

**MINUTES OF THE LA AND EPHA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY 24 JANUARY 2019 starting at 1.00 pm**

In attendance	Representing	email address
Clare Kershaw CK	Director of Education	clare.kershaw@essex.gov.uk
Alison Fiala	Education and EY Lead Mid	Alison.fiala@essex.gov.uk
Mark Gant	Performance Analyst	Mark.gant@essex.gov.uk
Nicola Woolf	Assistant Director West	Nicola.woolf@essex.gov.uk
Jason Kitkat	Executive Director, Corporate Development	Jason.Kitkat@essex.gov.uk
Steve Whitfield	Senior EP	Steve.whitfield@essex.gov.uk
Ruth Sturdy	SEND School Effectiveness Leader	Ruth.sturdy@essex.gov.uk
Lois Ashforth	EPHA Dengie	Head@coldnorton.essex.sch.uk
George Athanasiou	EPHA West Vice-Chair	head@greatsampford.essex.sch.uk
Dawn Baker	EPHA Mid Treasurer	headteacher@lawfordmead.essex.sch.uk
Sue Bardetti	EPHA Tendring South	admin@hollandhaven.essex.sch.uk
Nicky Barrand	EPHA South Chair	htpa@cherrytree-pri.essex.sch.uk
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
Sarah Donnelly	EPHA Halstead	sdonnelly@richarddeclare.essex.sch.uk
Fiona Dorey	EPHA Braintree	Head@greatbradfords-jun.essex.sch.uk
Andy Douglas	EPHA South Vice-Chair	andy.douglas@riverside.essex.sch.uk
Mary Jo Hall	EPHA Uttlesford North	head@stmsw.co.uk
Shelagh Harvey	EPHA Brentwood	headteacher@ingatestone.essex.sch.uk
Nick Hutchings	EPHA Vice-Chair/NE Chair	head@hamiltonprimary.com
Chris Jarmain	EPHA Epping Forest South	Headteacher@st-johns-buckhursthill.essex.sch.uk
Pam Langmead	EPHA Professional Officer	pam@langmead.me.uk
Ian MacDonald	EPHA Tendring Mid	headteacher@elmstead.essex.sch.uk
Mark Millbourne	EPHA Harwich and Dovercourt	headteacher@allsaints-harwich.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
Paula Pemberton	EPHA Colchester East	paula.pemberton@hazelmere-jun.essex.sch.uk
Harriet Phelps-Knights	EPHA Chair	Head@janetduke.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
Karen Tucker	EPHA Canvey Island	head@canvey-jun.essex.sch.uk
Jonathan Tye	EPHA Harlow	head@churchgate.essex.sch.uk

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

- Lehla Abbott North East Vice-Chair
- Isobel Barron West Chair
- John Clements Uttlesford South

Action

- Julie Lorkins Epping Forest Rural
- Amanda Reid Chelmsford North
- Donna Parker Tendring North
- Lorna Pigram Rayleigh

Clare welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE EPHA EXECUTIVE MEETING

a) ADMISSIONS AND TRANSPORT ADVICE

One headteacher explained that the planning and admissions team, and the ECC transport team are giving conflicting advice to parents about which schools they should choose for their child/ren. The Planning and Admissions team is apparently advising parents who move into an area to contact local schools to check whether they have availability, but in order to be eligible for school transport they must apply for their most local school. If turned down, the Council then has a responsibility to provide transport to another school. Clare **AGREED** to feed this back to the teams to ensure that they are giving consistent and clear advice to parents.

CK

b) TERMLY HEADTEACHER MEETINGS

The Education Team explained that they wish to showcase good practice at termly meetings. EPHA Executive members asked if it would be possible to suggest themes to ensure that the case studies shared are relevant and useful, and also that presentations should be shared in other quadrants. This was **AGREED**.

c) SEND SUPPORT AND PROVISION

One headteacher expressed his ongoing concern that primary schools are still not given information about SEND admissions, unlike Special Schools. Clare confirmed that one intention of the SEND redesign is to ensure that Local Authority teams work much more closely and in partnership with schools. It was suggested that currently there is a very literal and inflexible interpretation of the SEND Code of Practice, and the capacity and resources in schools needs to be considered, as well as the needs of children and young people with SEND.

Clare gave an update on the SEND redesign strategy. Currently the teams continue to work as usual, but staff are aware that the LA is reviewing the system and is working on a redesign of services. There is early engagement with staff, sharing the reasons for the review and the intended process. By early March there will be more information, followed by a public and then staff consultation. One aspect that needs to be managed carefully is the expectation and understanding of parents of what a future service may look like.

d) INCLUSION STATEMENT SIGN UP

Schools continue to be encouraged to sign up to the SEN Inclusion statement, as part of a broader commitment to inclusion across the county. Clare reminded the EPHA Executive that the statement of principles is not legally binding, and the commitments in the statement are no more onerous than those set out in the DfE Exclusions guidance and the SEND Code of Practice. She confirmed that the

Local Authority will not hold schools accountable if they have signed up to the statement but are unable to deliver every aspiration. The document is part of a suite of tools designed to deliver best practice provision for SEND. Clare reminded the group that the SEND redesign has three strands: the capital investment programme, the school-led system and the review and redesign of the LA workforce.

It was noted that there is still some confusion from schools about how to sign up, and it was agreed that schools should be reminded about the process at the area meetings in March.

3. DATA PACKAGE OFFER

The Education Team strongly believe that it is essential that all schools have a firm understanding of how well their pupils are progressing and how their schools' achievement data compares with schools locally and nationally for all pupils and for key groups. From September a data package will be available from the Educational Data Traded Services (data provided previously by the LA will no longer be free). The package includes:

- Subscription to Fischer Family Trust
- Essex Primary School Data booklet
- Nova reports
- Data training

Mark Gant gave a presentation about the Nova product. The booklet setting out data for a partnership of schools will be available at additional cost.

The package costs to schools (which vary depending on size and phase) were set out in the briefing paper, and will be circulated to schools in the next few days. One headteacher asked if a costing could be added for schools that had less than one form entry (to sit midway between schools with less than 120 pupils, and 1FE entry). It was agreed that the costs would be reviewed and this point could be added. Another headteacher asked if the Partnership Booklet could be offered for free if all schools within a partnership bought into the data package; it was agreed that this would be considered, as well as access to FFT collaborate.

4. SALE OF EES

Jason Kitkat, Executive Director for Corporate Development, attended the meeting to give an update on the sale of Essex Education Services. The sale was first announced in May and it had been hoped that a decision would have been made by September.

Jason explained that the process is moving forward. There have been 52 interested parties, and ECC is now working with one exclusive buyer. A key issue for discussion and negotiation is the pension's liability of EES, particularly given that all of the staff are ECC employees. The outcome of final negotiations will need cabinet approval. Jason confirmed that contracts that are agreed this term will be honoured by any new buyer. He was asked what the position would be if the current buyer decided not to go ahead, and Jason explained that ECC would

then go back to other bidders to discuss the sale further. The professional officer noted the concern from schools about this decision being made so late in the day, and the potential reputational damage to EES companies.

Jason agreed to meet with representatives from EPHA and ASHE later in the term to discuss the progress of the sale and the implications for schools.

5. SCHOOL MEALS AND SCHOOL ADMISSIONS UPDATE

Clare reminded the Executive members that the School Meal service is currently fully subsidised, but will be a traded service from April. This decision was made by the EPHA Executive last year and agreed by Schools Forum. The School Meals service has shared a model for a service going forward and 163 schools have indicated that they are likely to buy into the service, which means that it will be viable. Contracts will be sent out soon, but the Executive asked if final prices could be circulated in advance to enable schools to make an informed decision about the service. This was agreed.

Clare noted that she has asked the Planning and Admissions team to review the costs of multiple admission appeals, as previously discussed by the EPHA Executive. She is hoping to achieve a discount where schools have multiple appeals on one day (the current cost is £165 per appeal, whether that is a single appeal or multiple appeals back to back).

6. EMOTIONAL WELLBEING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Ruth Sturdy and Steve Whitfield were welcomed to the meeting. Steve Whitfield (Senior EP), Andrew Smith (Headteacher of Lyons Hall and principal of the Professional Learning Network (TSA in mid-Essex) and Ruth Sturdy (SEND School Effectiveness Leader) are in the process of developing a workforce development programme around supporting children with challenging behavioural issues and mental health problems.

Steve explained that the programme is based on research and practice-based evidence. The training considers the impact of early trauma on children and young people and shifts the focus from asking “what is wrong” with a child to “what has happened to him or her”. There will be seven components of the training, including a focus on the well-being of staff. The Executive asked for the well-being of headteachers to be included, and Steve agreed that there should be a focus on this, with the need to develop and involve governors. It was also noted that working with parents is a key to supporting and developing children, and Steve confirmed that this is part of the programme.

This programme will be developed and the basic training delivered free of charge to all schools. The aim is to complete the materials by Easter and pilots will take place in the summer. Staff in Special Schools and the Specialist Teacher Team will be trained, with the aim of the training being rolled out to all schools in the autumn term.

Steve noted that, if schools are already working with Thrive, this programme will

complement that approach.

One headteacher suggested that this training should also be rolled out to early years practitioners, including in pre-schools and nurseries, so that there is awareness of early trauma and adverse childhood experiences among the very youngest children, leading to effective and early intervention. Clare **AGREED** to discuss this with the Early Years team.

The Professional Officer asked if the Educational Psychologists who are to be seconded by EWHMS (taking over from Jon Large) have been appointed. Steve confirmed that interviews for the 5 x 1 day posts are taking place, and that these EPs will help to roll out the training programme.

7. **TERMLY PRIORITIES**

Clare noted that she recently met with Jeremy Spencer (Senior Ofsted HMI, Easter region) and an Early Years' adviser, to discuss priorities for Essex. Key priorities, highlighted by the 2018 data, are a focus on reading and maths, and it was agreed that it was important to focus on early years. At secondary level there has been a decline in the Progress 8 data, and this is a key priority for the LA.

The redesign of SEND continues to be the number one priority, as well as the development and implementation of a recruitment strategy for the county.

Clare noted that there will be a School Led Improvement conference on 10 May. Key note speakers include Christine Gilbert and Maggie Farrar.

The Executive asked Clare to consider, as a priority this term, the need for schools to know accurate information about funding for the year ahead, including their income and likely costs of services. Schools are struggling with a considerable number of unknowns, adding pressure to their challenging budget process.

8. **DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE 2018/19 SCHOOL YEAR**

Executive meetings (Chelmsford City Football Club)

Thursday 9 May 2019

Area Heads Meetings

Spring term 2019

N-EAST	Wednesday 6 March	Weston Homes Community Stadium
SOUTH	Thursday 7 March	Holiday Inn, Basildon
WEST	Wednesday 13 March	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 14 March	Chelmsford City Football Club

Summer term 2019

N-EAST	Wednesday 12 June	Weston Homes Community Stadium
SOUTH	Thursday 13 June	Holiday Inn, Basildon

WEST
MID

Wednesday 19 June
Thursday 20 June

Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
Chelmsford City Football Club

The meeting ended at 3.20 pm
Pam Langmead, EPHA Professional Officer