

Essex School-led Improvement System Project Board

Date: Thursday 28th June 2018
Venue: Hamptons, Tydemans, Chelmsford CM2 9FH
Time: 10:00am to 12:00pm

Attendees

Clare Kershaw	Director, Education
Simon Thompson	ASHE
Pam Langmead	EPHA
Philippa Holliday	ESSET
Rod Lane	ESGA Primary
Ruth Bird	ESGA Secondary
John Hunter	Governor of a Special School
Simon Rea	ISOS Partnership
Nicola Woolf	LA Lead for the School Led Improvement System Strategy
Lallie Godfrey	Diocesan C of E representative
Colin Raraty	Chair of West Quadrant meeting, Headteacher at Rodings Primary
Sue Jackson	Chair of South Quadrant meeting, Headteacher at Lee Chapel
Lisa Feldman	Chair of Mid Quadrant meeting, Headteacher at Finchingfield
Nicola Sirett	Chair of North-East Quadrant meeting, Headteacher at Mersea Island
Gillian Cawley	Independent Chair
Simon Rea	ISOS EDT

Item 1 - Welcome and introductions

Gillian Cawley welcomed everyone and reminded the Board of its aims, ways of working, and the advocacy role of members. Board members were the key people that enabled links to other networks across Essex and beyond. She welcomed in particular the four new Quadrant Chairs that were attending for the first time; establishing the Quadrants was a key moment in the progress of the school-led improvement system (SLIS) in Essex.

Item 2 - Apologies

Lyn Wright	Link to Teaching School Alliances
Ruth Sturdy	LA Lead School Effectiveness Partner for Inclusion
Rob Simpson	Diocesan Catholic representative

Item 3 - notes from the meeting on 15 March

Page 3, item 5: Ruth Sturdy had liaised with Philippa Holliday. Philippa Holliday reported that ESSET were producing a current list of which special schools were in each partnership. Engagement was variable across ESSET and this reflected other discussions about how special schools were engaged by mainstream colleagues: there was variability in the extent that special schools were engaged by mainstream colleagues in partnerships and peer review; and comparing SEND progress data was often challenging.

Action: Simon Thompson to liaise with Philippa Holliday about the potential for secondary phase special schools to link to the work of ASHE triads

Page 3, item 5: Nicola Woolf would report under Item 8.

Page 3, item 5: Simon Thompson would report under Item 9.

Page 4, item 5: Clare Kershaw had written an editorial about SLIS.

Action: SLIS Board to agree five key points after each meeting for each Board member to feed back to their networks

Action: Clare Kershaw would mention progress in developing the school-led improvement system in her end-of-year round up and welcome back messages

Page 4, item 5:

Action: Simon Thompson/Ruth Sturdy and Nicola Woolf would liaise to include further secondary/Special school examples about effective secondary/special school partnership working in the Ofsted summary document.

Page 5 item 8: Gillian Cawley had sent the vision statement.

Item 4 – revisit priorities

Gillian Cawley reminded members that the five key Board priorities they had identified this year would continue for three years (2017-2020)

Item 5 – review

Gillian Cawley summarised some of the achievements that had been secured across Essex this year in relation to developing the school-led system. These included:

- beginning to build stronger capacity in partnerships;
- engaging stakeholders that represent the school-led improvement system;
- developing a shared body of knowledge about school-led improvement;
- identifying successful practice in peer review and school-to-school support through case studies;
- supporting the development of the SLIS Partnership Leads;
- establishing Quadrant meetings and identifying chairs for each group; and
- surveying all school leaders and identifying a baseline and areas for development.

Board members provided feedback on the progress that had been achieved from their perspectives. The following main achievements were noted in the discussion:

- the SLIS Partnerships had benefited small schools;
- an increasing number of schools were aware of the work of the SLIS Partnerships;
- governors were increasingly seeing the benefits of partnership working, and in some partnerships each school had a link SLIS Governor that had started to meet and visit each other's schools. The outcomes from peer reviews were useful information for governors;
- Ofsted was showing an increasing interest in partnership working in Essex; and
- peer review had been a "game changer" for some partnerships, enabling the schools to understand each other's contexts, develop partnership level data, identify strengths and weaknesses across the partnership, and articulate needs.

Action: Nicola Woolf, Gillian Cawley and Simon Rea to develop short summary of the development of the school-led improvement system in Essex to capture progress to date

Board members also identified the following areas for development:

- how different strategies – such as SLIS and the small schools strategy – fitted together;
- the need to continue to remind other services about the development of the SLIS Partnerships;
- the strategic direction and co-ordination of the governor peer review. This was currently being piloted by the Tiptree and Stanway partnership;
- how to use the strategic knowledge that was generated by each partnership to achieve maximum impact;
- Diocesan understanding about the engagement of church schools in partnerships was variable and reliant on schools updating them. Some Church schools, having established a MAT, had turned inwards;
- small schools generally found it harder to engage in partnership working due to their lack of capacity; and
- the development of the school-led system in Essex was broader than the work of the SLIS Partnerships and included the work of TSAs, MATs and other partnerships. There was a risk that the SLIS Project was seen as a primary-only initiative.

Action: Board to consider integration of SLIS and other strategies at a future meeting

Action: Nicky Sirett to provide feedback on her experience of the governor peer review pilot to Nicola Woolf. Nicola Woolf to identify ESGA lead for the project

Action: Nicola Woolf to share lists of all partnerships to enable all Board members to identify where schools were situated

Action: Board to consider at a future meeting how the “SLIS Project” is best described to ensure it encompasses the full range of partnership working in Essex

Item 6 – Quadrant meetings

Nicky Sirett said that her Quadrant had met twice. They had established a MoU that covered information sharing. They had identified successes and key priorities, and discussed peer review and ITT. Some key themes were emerging, including middle leadership in small schools, curriculum development, teacher workload and well-being, outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, and SEND. They had started to engage TSAs about their needs.

Lisa Feldman said that the Quadrant approach had felt positive and exciting. Schools and partnerships had not been aware of the offers from TSAs in her Quadrant, so the sharing of this information was useful and the Quadrant would be able to go to TSAs with ideas about support needs.

Colin Raraty said his Quadrant had also discussed TSA communications and there were presentations about offers available. These had been useful as some schools and partnerships had not been aware of this information and this was opening up channels of communication. They had discussed a MoU on data sharing. Ruth Sturdy had given a useful presentation about SEND.

Sue Jackson said the Quadrant approach was exciting and it had established a connection between TSAs and other schools. They were sharing teaching and learning approaches and looking at examples of good practice.

Gillian Cawley thanked the Quadrant chairs for their reports and said it would be crucial for the Board to hear about their progress at every meeting. The Quadrants were the “engine room and power house” in considering teaching and learning progress across the Partnerships.

Clare Kershaw said it would be important for Partnerships and Quadrants to know about important initiatives such as the SSIF project on boys reading, the TSA Centres of Excellence work, and the Ofsted project.

Action: Pam Langmead to consider with the EPHA chairs of local groups how to attend Quadrant meetings

Item 7 – peer review case studies

Nicola Woolf said that 12 SLIS Partnerships had each been funded £2,000 to develop a case study on their experiences of peer review to date, and then share and promote these findings. The Board discussed how the case studies might be promoted effectively and the following ideas were shared:

- Quadrant chairs to advertise them, discuss at future meetings, and possibly invite other Partnerships outside of their own Quadrant to come and discuss at a meeting;
- gather the case studies together in one place so they could be easily accessed; and
- celebrate successful examples of all peer review work in Essex at events in the autumn term. Ideas discussed were a half-day conference, twilight meetings, and existing phase meetings

Action: Clare Kershaw, Pam Langmead, Simon Thompson, Philippa Holliday and Nicola Woolf to consider further how to promote peer review in the autumn term

Item 8 – SLIS update

Nicola Woolf summarised the recent meeting of the SLIS Partnership Leads. These meetings were designed to develop the capacity of Partnership Leads and be complementary to, but not overlap with, the Quadrant meetings. There had been unanimous support for them to continue in 2018/19.

Nicola Woolf reported that the School Effectiveness Partners (SEP) allocation of time to SLIS Partnerships in 2018/19 had been decided on the basis of 8 days per Partnership with 10 days for Partnerships with more than 16 schools.

Item 9 – updates

Clare Kershaw said that the Sub-Regional Improvement Board (SRIB) continued to meet and was focussed on the SSIF bids. She had been talking regularly to Ofsted’s regional lead about the development of the school-led system in Essex. The discussions about an “Essex MAT” reflected the need to find solutions for the long-term sustainability of very small schools.

Action: Clare Kershaw would discuss with the Board the challenges of improving the progress of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds at the next meeting

Simon Thompson summarised the current structures of secondary schools across Essex.

Action: Philippa Holliday to share similar background information on specials schools

Action: Nicola Woolf to share similar background information on primary schools

Item 11 – dates for 2018/19 meetings

Dates confirmed below – all 10 to 12 at Hamptons, Chelmsford

- 22 November 2018
- 28 March 2019
- 27 June 2019

ACTION FOR ALL BOARD MEMBERS

Please feed back these key messages to your groups and networks

1. Some of the achievements this year listed under Item 5
2. The Project Board priorities for 2017-2020 and the ways in which the board members groups and network can contribute to these priorities
3. Quadrant meetings have been established and there are now four serving headteacher chairs of these meetings who are:
 - Colin Raraty - Chair of West Quadrant meeting, Headteacher at Rodings Primary
 - Sue Jackson - Chair of South Quadrant meeting, Headteacher at Lee Chapel
 - Lisa Feldman - Chair of Mid Quadrant meeting, Headteacher at Finchingfield
 - Nicola Sirett - Chair of North-East Quadrant meeting, Headteacher at Mersea Island

They attended their first board meeting and an important part of their role is to be the link into the SLIS Board from the quadrant meetings

4. 12 peer review case studies have been funded by the Local Authority and these will be available on the School led Improvement pages on Essex info link at the beginning of the autumn term.
5. Partnership Leads are meeting with the LA termly to discuss the SLIS strategy; and have some CPD from Maggie Farrar so that they can have a national and international perspective on this work.
6. To ensure that the groups and networks represented understand that this strategy is about a school led improvement system and how all partnerships can impact on school improvement eg SLIS partnerships, MATs, Teaching school alliances, federations etc