

Spring Local Area Forum  
**GOVERNORS' Local Area Forum Spring 2019**  
**SUMMARY REPORT**

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The local area forums for governors took place as follows:-

06/03/2019	<a href="#">GOV701</a>	19:00 – 21:00	Uckfield Civic Centre
14/03/2019	<a href="#">GOV702</a>	19.00 – 21.00	The Sussex Exchange, Hastings
20/03/2019	<a href="#">GOV703</a>	18:30 – 20:30	County Hall, Lewes
28/03/2019	<a href="#">GOV704</a>	19:00 – 21:00	East Sussex Training and Development Centre, Eastbourne

The following officers were in attendance:

**System Leadership**

Uckfield – Elizabeth Funge, Head of Education Improvement, SLES  
Hastings – Carrie Beech, Head of Service: Primary & Early Years, SLES  
Lewes- Elizabeth Funge, Head of Education Improvement, SLES  
Eastbourne - Carrie Beech, Head of Service: Primary & Early Years, SLES

**Headteacher presenting**

The forums were supported by the following headteachers:

- Uckfield – Debbie Coslett, Consultant Headteacher
- Hastings – Simon Hughes, Head at Battle and Langton Primary School
- Lewes – Tony Smith, Priory School, Lewes
- Eastbourne – Bob Ellis, Principle Seaford Head Community College

<b>Local Area Forum Chair</b>	<b>Name</b>
Uckfield	Sue Berry
Lewes	Denise Kong
Eastbourne	Jane McCarthy-Penman
Hastings	Karen Marr

## Agenda

No	Item	Time
1.	<b>Welcome</b>	7.00pm (6.30 Lewes)
2.	<b>Minutes &amp; Matters Arising</b>	7.00pm (6.30 Lewes)
3.	<b>System Leadership</b>	7.05pm (6.35 Lewes)
4.	<b>ESGF session</b>  An opportunity for governors to meet with their elected ESGF representative.  The Hot Topic will focus on Clerking.	8.30pm (8.00 Lewes)
5.	<b>Close</b>	9.00pm (8.30 Lewes)

Agenda Item	Discussion and Decisions	Action
1.	<b>Welcome</b>	
2.	<p><b>To receive the minutes of the Autumn Term County Forum, East Sussex Governor Forum and Summer Local Area Forum</b>  <i>This item is included on the agenda each term for information only.</i>            The minutes were noted as above.</p>	
3.	<p><b><u>System Leadership</u></b>            The Government’s White Paper ‘The Importance of Teaching’ (2010) committed to give schools greater autonomy and to design and enable a wider system where the best schools and leaders can take on greater responsibility, leading improvement work across the system, and where all schools work together to improve outcomes for pupils. This development has been facilitated by an increased focus on autonomy for school leaders, the development of partnerships between schools, Teaching Schools, new regional structures and a changing role for local authorities in school improvement. Resources for school improvement now follow these new structures.</p> <p>The role of the local authority is changing; the current educational landscape is complex and now characterised by a variety of overlapping partnerships, networks and alliances. The presentation at the local area forum will cover some of the key elements of the new system leadership structure within East Sussex.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Teaching Schools</li> <li>❖ Education Improvement Partnerships (EIPs)</li> <li>❖ Early Years Hubs</li> <li>❖ Secondary Improvement Board</li> <li>❖ Development of a Primary Improvement Board</li> <li>❖ Governor to Governor support</li> </ul> <p>The educational landscape is complex and fragmented. The session aimed to give governors an overview and understanding of the different components that make up this landscape and how they are brought together.</p> <p>System leadership is the collective capacity for a self-improving school system. It is designed by schools for schools. Within this there is a real sense of moral purpose to make a difference for pupils. Schools are at the heart of this system.</p> <p><b>Teaching schools.</b>            There are 8 teaching schools across East Sussex. They work proactively to bring capacity to school improvement in East Sussex. Teaching schools are nationally accredited to</p>	

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	<p>deliver key priorities in terms of impact. They have three key roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-coordinating and delivering high-quality, school-based initial teacher training (ITT)</li> <li>• Spreading excellent practice by supporting other schools, particularly those most in need (School to school support)</li> <li>• Providing professional development for teachers and leaders across their network (CPLD).</li> </ul> <p>The Headteacher of a Teaching school is a National Leader of Education (NLE). Teaching schools can bid for funding to deliver school improvement under the above key roles. They also undertake outreach work in other schools. Within their Education Improvement Partnerships (EIPs).</p> <p><b>Governors should ask how their school is working with their local teaching school.</b></p> <p><b>Education Improvement Partnerships (EIPs)</b>  Nine EIPs were established in East Sussex in 2014. These have undergone significant changes over the last 5 years in responding to their local context in terms of structure and capacity. Some EIPS are more proactive than others and engage more with their schools. In large EIPs, schools often work together in clusters. EIPs have a massive impact in terms of the self-improving school system. Schools can identify quickly within their locality, the priorities in their areas and work together to achieve outcomes.</p> <p>Each EIP submits an action plan to the EIP Executive for the planned work for each year. The executive moderates the plans and provides feedback. There is now governor representation on the EIP Executive by a member of the East Sussex Governors Forum (ESGF).</p> <p>One challenge for EIPs is those schools that choose not to engage. Governors asked if this was being addressed. There is a constant effort from EIPs to engage with all schools within their area.</p> <p><b>Governors should ask to see a copy of their EIP Action Plan. Governors should ask for regular updates on how their school is working with their EIP.</b></p> <p><b>Early Years Hubs</b>  Early Years Hubs seek to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All children are able to attend an early education provision that is rated at least 'good' by Ofsted.</li> <li>• All children achieve the best possible outcomes from their early education.</li> <li>• All children experience consistent and wherever possible seamless Foundation Stage learning.</li> </ul> <p>In East Sussex, there are a wide range of providers of early year's education. There is</p>	

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	<p>between 1 and 4 Early Years Hubs within each EIP. They are led by schools based early years practitioners in partnership with the Local Authority. They share good practice and provide practitioners with an opportunity for professional development. Central hub meetings are regularly held to look at the impact from interventions.</p> <p><b>Governors can ask how their school is engaging with the Early Years hubs.</b></p> <p><b>Secondary Improvement Board</b>  East Sussex Secondary Schools and the local authority have been working together to develop a school-led system of improvement for secondary phase schools over a number of years.</p> <p>The Secondary Improvement Board has overall responsibility for setting the strategic direction and overall priorities for improvement for secondary schools. It is informed by the work of Area Groups who work to ensure all schools have the right challenge and support to improve and building school-to-school support at a local level. The Area Groups report regularly on their progress to the Secondary Improvement Board and challenging each other on their progress through the Board. The Board also has responsibility for commissioning additional resources and expertise to support the work of Area Groups.</p> <p>The Secondary Improvement Board places school leaders even more firmly in the driving seat for the next phase of improvement. The Board is collectively responsible for improving outcomes in the secondary phased and also for building capacity for school to school support.</p> <p><b>Governors should ask how their school is engaging with the Secondary Improvement Board.</b></p> <p><b>Primary Improvement Board</b>  The EIP Executive and primary headteachers are working with the local authority to develop a Primary Improvement Board that will work alongside the Secondary Improvement Board and build on the successes and structure of the EIPs. This work is in the early stages of development.</p> <p><b>Governor to Governor Support</b>  Teaching Schools, EIPs and the Secondary Improvement Board all have priorities that focus on developing and supporting school leadership, of which governance is a key part. Teaching Schools designate National Leaders of Governance (NLGs) and will have a greater role in deploying NLGs. Many EIPs have active governor networks that are meeting to share good practice and for training on key themes.</p> <p>The local authority is further developing the capacity for governor to governor support. In the summer we invited expressions of interest for Local Support Governors, experienced and skilled governors who can provide support to other governors and governing bodies through filling an interim governor or chair position at another school,</p>	

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	<p>sit on governor panels, and provide one to one support on specific issues. We now have appointed 13 Local Support Governors, who are available for deployment to governing boards. We have also facilitated governor networks on requested themes to support the sharing of good practice between governors. The East Sussex Governors Forum will be establishing a Chair's Network this year.</p> <p>Governors then received a presentation by a headteacher from a school within their locality.</p> <p><b>Uckfield – Debbie Coslett, Consultant Headteacher.</b> Debbie is a consultant headteacher who supports schools for 70 days a year to effect school improvement. The National Support School programme started in 2006 to support schools that were not doing so well. This attracted funding for the school delivering the support. The programme saw rapid improvement. A lesson learnt was that the support was better provided with formal arrangements. There were also benefits to the home school in terms of professional development. There was a real philosophy of helping students in all schools, not just your school. The real current challenge is funding as there is not the same level of funding that there was.</p> <p>With school to school support, governors are mostly supportive of the Headteacher and their desire to be involved in because they can see the benefits. The role of the chair is crucial as their support is needed to get the support through. Support is not always unanimous. The whole concept of system leadership should be child centred and have the right moral purpose.</p> <p><b>Q</b> What would you do differently? Have some more hesitation before agreeing to sort out problems and inviting people to visit the school. Gage the opinion of the school community before agreeing to support.</p> <p><b>Q</b> Other than Teaching schools, do other schools send leaders out? Yes. Some schools send their headteacher out for up to 50 days. Schools see the benefits coming in from this.</p> <p><b>Hastings – Simon Hughes, Head at Battle and Langton Primary school.</b> There is lots of support available across East Sussex. Teachers access training in other schools and learn from best practice in other schools. National programmes can be expensive. Schools working together can buy in bulk to get reduced rates for CPD/resources.</p> <p>Early years hubs run well. By supporting pre-schools, this means children are where they need to be by the time they arrive at primary school. Peer review is a great system where teachers go into other schools and look at an agreed focus and take learning back to their own school.</p> <p>Challenges are sometimes around engagement. There is a need to look at how teachers grow from development. Schools are still vulnerable to certain events like long term sick</p>	

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	<p>or small class size. Governors need to ask questions to find out what is going on. Schools are better for being part of a network. Within the network, everyone around the table needs to give to get the most from working together.</p> <p><b>Lewes – Tony Smith, Head at Priory School</b></p> <p>Priory is a teaching school in Lewes and is involved with many partnerships. The Lewes EIP is small with one secondary school and primary schools. One of the areas of work Priory has been involved in is moderation of writing. This involved peer review with primary and secondary to find out how this works. Priory has also been involved in Strategic School improvement Funding (SSIF). This is now coming to a close but it is important to look at the results and self-reflect to see the benefits.</p> <p>Tony is an NLE and the Director of the Teaching school. He has recruited Specialist Leaders of Education (SLE) to deliver accredited programmes. This gives members of staff a career pathway within a teaching school. All staff know that they are working at a teaching school. SLEs are time off timetable to enable them to have time to do the job.</p> <p>It is important to prioritise what really needs to happen. NLE work has happened in Lewes and Eastbourne. There is a lot of demand for NLEs.</p> <p>The East Sussex Teaching Alliance is working well together to on the recruitment and deployment of NLEs and SLEs.</p> <p>The benefits of system leadership include: professional development for staff, staff retention as there are more opportunities for staff, staff recruitment as people are drawn to teaching schools, funding as teaching schools do get some funding, and it opens up other opportunities to access funding. Being a teaching school is good for a schools' reputation as it attracts attention.</p> <p>The main challenge is capacity in terms of balancing a tight budget with release time for outreach work. Some people perceive teaching schools as negative as they don't want your help. Not all governors want to see you out of the office. There are huge demands on your time. Back office support is essential. The right support is needed to make things happen.</p> <p>From working with other schools, there has been improved quality of teaching, better outcomes and progress for pupils at Priory.</p> <p>For the governing board, becoming a governor at one school can mean helping at another school. It is important to not look inward. Schools want to keep their best staff and headteacher. There is a real need to think about what partnership means and what they understand by partnership. Governors need to think about how their own school will benefit and recognise that this might not be straight away. Governors need to know what is happening. One of the Priory governors went to the peer review feedback. Governors should see what they can do to support system leadership.</p>	

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	<p><b>Eastbourne – Bob Ellis, Principle at Seaford Head Community College</b></p> <p>Bob worked across 2 schools in Lewisham before coming to Seaford Head. There are a lot of opportunities with system leadership to drive improvement, with the overarching goal to make sure no child is left behind. There is a collective responsibility for driving improvement.</p> <p>Working with other schools within the locality means that clear outcomes are pursued. Work can be aligned to the EIP. Bids can be made to get funding to support specific school projects which means that the whole of Seaford benefits from the relationship the secondary school has with the local schools in the town. This has particularly worked around transition and mental health.</p> <p>Going into other schools is the best CPD in the world and helps create partnerships between schools. Teachers can take examples of best practice back to their own schools.</p> <p>Middle leaders can access subject hubs, for example a secondary maths teacher supporting a primary school with their year 6 pupils. This also helps with retention of staff who are ambitious as they have the opportunity to look out beyond their school.</p> <p>It is important also to recognise the challenges. It can lead to some fragmentation. One headteacher running lots of schools is not a sustainable model. There is also a need to be good co-ordination of the different elements of the system to make sure it is joined up and not a scattergun approach.</p> <p>For Seaford Head, it was important to be outward facing and highlight examples of best practice as it was previously a school in special measures.</p> <p>Governors have an important role to play in terms of monitoring. System leadership generates pace of improvement. Governors should look at and challenge results. Governors need to make sure that there is the right balance around the capacity of the school to provide support and the responsibility to their own school.</p> <p>Governors should ask what role their school is playing in driving up results across the area. Governors should ask why the school is doing it and how it will benefit their school and the partner schools.</p> <p><b>Any other comments and questions</b></p> <p>It would be useful for heads to give a small report on system leadership, including about the work they are doing in the EIP. Governors should receive a copy of the EIP action plans so they know about the work that is going on.</p> <p>The system isn't cyclic, it is an upward spiral. Commitment is strong and can secure improvement very quickly.</p> <p>System Leadership is a powerful model in securing improvement in a complex landscape.</p>	

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	<p>This session has helped to demystify what system leadership is. Perhaps the language used to describe this could be more explicit.</p> <p>There is a space in governor meetings to feed back to other governors. It is great to come to meetings like this and network and take exemplary information back to the board about what governors should know.</p> <p>Would there be any scope to have a collaboration link governor?</p> <p>Some schools act in isolation and pull up the drawbridge. All schools want to survive and governors are key to making sure this happens.</p> <p>Some of the EIPs are too big. There needs to be an acceptance that not everything will be right for every school.</p>																	
4.	<p><b>Dates of the next meetings:</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="264 938 1329 1263"> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="264 938 456 1010">05/06/2019</td> <td data-bbox="456 938 587 1010"><a href="#">GOV705</a></td> <td data-bbox="587 938 815 1010">19:00 – 21:00</td> <td data-bbox="815 938 1329 1010">Uckfield Civic Centre</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="264 1010 456 1081">12/06/2019</td> <td data-bbox="456 1010 587 1081"><a href="#">GOV706</a></td> <td data-bbox="587 1010 815 1081">18:30 – 20:30</td> <td data-bbox="815 1010 1329 1081">County Hall, Lewes</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="264 1081 456 1153">20/06/2019</td> <td data-bbox="456 1081 587 1153"><a href="#">GOV707</a></td> <td data-bbox="587 1081 815 1153">19.00 – 21.00</td> <td data-bbox="815 1081 1329 1153">The Sussex Exchange, Hastings</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="264 1153 456 1263">27/06/2019</td> <td data-bbox="456 1153 587 1263"><a href="#">GOV708</a></td> <td data-bbox="587 1153 815 1263">19:00 – 21:00</td> <td data-bbox="815 1153 1329 1263">East Sussex Training and Development Centre, Eastbourne</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	05/06/2019	<a href="#">GOV705</a>	19:00 – 21:00	Uckfield Civic Centre	12/06/2019	<a href="#">GOV706</a>	18:30 – 20:30	County Hall, Lewes	20/06/2019	<a href="#">GOV707</a>	19.00 – 21.00	The Sussex Exchange, Hastings	27/06/2019	<a href="#">GOV708</a>	19:00 – 21:00	East Sussex Training and Development Centre, Eastbourne	
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5.	<p><b>ESGF Forum</b></p> <p>Representatives from the Local Authority left the meeting so Governors could meet with representatives from the ESGF.</p>																	