacher noted that her school is being charged an increase of 37.5% from last year.

Clare explained that the charges are set by members, but that she would discuss these concerns with Cllr Gooding.

8. SUMMER TERM AREA HEADTEACHER MEETINGS

The following items were agreed for the LA part of the termly meetings:

- Safeguarding, including resources the LA are developing to support schools and governors
- SEC team changes
- STT and SAS review outcomes
- Growth fund information

9. DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS FOR THE 2016/17 AND 2017/18 SCHOOL YEARS

Executive meetings (Chelmsford City Football Club)

Thursday 12 October 2017

Wednesday 24 January 2018

Thursday 10 May 2018

Area Heads Meetings

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

Autumn term 2017

N-EAST	Wednesday 8 November	Weston Homes Community Stadium
SOUTH	Thursday 9 November	Holiday Inn, Basildon
WEST	Wednesday 15 November	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 16 November	Chelmsford City Football Club

Spring term 2018

SOUTH	Wednesday 21 February	Holiday Inn, Basildon
N-EAST	Thursday 22 February	Weston Homes Community Stadium
WEST	Wednesday 28 February	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 1 March	Chelmsford City Football Club

Summer term 2018

SOUTH	Wednesday 13 June	Holiday Inn, Basildon
N-EAST	Thursday 14 June	Weston Homes Community Stadium
WEST	Wednesday 20 June	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 21 June	Chelmsford City Football Club

The meeting ended at 3.10 pm

Pam Langmead, EPHA Professional Officer