

**MINUTES OF THE LA AND EPHA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER 2019 starting at 1.00 pm**

<b>In attendance</b>	<b>Representing</b>	<b>email address</b>
Clare Kershaw CK	Director of Education	clare.kershaw@essex.gov.uk
Lisa Fergus	Assistant Director - South	lisa.fergus@essex.gov.uk
Catherine Hutley	Assistant Director - Mid	catherine.hutley@essex.gov.uk
Alison Fiala	Education and EY Lead Mid	<a href="mailto:Alison.fiala@essex.gov.uk">Alison.fiala@essex.gov.uk</a>
George Athanasiou	EPHA West Vice-Chair	head@greatsampford.essex.sch.uk
Sue Bardetti	EPHA Tendring South	admin@hollandhaven.essex.sch.uk
Nicky Barrand	EPHA South Chair	htpa@cherrytree-pri.essex.sch.uk
Isobel Barron	EPHA West Chair	head@roseacres.essex.sch.uk
Liz Bartholomew	EPHA Harwich and Dovercourt	head@mayflowerprimary.com
Liz Benjeddi	EPHA Billericay	head@southgreen-jun.essex.sch.uk
Heidi Blakeley	EPHA Wickford	Head@abacus.essex.sch.uk
Amanda Buckland Garnett	EPHA South Woodham Ferrers	abg@collingwood.essex.sch.uk
Anna Conley	EPHA Witham	head@howbridge-inf.essex.sch.uk
Dawn Dack	EPHA Maldon	drdack@wentworth.essex.sch.uk
Emma Dawson	EPHA Castlepoint and Rochford	Head@thundersley.essex.sch.uk
Richard Green	EPHA South Vice-Chair	head@grovewood.essex.sch.uk
Shelagh Harvey	EPHA Brentwood	headteacher@ingatestone.essex.sch.uk
Nick Hutchings	EPHA Vice-Chair/NE Chair	head@hamiltonprimary.com
Pam Langmead	EPHA Professional Officer	pam@langmead.me.uk
Ian MacDonald	EPHA Tendring Mid	headteacher@elmstead.essex.sch.uk
Kate Mills	EPHA Braintree	head@johnrayinfants.essex.sch.uk
Nicola Morgan-Soane	EPHA Mid Chair	head@trinityroad.essex.sch.uk
Hayley O'Dea	EPHA Rochford	head@greatwaking.essex.sch.uk
Donna Parker	EPHA Tendring North	head@st-marys-ardleigh.essex.sch.uk
Paula Pemberton	EPHA Colchester East	paula.pemberton@hazelmere-jun.essex.sch.uk
Harriet Phelps-Knights	EPHA Chair	Head@janetduke.essex.sch.uk
Richard Potter	EPHA North East Vice-Chair	admin@perryfields-inf.essex.sch.uk
Angela Russell	EPHA Basildon West	angelarussell@st-anneline-inf.essex.sch.uk
Suzy Ryan	EPHA Colchester South	head@fingringhoe.essex.sch.uk
Neil Taggart	EPHA Brentwood	headteacher@ingatestonefryerning.essex.sch.uk
Karen Tucker	EPHA Canvey Island	head@canvey-jun.essex.sch.uk

**Action**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from:

- Lois Ashforth           Dengie
- Dawn Baker             Chelmsford West
- John Clements         Uttlesford South
- Julie Lorkins           Epping Forest Rural
- Hayley O'Dea           Rochford
- Amanda Reid           Chelmsford North
- Gary Soars             Rayleigh
- Jonathan Tye           Harlow

Clare welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## 2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE EPHA EXECUTIVE MEETING

### a) OFSTED BRIEFINGS

It was noted that a number of the LA briefings on the new Education Inspection Framework had been cancelled, often at short notice (and that a few participants had turned up, unaware that they were not running). Alison Fiala confirmed that she had contacted host schools in advance. An additional briefing will be held at White Court School on November 12<sup>th</sup> at 4.00 pm.

### b) HEADTEACHER WELLBEING

Clare Kershaw confirmed that the focus on headteacher wellbeing and support in a crisis situation is work in progress (that was somewhat delayed by the SEND Local Review). She has a follow up meeting with Jo Barclay, Nicki Harris and Ros Somerville to consider and develop the critical incidents process. Clare explained that, while there is support available in certain situations there is the need to strengthen out of hours support for schools. It is generally felt that the EP team critical incident support is highly valued, but would benefit by offering a follow up service, as schools may need advice and support a few weeks after an incident has occurred.

One idea being considered is to identify and train “headteacher well-being champions” who can support heads, including those who are suspended or in vulnerably situations. Clare confirmed that the LA does recognise the impact when a headteacher leaves their post suddenly, perhaps as a result of a negative Ofsted inspection, and is considering what might be offered to support these colleagues.

### c) GUIDANCE AROUND ADMINISTERING MEDICINES

EPHA Executive members gave examples of the challenges schools face when supporting children with complex medical conditions, which often include administering medicines and nursing procedures that school staff aren't, or don't feel, equipped and trained to deliver.

Clare noted that the agreed support and management of conditions should be set out in the Health Care Plan, but accepted that not all schools have this in place for every child. It was argued that there needs to be clarity on what is meant by “reasonable adjustments”. She **AGREED** to discuss the Medical Needs Policy (about to be published) with Julie Keating (Education Access Manager) to check that complex health needs and management of medicines are addressed in the policy. It was also argued that there also needs to be a greater commitment from health in relation to the management and delivery of Health Care Plans and the Professional Officer suggested that this could be raised at the Children's Partnership Board.

Clare  
Kershaw

*Other questions that arose during the Executive meeting were considered under the following agenda items.*

### 3. PRIORITIES FOR EDUCATION - SEND REDESIGN UPDATE

Clare Kershaw confirmed that the main priority for the Local Authority continues to be the successful implementation of the SEND redesign, including the transition to a new workforce structure and delivery of SEND support. The aim of the redesign is to create an inclusive education system, offer better support for schools and increase and improve the provision. This links with the focus on supporting emotional wellbeing and improving mental health. There is a commitment to investing in universal support.

Four of the roadshows designed to explain the new workforce approach have taken place; more are being rolled out across the county. Clare Kershaw stressed the importance of school staff attending so that they understand the way in which the teams will work with schools in future. The Executive asked how well attended the roadshows had been; Clare explained that the attendance has been varied, but they are most beneficial when there is a mix of headteachers and SENCOs. She **AGREED** to resend the information about the future roadshows via Education Essex.

Clare  
Kershaw

There are two new and different roles in the structure: the Inclusion Partner (IP), and the SEND Engagement Facilitator. Every school will have a named IP and EP (Educational Psychologist) as well as a SEP (School Effectiveness Partner), supporting the SEND population in the school.

The LA is continuing to recruit to the teams, including appointing to the new roles. Clare stressed that there is no change to the Specialists Teachers supporting Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment and PSI.

The Specialist Teacher Team has been restructured within a new Inclusions and Psychology Team, working alongside the Assessment Operations Team.

The aim of the new structure of support is to deliver less of a binary relationship between specialist teacher and the school/child, and more of a holistic service. The new structure goes live in January. In the meantime, there is recognition that there are some concerns about the transition period, which should be minimised when the new service is launched.

The Executive members discussed some of the issues that are being raised during the transition period.

It was noted that there continues to be a misunderstanding from many parents about SEND provision, including the appropriateness of EHCPs in some cases. This is not helped by a tendency for some health professionals, including paediatricians, who suggest that an ECHP is the right route for a child and that schools will deliver that SEN support as a result. This advice often contradicts the assessment made by education professionals about what level of support a child actually needs. Clare confirmed that this is an ongoing discussion with health, and that she will restate these concerns.

It was agreed that the needs to be clear and realistic guidance for parents. Recent

online video guidance from admissions was seen as very helpful, and headteachers asked if something similar could be provided for parents around SEND provision.

Clare noted that the LA is working closely with Families in Focus to consider their role in providing advocacy, whilst avoiding immediate escalation to a legal challenge.

#### **4. PRIORITIES FOR EDUCATION – SEND LOCAL REVIEW INSPECTION**

Clare Kershaw reminded the Executive that the SEND local review is not a graded inspection; the inspection team assesses to what extent the Local Authority is delivering the SEND reforms from 2014 – 2019, and so assessing and meeting needs and delivering outcomes for children.

The inspection included detailed scrutiny of education, health, EWHMS, the Children and Family Wellbeing Service as well as the LA SEND provision.

The parent voice is taken very seriously in the inspection, and Clare confirmed that there had been 600 responses by parents; the inspectors regard their “lived experience” as a crucial part of the assessment of the service.

It was confirmed that the inspection team found weaknesses in the system, but all had been identified with the SEF. The final report will be published in around a month.

#### **5. OTHER PRIORITIES FOR EDUCATION**

- i) Continued focus on the school led system of improvement, including looking at the maturity of partnerships and the impact of activity.
- ii) Pupil outcomes at all key stages
- iii) Early Years, including pre-school and Reception. Clear link to SEND – what are the expectations and competencies of the early years sector. Also, tackling family parenting skills.
- iv) Headteacher welfare.
- v) Essex Teaching Awards – celebrating the excellent teachers, staff and governors in Essex.

#### **6. PRIORITIES FOR EDUCATION – SCHOOL FUNDING**

Clare Kershaw reminded the Executive members that a number of announcements have been made by the Government about future school funding, although the details and implications are yet to be known. Yannick Stupples-Whyley, ECC Senior Finance Business Partner, is meeting with the DfE on 11<sup>th</sup> October and expects to receive confirmed figures the following week.

The DfE has announced that all primary schools will receive a minimum of £3,750 per pupil in the 2019/20 financial year, and £4,000 the following year. (This is not the AWPU, but total funding per pupil, less Pupil Premium). There is also a clear expectation from Government that local authorities will move towards (or deliver) the national funding formula; however, there is no mandatory requirement to do so yet. There are a number of differences between the Essex funding formula and

the NFF, but the most significant is the difference in the lump sum to schools: £110k in the NFF compared with £150k in the current Essex funding formula.

The current thinking in the LA is that even with additional funding the High Needs Block will continue to be overspent in coming years and there may be a need to transfer 0.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. Schools Forum will be considering options during two meetings next month (11<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> November).

## **7. SCHOOLS BROADBAND SERVICE UPDATE**

Clare Kershaw explained that the decision to end the Essex Schools Broadband Service had to be one made by the Cabinet, as the DUCL contract is integrated within the ECC corporate provision. The Cabinet has agreed to end the contract with schools and maintained schools will no longer pay a de-delegated amount for the service.

The team (overseen by Emma Toublic) has been providing information to schools about the steps that need to be taken to decide on a new contract with an alternative provider.

Clare confirmed that ECC will organise and pay for the transfer of essex.sch.uk email addresses for maintained schools; and will check and confirm whether this will also apply to academies.

Clare  
Kershaw

## **8. ESSEX PAYROLL**

Clare Kershaw confirmed that the Essex Payroll system will novate to a new provider in the coming year. Schools will have the option to remain with a new provider or choose an alternative provider.

She suggested that it would be helpful to consult with a small group of School Business Managers to ensure that future provision meets the needs of schools. It was also suggested that the LA could meet with the NESP financial consortium group manager.

## **9. SMALL SCHOOL REVIEWS**

Alison Fiala reported that she met with representatives from the Diocese on 17<sup>th</sup> September to discuss the number of small schools that are in a deficit budget position; five have been required to take out a loan from the Local Authority.

Alison confirmed that a small school is defined as having 120 or fewer pupils on roll. There will be a further meeting of the Small Schools Strategy Group on 4<sup>th</sup> December – Donna Parker and George Athanasiou will attend to represent primary headteachers.

## **10. AUTUMN TERM HEADTEACHER MEETINGS**

The LA part of the autumn term headteacher meetings was discussed. The EPHA Executive noted the feedback from the summer term meeting evaluations, and asked if the main focus could be on Clare's update, which is always seen as

valuable and important for heads to hear. Clare noted that this was fine in principle but that, unfortunately, she will not be available to lead the EPHA meetings in November; this term her update will be delivered by the Assistant Directors in each quadrant.

It was agreed that feedback and lessons learnt from recent Ofsted inspections that have taken place this term would be valuable for headteachers to hear.

## 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Clare was asked how she and the Education Team were following the SEND inspection. Clare noted that it had been a rigorous process over an intense two weeks, and the team were tired, but glad that the inspection is now over.

## 12. DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS FOR THE 2019/20 SCHOOL YEAR

### **Executive meetings** (Chelmsford City Football Club)

Thursday 23 January 2020

Thursday 7 May 2020

### **Area Heads Meetings**

Autumn term 2019

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

Spring term 2020

N-EAST	Wednesday 4 March	Colchester Community Stadium
SOUTH	Thursday 5 March	Holiday Inn, Basildon
WEST	Wednesday 11 March	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 12 March	Chelmsford City Football Club

Summer term 2020

N-EAST	Wednesday 10 June	Colchester Community Stadium
SOUTH	Thursday 11 June	Holiday Inn, Basildon
WEST	Wednesday 17 June	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 18 June	Chelmsford City Football Club

The meeting ended at 3.00 pm  
Pam Langmead, EPHA Professional Officer