



# GEP ACADEMIES WEEKLY BULLETIN

## WEEK COMMENCING 1 JUNE 2020

### Reminders for this coming week:

#### GEP Clerks

03.06.20  
09:30 – 11:00

#### GEP Central Team Meeting

04.06.20  
13:30 – 15:00

#### GEP Trustees and GLAC Chairs

05.06.20  
14:00 – 16:00

### Forthcoming meetings:

#### GEP PRIMARY HEADS

04.06.20  
13.00 – 13.30

#### GEP SECONDARY HEADS

10.06.20  
10.00 - 10.45

#### GEP PRIMARY SBMs

16.06.20  
09:00 – 12:00

#### GEP SECONDARY SBMs

18.06.20  
8:30 – 10:30

#### GEP&AST ALL HEADS

18.06.20  
08:00 – 11:15

#### GEP RESOURCES COMMITTEE

01.07.20  
15:00 – 17:00

#### GEP AUDIT COMMITTEE

07.07.20  
17:30 – 19:00

#### GEP EDUCATION COMMITTEE

15.07.20  
10:00 – 12:00

#### GEP BOARD

16.07.20  
17:30 – 19:00

### Welcome from Jack Mayhew

I would like to welcome you back to the last half term of what has turned out to be a remarkable academic year and it is my privilege to do so as the new Chief Executive Officer of GEP Academies. I am excited about the role, and the opportunity to work alongside headteachers, staff and governors at such a great range of schools. I have a genuine belief that our continued collaboration across schools will enable us to build upon the significant successes already achieved and drive us on to new heights in educational provision in Guildford and the surrounding areas.

It is difficult times like these that demonstrate the benefits of being part of a Multi Academy Trust. The schools have been able to unite and work through the problematic, ever-changing guidelines together, whilst receiving on-going support from the central team. Your hard work, leadership and flexibility throughout this pandemic has been admirable and the central team will continue to support you fully as we move forward in our endeavours to expand our provision of on-site learning.

I am excited about working alongside you all to build GEP as a trust which delivers for our children and young people. We can only do this effectively with purposeful and supportive local governance and a collective vision to provide excellent education for everyone.

I hope to meet (virtually or otherwise) with many of you over the coming weeks and months, liaise with chairs of governing bodies and continue to place schools at our centre. In my view, expressed to headteachers as part of my interview and selection process, 'the schools are the trust, and the trust are the schools'. Together we need to support schools to provide the best education they can to our pupils.

Governors at our schools play a crucial part in monitoring, supporting, challenging and fulfilling the vital role of 'critical friend' to our headteachers and staff in their role of serving our children and their families. Local governance is a central component of effective trust working, and it is my ambition to develop this further as we work together in the future.

This is the first of what will be a weekly bulletin delivered every Monday. The intention being to keep us all connected, informed and up to date with all the great work that is going on within the trust.

Thank you for your welcome and support as we move forward together.

### Actions for Heads:

GEP Finance Policy, w.e.f. 1st June 2020.  
Ensure first draft of budgets are submitted w/c 1st June (deadline deferred to 5th June under C-19)  
Review of budgets prior to final submission 19th June 2020.

### Actions for Governors:

GEP Finance Policy, w.e.f. 1st June 2020.  
Review of budgets prior to final submission 19th June 2020.  
Review draft calendar of trust meetings and take into consideration when planning GLAC meetings.  
Undertake the following by the end of term for board consideration, per the recent governance newsletter:  
Consider admissions policies for 2022/23  
Nominate chairs for 2020/21  
Review and submit committee/sub-committee terms of reference.

### Actions for Trustees:

An extra education committee date has been requested to take place on w/c 22nd June, please check your calendars for availability. The meeting is an opportunity to evaluate the schools' Risk Assessments and Health & Safety changes since the expansion of on-site provision.

### School Improvement Update:

A short paper has been drawn together around the 'Recovery Curriculum', which draws on the work of Tom Sherrington, Barry Carpenter and Mary Myatt. These articles remind us that we need to consider at length the impact of recent school closure on pupils and that we cannot simply pick up where we left off. Rather, there is a significant need to re-establish routines and the conditions for effective learning. This has been shared with all Headteachers and is also available here: [Recovery Curriculum](#)

Both Carol Pearce and Jane Abbott are in the process of organising their School Improvement Partner visit to each school over the next few weeks. These meetings will provide an opportunity for them to undertake a conversation with each headteacher around school self-evaluation as well as to reflect on school priorities for 2020-21.

We are now in the process of drawing together the school improvement calendar and schedule of CPD for next year. We will in due course be requiring the input of all headteachers into the content of this programme. Further discussions to follow. We are also planning on establishing a calendar of training and support for GLAC members, details of which will be published in due course.

George Abbot Teaching School was recently successful in being awarded the contract to undertake training for secondary teachers in the new Relationships, Sex & Health Education (RSHE) curriculum. This free training will be provided for secondary teachers across the South East South London region.

The deadline for **SCC Statutory Audit of Safeguarding Arrangements** has been extended until 30th June 2020.

### School Operations:

#### **GEP Good Estates Management - School Capital Allocation**

GEP schools are fortunate to have received a further £2.3m to help ensure our estates are in sound condition. We are currently awaiting finalised condition surveys that Baily Garner were able to conduct during lockdown, with support from school premises teams. We will therefore be able to propose the most suitable allocations and seek approval in our forthcoming trustee meeting this summer. To date, as trust of 7 schools we have benefited from £12m of such capital funding. Smaller trusts must bid for their allocations to central government and maintained schools rely on local government's approach to allocating funding, whereas we have received the 19th largest allocation of all multi-academy trusts this year.

SBM deadline: Schools should be aware via the SBM bulletin that schedules of existing SCA allocations and projects need to be updated prior to new allocations being made.

## **GEP Joint Purchasing – PPE and cleaning supplies**

As a further benefit of being part of a trust, the GEP Estates Manager has co-ordinated central procurement of PPE equipment and cleaning supplies. This has involved sourcing a good supply chain, pulling together requests from schools with a coordinated PPE approach and then distributing these across schools with school premises staff working as a collective team across our trust. Our schools are therefore ready and prepared for the new term with gloves, aprons, masks, thermometers, hand sanitiser and cleaning fluid.

Centralised procurement is an ongoing ambition.

## **GEP Risk Management – Expansion of School provision from 1st June**

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, GEP central support to schools continues to be extensive. In the last four weeks the COO and GEP Estates Manager have continued to interpret government guidance, provided resources (checklists, posters, risk assessment templates), and offered H&S and legal advice for schools to robustly assess the risks presented by wider expansion of provision from 1st June. Schools' 'reopening' plans have been reviewed by the GEP executive to ensure that such expansion strikes the right balance between minimising risk of coronavirus infection and an ambition to have more children return to onsite education. We have also been proactive in discussing these plans with unions and trustees.

Feedback from schools on the central support provided has been very positive – thank-you!

## **GEP IT Support Team – Home Learning & Remote Working**

The network team have been busy supporting students, parents and staff continuously throughout lockdown to ensure everyone is ready and able for Home Learning. We are pleased to say that all schools have hugely benefited from the expertise of the GEP IT Network Team, who have worked in a coordinated manner across the schools in our trust. We have introduced remote lessons using Zoom Cloud Meetings, work submission using SharePoint and deploying other bespoke learning tools to each school.

We have been providing support and assistance to all through our Helpdesk system, which as you know has allowed us to keep track of the hundreds of requests we receive every week, but still allows us to interact with you all and provide that personal touch.

Since early March our team has received a total of 2435 individual tickets into this system and we have been able to close 2243. March alone saw over 1000 tickets closed, making it our busiest month of the year to date which is normally September with the start of the school year. These tickets can range from providing remote support and training to account support, setting up user devices, online services and much more. The team has been very grateful for the support and positive feedback we are receiving from our schools, parents and pupils, thank you.

As always, we please ask that you log any issues or queries in helpdesk by emailing:

[networkhelpdesk@gepacademies.com](mailto:networkhelpdesk@gepacademies.com)

### **Contacts:**

Jack Mayhew: CEO

Ali Larcombe-Fish: COO

Andrew Roach: Education Director

Jo Coles: HR Manager

Richard Wiseman: Estates Manager

Ben Sayers: Head of IT

Gary Lelliott: Head of Governance

Jackie Blackwood: Teaching School Manager

Gaby Sutton: Senior Administrator/PA to CEO

Carol Pearce: Primary SIP

Jane Abbott: Secondary SIP

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**Jack's (virtual) school visits will start next week.**