



## GEP ACADEMIES WEEKLY BULLETIN

### WEEK COMMENCING 01 February 2021

#### Reminders for this coming week:

##### **RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

04.02.21  
13.00 - 15.30

#### Forthcoming meetings:

##### **ALL HEADS MEETING**

09.02.21  
08.00 - 12.00 TBC

##### **SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

23.02.21  
11.00 - 13.00

##### **TRUSTEES & GLAC CHAIRS**

01.03.21  
16.30 - 18.30

##### **AUDIT COMMITTEE**

11.03.21  
13.00 - 15.30

##### **EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

18.03.21  
13.00 - 15.30

##### **BOARD MEETING**

22.03.21  
13.00 - 15.30

##### **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST COMMITTEE**

20.04.21  
09.30 - 11.00

#### **Interview season already?**

In many countries around the world, particularly those certain latitudes, seasons don't really exist at all. In education, the interview season of March, April and May (ahead of the May 31<sup>st</sup> resignation deadline) was pretty well established; in the last century.

More recently interview and recruitment 'seasons' seem to be an all year-round affair. A constant cycle of concern, paperwork, hope and induction. It has been said that a headteacher's role is never more important than in who they recruit. Recruitment is an art – not a science. You can never really *know* that you have made a good hire, or indeed whether the role or school you have applied for is right for you, the children or the school. Psychometric testing, interview lessons, panel interviews, application forms, school council briefings, tours, pre-tours and then many hours of pleasant, but slightly awkward conversations amongst the candidates later, a decision is reached. A two-way decision. In every case. Who shall we offer the job to? Shall I take the role if offered?

This year, against a global pandemic backdrop, are things clearer, more difficult or exactly the same? It is difficult to tell whether zoom interviews, socially distanced tours or socially distanced panels conducted in large halls will make a difference. The mode of operation may change. Covid testing beforehand and the mechanics of the process will undoubtedly be different – but has what we are looking for altered too? Whether candidate or headteacher – has so much changed?

Connection with children. Connection with colleagues. Teaching is a relationships profession. It is an adaptable profession. These current circumstances have seen this truth laid bare. We must build relationships and connect with children to enhance the learning. Recent online tools we are forced to use have stretched our adaptability, but we have got there. Ever exploring new methods of connection – moulding the 2D world into 3D connection as far as possible. Jam boards, visualisers, breakout rooms, graphic tablets, and a plethora of software packages are at the centre of our world. But we are all striving for one thing: connection. We are not discussing WIFI strength here. Human beings require connection and interaction to form our most basic need – this truth is also found in learning.

We are not oversimplifying our profession. Decades of professional learning, curriculum expertise, cognitive science, examination technique are all equally vital in our profession. Indeed, these are all assessed through the interview process. However, when all is said and done. When these requirements are met. When we seek to separate those who get the job offer from those who don't. When we consider whether to accept the role or politely decline – our minds focus on one thing. Connection. It is the glue that holds us together in the difficult times. Binds the unseen hours of hard graft, of lesson preparation and assessment.

**TRUST ACTION  
COMMITTEE**  
29.04.21  
Time tbc

Our profession and our children demand it – invest in those who connect with us... and go from there.

### **Actions for Heads:**

The next GEP heads meeting is being held via zoom on Tuesday February 9<sup>th</sup>, times to be confirmed and an agenda will follow.

### **Actions for Governors and Trustees:**

Director of [LeadershipWise](#), Ruth Murton is running the next governors training session: **Safeguarding – an introduction** which is taking place this Wednesday, 3 February, at 6.30pm. All governors from GEP and AST are invited – please click on the following link to sign up to attend – [“An introduction to safeguarding for governors”](#).

You can view further GEP/AST training sessions for governors by [clicking here](#).

### **School Improvement Update:**

#### **NFER Research**

The NFER continue to support schools through their research into the COVID-19 attainment gap. Their latest research looks at the impact onKS1 attainment. Here is a link to this latest report.

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-publishes-new-research-on-the-impact-of-covid-19-partial-school-closures/>

#### **Reminder: Administrative and Office-Based Colleagues - CPD Planning**

Thank you to all those who responded to our surveys so far. Responses are on the low side so we would love to hear from more of you to help our planning! Please pass these links on to any colleagues in Admin or Office roles who may wish to complete the survey.

We have extended the deadline for responses until **close of play Wednesday 3rd February** to give more time for people to complete the survey. The links are below, please complete either the **Primary** survey or the **Secondary** survey as appropriate.

#### **Primary**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PrimCPDAdmin>

#### **Secondary**

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SecCPDAdmin>

If you have any questions or difficulty accessing the survey, please contact Lisa West (Teaching School Administrator) [lwest@georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:lwest@georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk). Thank you for your time.

### **School Operations:**

#### **Premises Teams**

Many thanks must go to all the staff in all the schools for the work that they all do. Site staff are often forgotten in praise but I want to take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work and diligence.

Secondary schools have had to set up Covid testing stations for the return in January that never was. On site staff are all being tested in our secondary schools and home tests are being used for our primary schools.

### **Trust-funded capital projects: The Field Study Centre @ Loseley**

The new building at Loseley is now open and they managed to hold a fabulous day on the 10th December, blending face to face workshops with online delivery. Headteacher, Amanda Pedder provided more details on the day:

"Our first Loseley STEM Fest 2020, held on the 10th December was a real triumph and marked the opening of our new science building at school. It was fantastic to feel the buzz about the school; so many of our parents have told us about the tangible excitement in their homes as they discussed the science they had taken part in across the dinner table. From remote sessions by the WWF on 'Saving Planet Earth', water experiments carried out over zoom by STEM ambassador Andrew Hanson, from the National Physics Laboratory and then working outside the classroom with the Surrey Wildlife Trust to build hedgehog homes all kept our youngest children entertained. For the older ones, there was STEM in a box lead by Surrey University, constructing chemical 'Chemistrees' with George Abbot school and making light up Christmas cards with the Royal Grammar School."



## STEMFEST 2020

THE FIELD STUDY CENTRE @ LOSELEY - THURSDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER



This demonstrates good collaboration with our schools and partner schools to open the building. It is one instance of using SCA funding (School Capital Allocation) to improve school buildings and provide greater learning potential, it will be great to see it being used fully when we can return to normal lettings.

### **Mental Health and Well-being**

There is no doubt that Covid-19 is having an adverse effect on mental health and wellbeing. [Mind](#), a mental health charity has produced a selection of helpful resources which colleagues may find useful during the current challenges that we are all facing.

Our [Employee Assistance Programme](#) also offers telephone support and resources.

<b>Contacts:</b> Jack Mayhew: CEO Ali Larcombe-Fish: COO Andrew Roach: Education Director Lisa Wilde: Financial Controller Lyndsay Cameron: SCITT Director Jo Coles: HR Manager Richard Wiseman: Estates Manager Ben Sayers: Head of IT Gary Lelliott: Head of Governance Jackie Blackwood: Teaching School Manager Graham Tuck: Director of Secondary Education (school improvement) Kathryn Krynicki: Director of Primary Education (school improvement) Carol Pearce: Primary SIP Jane Abbott: Secondary SIP Gaby Sutton: Senior Administrator/PA to CEO	jmayhew@gepacademies.com alfish@gepacademies.com aroach@gepacademies.com Lwilde@gepacademies.com Lcameron@georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk jcoles@gepacademies.com rwiseman@gepacademies.com bsayers@gepacademies.com gelliott@gepacademies.com jblackwood@gepacademies.com  gtuck@gepacademies.com  kkrynicky@gepacademies.com  Cpearce@athenaschools.co.uk jane@ascentia.org.uk gsutton@gepacademies.com	01483 888188 01483 888022 01483 888047 01483 888022 01483 888070 01483 888074 01483 888007 01483 484837 01483 888007 01483 888047       01483 888188
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### Jack's visits and meetings this week:

<b>Meeting with Diocese</b>	<b>02.02.21</b>	<b>11.00 – 12.30</b>
<b>CEO Network meeting</b>	<b>02.02.21</b>	<b>13.00 – 14.30</b>
<b>SuMS meeting</b>	<b>02.02.21</b>	<b>14.30 – 16.00</b>
<b>CST trust leader meeting</b>	<b>03.02.21</b>	<b>09.00 – 10.00</b>
<b>Executive team meeting</b>	<b>05.02.21</b>	<b>09.00 – 10.30</b>
<b>UK Maths schools network meeting</b>	<b>05.02.21</b>	<b>10.30 – 12.00</b>
<b>RSC meeting</b>	<b>05.05.21</b>	<b>13.00 – 14.00</b>