

**LA /ESSEX PRIMARY HEADS' ASSOCIATION MID AREA
JUNE 2020**

**THE AREA MEETINGS WERE NOT HELD IN THE SUMMER TERM 2020
DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND LOCKDOWN.
THIS REPORT IS A RECORD OF THE INFORMATION SHARED WITH HEADTEACHERS BY EMAIL.
Agendas and minutes for these meetings available at www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk**

Attendance List

**DISTRICT AND EPHA MEETING
(Notes below)
Dawn Dack, Chair**

Welcome to the following Headteachers:

Demelza Collins Larkrise Primary (Acting headteacher)
Jennifer Kendall Larkrise Primary (Acting headteacher)

Farewell to the following Headteachers:

Joe Figg Purleigh Primary (continuing CEO of Eveleigh MAT)
Carolyn Hunt St Mary's CE Primary, Woodham Ferrers
Guy Niven Baddow Hall Juniors

Chair's report

Dawn Dack

**MEPHA meeting and AGM
Election of Officers and Local Delivery
Group representatives**

Chair Dawn Dack (Wentworth Primary)
Vice-Chair Nicola Morgan-Soane (Trinity Road Primary)
Treasurer Dawn Baker (Lawford Mead Primary)
Braintree Kate Mills (John Ray Infants)
Chelmsford N Amanda Reid (Perryfields Infants)
Chelmsford W Dawn Baker (Lawford Mead Primary)
Chelmsford S Nicola Morgan-Soane (Trinity Road Primary)
Halstead Jinnie Nicholls (St Giles' and St Luke's Federation)
Maldon Dawn Dack (Wentworth Primary)
Dengie Lois Ashforth (Cold Norton Primary)
Witham Anna Conley (The Howbridge Infants)
South Woodham Ferrers Amanda Buckland-Garnett (Collingwood Primary)

**Summer term newsletter and
information**

p 17 **Key dates**

**MID meetings with the Local Authority officers 2020/21 -at
Chelmsford City Football Club**

Thursday 19 November 2020
Thursday 11 March 2021
Thursday 24 June 2021

Deputy Headteachers' Annual Conference 2020

Friday 2 October 2020 Virtual event

Headteachers' Annual Conference 2021

Friday 19 March 2021 Stock Brook Country Club, Nr Billericay

MID EPHA AREA SUMMARY June 2020

The termly headteacher meetings was not able to be held at the usual venues in June as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Primary schools have remained open during the lockdown, which started on 23rd March, and are beginning to increase their provision for pupils in various year groups. However, large gatherings are not yet allowed or advisable. We hope to return to normal for the meetings in November, but this term will conduct the business of the EPHA area meetings by email.

1. WELCOME AND FAREWELL – SUMMER 2020

Welcome to the following Headteachers:

Demelza Collins	Larkrise Primary (Acting headteacher)
Jennifer Kendall	Larkrise Primary (Acting headteacher)

Farewell to the following Headteachers:

Joe Figg	Purleigh Primary (continuing CEO of Eveleigh MAT)
Carolyn Hunt	St Mary's CE Primary, Woodham Ferrers
Guy Niven	Baddow Hall Juniors

If you are leaving please make use of the EPHA new heads' checklist, and complete it for your successor. This is available on the EPHA website at <https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/info-and-documents/good-practice/>

2. MID EPHA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

a) CHAIR'S REPORT

Dawn Dack, Chair of Mid EPHA, sent the following report.

Review of the year

I have held the post of MID EPHA Chair for this academic year and have seen the strangest time in my teaching career. However, I have been very impressed with the organisation and commitment of EPHA representatives in MID area throughout these unprecedented times and would like to thank these colleagues for attending the area and Executive meetings. Each area representative is passionate about sharing Headteacher views in your unique areas and situations. These colleagues complete the role in a voluntary basis giving a great deal of their precious time.

I would like to thank Vice Chair of MID, Nicola, who was planning to leave her role as Headteacher in July, but has agreed to stay on until December 2020! She has held the Vice Chair role for many years and has always offered very well balanced views for the best outcomes for all pupils and staff. I hope she enjoys being a mum at the school gates when it finally happens!

I was recently rereading the minutes from our EPHA Executive meeting in October. The minutes were dominated with discussion about the Ofsted Framework and how schools were dealing with deep dives, and what the impact of the first inspections under the new framework were looking like! How things have changed and our roles!

Move forward 6 months, and all schools in the UK were closed to all but 'key worker' children, we had developed a new language around 'social distancing', we were all beginning to provide home learning via electronic platforms and trying to diagnose coughs across the phone!!!

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the fantastic work that all heads and senior teams did in closing schools with 2 days' notice. This had never been done before and I truly hope that it will never be done again, along with the hundreds of plans that have had to be put in place to stay open to key workers and further open to other year groups. The amount of stress that was placed on individuals during this time, and how they coped, is a testament to how resilient we are as a group of people. Well done!

I have very little memory of anything else that we have all achieved this year – not a surprise, I guess! My curriculum plans have halted and the School Improvement plan for next year looks very different!

However, some things have remained constant, I would like to thank Pam for her amazing work delivering sessions in each cluster and briefing notes on new expectations, guidance and the excellent EPHA website throughout this academic year. This is the first area I look for up-to-date information and answers!

During the Covid lockdown, Pam has continued supporting Essex Headteachers at all the local authority conference calls nearly every day, keeping us up to date and putting forward headteachers views. I am sure you will join me in sending her many emails telling her how brilliant she is!

I would also like to thank Clare Kershaw, Director of Education, for her daily emails and support throughout this lockdown. Many Headteachers in other authorities have not had this regular contact and leadership.

The next academic year is clearly going to be different. There will be many demands on Headteachers and how they best deal with the expectations from DfE, Unions, parents, children and staff. How we negotiate with the Local Authority and the various agencies that work with schools will also be paramount to the well-being of pupils and staff. Past lessons tell us we do a pretty good job and that strength is certainly held in numbers. Communicating with each other and choosing a strategy that is agreed by a number of heads, rather than just one, will provide protection and safety for us all.

The MID EPHA group is a particularly passionate one and I know we will work together to navigate through the coming months and years. Having a clear message about accountability, testing and transition of children will enable us to shape the Local Authority's agenda and communications with the DfE. Stand strong and do not be afraid to voice your opinions.

EPHA will continue to support you, represent you at meetings and try to get the best deal that it can for children and staff across Essex.

It has been a pleasure to chair this group and represent you.
Do try to get some rest over the summer - you deserve it!

All four Chairs have agreed to continue in their posts, with the usual proviso that they will be happy to step aside if anyone else wants to take on the role!

On behalf of EPHA and headteachers in each area, I would like to thank the four Chairs for their continued commitment and contribution to the Association and their determination to represent and support their colleagues across the county. They have done an excellent job and have given their time freely and generously – thanks to them all.

b) ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND LOCAL DELIVERY GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

Chair	Dawn Dack (Wentworth Primary)
Vice-Chair	Nicola Morgan-Soane (Trinity Road Primary)
Treasurer	Dawn Baker (Lawford Mead Primary)
Braintree	Kate Mills (John Ray Infants)
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The officers and Local Delivery Group representatives were thanked for the hard work that they do on behalf of headteachers in the Mid Area and for agreeing to continue in their roles or taking on new positions.

c) EPHA Executive report

The EPHA Executive has met more frequently than usual to discuss the challenges and changes that are being experienced by primary-phase schools across the county. Minutes of the meetings are available on the EPHA website at <https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/meetings/executive/>

d) The Summer term EPHA newsletter, including dates for the 2020/21 school year, was circulated to headteachers by email -these can also be found on the Newsletter page of the EPHA website www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk.

e) EPHA Annual funding

EPHA continues to be funded by a top-slice from the DSG. The cost to each school is £320. Please see the article "What do headteachers get in return for their top-sliced contribution to EPHA?" available on the EPHA website.

<https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/files/what-headteachers-get-in-return-for-their-epha-contribution-2020-21.pdf>

Please remind your Finance Officer that the school does not have to pay a subscription for the financial year.

f) The EPHA county Annual General Meeting – Wednesday 7 October 2020

We plan to hold the AGM as usual at Chelmsford City Football Club. Michelle Winter, Senior HMI for the Eastern Region, will attend the meeting to talk about the future of Ofsted.

You will receive the agenda and information about the AGM by email in advance of the meeting.

g) CONFERENCES

Deputy Headteachers' conference - Friday 2 October 2020

Unfortunately, as a result of the continued uncertainty around when large gatherings will be able to resume, the decision has been made not to hold the annual Deputy and Assistant Headteachers' conference this year. This would have been our 15th deputy conference, and we know that for many this is an annual date in the diary that senior leaders value and look forward to.

EPHA plans to hold an alternative, free, virtual event to celebrate and thank Deputy and Assistant heads for the amazing work they do in our schools, particularly in such challenging times. More information in the second half of the summer term.

Headteachers Conference – Friday 19 March 2021, Stock Brook Country Club

You will be aware that the headteacher conference in 2020 was cancelled as a result of the national lockdown. EPHA is holding bookings for headteachers and will contact you later in the year about the headteacher conference in 2021- we have great hopes that this will go ahead, just a year late!

h) Article in the newsletter - Headship in a time of uncertainty

Whether you are brand new to headship or have many years of experience, one thing is certain – you've never dealt with a global pandemic before! This is the most unprecedented event that school leaders have ever had to face, and the uncertainty stretches into the future, making this challenge even harder to manage. Here are my 5 top tips for you:

1. *Trust your intuition, as well as your experience.* You are not a headteacher for nothing – you are smart, experienced and have proved that you can lead a complex organisation.
2. *Access all the support you can get.* Both professional and personal – this is the time to ask for help and reassurance.
3. *Accept that not all of your decisions will be right.* This is a time of test and trial, and you will probably make the odd mistake.
4. *Give yourself permission to be flexible and change your mind.* Recognising the need to alter course is a strength, not a weakness.
5. *Take a break.* Your job is always too big – at the moment it can be overwhelming, so remember to rest and recuperate. The school will still be there when you return – and the DfE guidance will probably have changed!

Please do contact Pam Langmead if you have any questions or comments about the work of EPHA and the Executive in the last year.

pam@langmead.me.uk

3. FUTURE DATES

MID meetings with the Local Authority officers 2020/21 -at Chelmsford City Football Club

Thursday 19 November 2020

Thursday 11 March 2021

Thursday 24 June 2021

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