



GEP ACADEMIES WEEKLY BULLETIN WEEK COMMENCING 22 March 2021

Reminders for this coming week:

Forthcoming meetings:

**CONFLICTS OF
INTEREST
COMMITTEE**
20.04.21
09.30 – 11.00

**GEP/AST JOINT
EDUCATION
COMMITTEE**
28.04.21
08.00 – 10.00

**TRUST ACTION
COMMITTEE**
29.04.21
Time tbc

**AST/GEP JOINT
HEADS MEETING**
20.05.21
Time TBC

**RESOURCES
COMMITTEE**
20.05.21
13.00 – 15.30

**GEP/AST JOINT
EDUCATION
COMMITTEE**
09.06.21
08.00 – 10.00

GEP ALL HEADS
15.06.21
TIME TBC

The key to Question & Answer...?

...Listening!

In the last week, and until Easter, we are spending time listening to all those in our communities as we consider merger with Athena Schools Trust. To this end we have been running question and answer sessions with schools and union colleagues. Following our information talking head video, these have been invaluable opportunities to review the positives around merger, as well as to better understand the concerns and hopes colleagues have.

Attended by teaching and non-class-based colleagues, we have been able to explore merger considerations. While packaged as a questions and answers session, it has been clear that it is through listening to people's comments and expressions that has been most important. It is a sign of a healthy trust that it is a listening trust – long may this continue.

Our focus group is a great example of our codesign policy. We wish to be a trust of which we are all proud. To do this, we seek to provide the services, support and challenge to enable us all to thrive. I would like to thank those headteachers, business managers and governors who have been put forward to help contribute to the vision being refined by our trustees. When we are faced with successfully navigating the return to schools, testing, high quality teaching and assessment arrangements these contributions are highly valued.

As a society we are often focused on the outcomes of any endeavour. Here, it is both our outcome (the trust we will create together) but also how we achieve this. Our process must match our ambition. Collaboration and partnership are central concepts in our vision of a merged trust and it is beholden upon us to start as we mean to go on. Once again – it is listening that becomes the key.

We are listening more closely in the classroom than perhaps ever before. What is it our children understand. What are the areas they haven't quite grasped? How can we develop the mastery of a curriculum discipline, without really understanding the fundamentals that underpin wider learning and progress?

Assessment for learning, the role of questioning and effective pedagogy all rely on listening, digesting and reframing. This is our challenge as a trust and as educators. Long may we remember this.

Actions for Heads:

The minutes and actions for the joint AST and GEP heads meeting that took place on Thursday 18th March can be found [here](#).

Actions for Governors and Trustees:

The next training session available to all governors will be Exclusions given by Gary Lelliott, Head of Governance, on Tuesday 30 March at 6.30pm.

The session will provide:

- an overview of the process
- details on scrutinising the headteacher's decision to permanently exclude
- information on conducting the governor panel and the associated decision making

[Book your place here](#).

Andrew Roach, Director of Education, will be giving the session: "Ensuring accurate assessment and trust wide consistency" on Monday 26 April, online, for all governors at both Athena Schools Trust and GEP. This will cover:

- Education monitoring
- School improvement planning and quality assurance
- How to monitor and triangulate data including how to ask the right questions

[Book your place here](#).

School Improvement Update:

Education Endowment Foundation Resources

In the context of planning for Covid recovery, the following useful resources from EEF may be helpful:

[Improving mathematics in the Early Years and Key Stage 1](#)

[Improving literacy at Key Stage 1](#)

[Improving literacy at Key Stage 2](#)

[Improving literacy in secondary schools](#)

School Operations:

Network Team Update

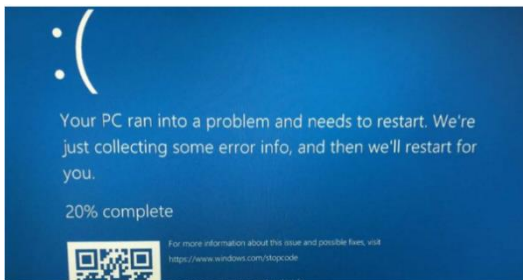
As we are nearing the end of probably our busiest school term in the Network team's short history, we have reflected on what has gone well and what could have gone better in our team meetings last week.

One of the areas we have been most pleased with is how all staff have been so supportive and understanding through this busy term. However, one area we would ask for your help with, is logging your requests in helpdesk. We have noticed a rise in people walking into Network offices, calling on the telephone or catching the team in the corridors. We understand it is good to discuss issues sometimes, however we find it very difficult to remember all of your requests and then juggle who is next to be helped unless the team are working from Helpdesk.

So, we kindly ask that you please log all of your tickets in helpdesk, to help we include a link below of our Helpdesk poster, that you can print and put on your wall: [Operation Helpdesk Poster](#)

Printing Blue Screen

Recently Microsoft released an update to Windows 10 computers. Unfortunately, there was an issue with the update, and it has caused certain computers to crash when trying to print. Some of you may have seen the following screen when attempting to print:



We have now developed a fix, so if your computer is crashing when you print, please email network helpdesk and we will work with you to install the fix which should take around 15 minutes. When creating the helpdesk ticket please include: "Computer crashes when printing - <Your Name> <Computer name>". Then in the body of the email, please add your availability.

Zoom Recordings

On March 13 last year, during the first lockdown of schools, we purchased a year's Zoom subscription of 296 licenses. This covered a number of accounts across our schools to enable home learning and communications with staff, students and parents, and was an immediate response to the emerging pandemic and lockdown.

Since the start of the Spring term, we have moved to Microsoft Teams for the rich features that it offers as part of our wider use of Office 365. This shift has brought many benefits to home learning, such as the added security, easy file sharing and assignments. The GEP Network Team have worked hard to provide training and support to migrate our schools to Microsoft Teams, with training aimed at both primary & secondary school teachers and support staff.

We are currently paying for the storage of all of our recorded Zoom meetings/lessons and we now need to review which recordings we wish to keep and which we are happy to be deleted. So, I am asking for you to login to Zoom and rename any recordings you wish to keep ([click here for a guide](#)). Any recordings that are kept on the default name will be removed and deleted. The recordings that are renamed will be downloaded and saved to your school SharePoint system ready for you to access whenever you need.

Should you wish to discuss any of this or indeed explore ways in which we can support you using MS Teams then please log a helpdesk ticket.

Network Helpdesk

This week I am proud to announce that as a team we have hit our 20,000th ticket created in helpdesk. This has meant since this time last year the team has received over 13,500 tickets, whilst this number grew quicker than we expected we are proud to have been able to complete these tickets with a high standard of support, focusing on teaching and learning.

This month we have seen the return to on-site teaching for our schools which has led to a change in the key types of ticket categories we have received, this has reduced the amount of online assistance or password related tickets we have created and increased the physical support needed by our team of network technicians.

- 45% of all closed tickets this month have been related to classroom audio/visual and staff device issues. Many of these tickets required staff training on how to use the equipment in our classrooms after the lockdown absence and helping staff feel comfortable using school equipment again
- 10% of all tickets created have been password resets and online systems staff training, this is a 17% reduction on password resets over last month as both students and staff have become familiar with using the online systems we offer

Remember if it's not on the list, you don't get an assist so please log all issues or queries in helpdesk by emailing: networkhelpdesk@gepacademies.com

Regards
Ben Sayers
GEP Head of IT

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Jack's visits and meetings this week:

Maths School	22.03.21	14.00 – 15.00
South West London MAT CEO meeting	22.03.21	15.00 – 16.30
Kings College mid-year review	23.03.21	09.00 – 10.00
Central team meeting	23.03.21	10.00 – 11.30
George Abbot merger Q & A forum	23.03.21	15.15 – 15.30
SuMS working group	24.03.21	08.30 – 10.00
Guildford Grove mid-year review	24.03.21	12.00 – 13.00
Chair of trustees 1:1	25.03.21	16.00 – 17.30
Executive team	26.03.21	10.00 – 12.00
George Abbot mid-year review	26.03.21	12.30 – 13.30
Fullbrook mid-year review	26.03.21	14.30 – 15.30
Merged trust branding exec meeting	26.03.21	15.30 – 17.00