



ESSET UPDATE - AUTUMN 15

Welcome to the second edition of ESSET UPDATE, a termly newsletter aimed at keeping colleagues informed regarding all ESSET activities and developments.

Let's start with an update on those staff currently working on ESSET activities and a reminder of ESSET's core purpose.

ESSET is established as a private company limited by guarantee, comprising of the eighteen Essex Special Schools. Directors of the company are the Headteachers of the eighteen schools. The company was established with the aim of leading Special Educational Needs Innovation in Essex providing a vehicle for sharing expertise to ensure all ESSET Schools were supported to provide outstanding outcomes for the young people of Essex.

Whilst the company does not employ any permanent staff there are a team of people working collectively to co-ordinate and develop the ESSET organisation.

Gary Smith	Headteacher Market Field	Chair of ESSET
Philippa Holliday	Headteacher Castledon	Vice Chair of ESSET and Essex Steps Strategic Lead
Judith Salter CBE	Headteacher Glenwood	ESSET Treasurer ably supported by her Business Manager, Karen Cavalla
Paul Ellis	Retired Headteacher of Southview School	ESSET Collaborative Officer and Company Secretary
Gary Bloom	ECC Secondee	ESSET Director of Operations
Joel Shaljean	Market Field Secondee	Essex Steps Operational Lead
Liz Cornish	ECC Secondee	Special School Standards and Improvement
Claire Lloyd	Oak View Secondee	Essex Steps Admin Assistant.
Geoff Slide	Essex Clerking Services	Clerk to ESSET

In addition Headteacher colleagues and staff in schools are supporting ESSET's training programme by writing and delivering training packages and supporting the following ESSET workstreams:

Finding Solutions for Hard to Place/maintain pupils
Joint working with Social Care
Joint Training and Induction for ESSET staff
Aspiring Leaders in Special Education – Training Programme
Securing appropriate therapeutic support for ESSET Schools
Essex Steps Training Programme
Special School Building Programme
Reviewing the SEN Funding Scheme and SEN Banding Descriptors
School Improvement Clusters and Funding

Sharing the load across ESSET members is essential to both the smooth running of ESSET Schools and the ESSET Company.

At the recent annual conference the board of directors appointed an enhanced Executive Board. As the company expands it is essential to have watertight practices and procedures in places and with this regard terms of reference for both the board of directors and executive board are being finalised along with a company scheme of delegation.

The following members were elected to sit on the executive board for a two year period covering the 2015 and 2016 academic years

Gary Smith (Chair)	Market Field School
Philippa Holliday (Vice Chair)	Castledon School
Elizabeth Drake	Kingswode Hoe School
Simon Wall	Lexden Springs School
Gary Bloom	Director of Operations
Paul Ellis	Company Secretary

The board also agreed that representation should be sought from the members of the company (who are the chairs of governors of local authority maintained and chairs of the Trust Boards in academies) to represent company members at board level and have a clear mechanism for challenging the company directors.

ESSET continues to review its' structure and organisation to ensure it is best placed to deliver the objectives stipulated in the ESSET strategic development plan.

ESSET Strategic Development

As mentioned in the first ESSET update a strategic development plan was developed by directors and presented to the Local Authority as a statement of ESSET's aspiration and intent. The proposal has been well received by the Local Authority who continues to support ESSET's development with start-up funding and other resources.

Leading SEN Innovation in Essex

ESSET directors have developed and approved a five year strategic plan which maps the development of the company from its current developing position to a sophisticated organisation leading the delivery of SEN Provision, training and development and SEN support services in Essex.

This plan documents the journey from the current position incrementally describing the development of four main strands over the short, medium and longer term outlining the ultimate ambition for 2020 that ESSET as an organisation requires to become the organisation described in the opening paragraph of this document.

The four main development strands are identified as follows.

- **Leading a school led SEN system in Essex**
- **Developing and Managing Specialist Services within Essex**
- **Supporting the statutory SEN system**
- **Developing world class shared business systems**

Set against a backdrop of the Local Authority becoming a commissioner rather than provider of services, sourcing the best local providers to deliver services and the national drive for a school lead education system. ESSET directors recognise that developing ESSET in this way will ensure that ESSET is capable of leading the delivery of SEN services in Essex. Working collectively and collegiately to ensure special schools and specialist services are outstanding and resourced to support the offer of an Essex place for every Essex child.

ESSET intends to play a key leadership role in the development of system-wide improvement for SEND outcomes in Essex.

ESSET is based on the strengths of a cohesive approach to creating a continuum of provision for a continuum of need. The collegiate approach from ESSET represents a unique pooling of expertise and knowledge about SEND and the Essex context; whereby excellent outcomes can be reached and efficiencies can be found using resources in innovative ways across the system. The ESSET proposal gives schools the opportunity to lead and shape the future of SEN provision and their role in it collectively

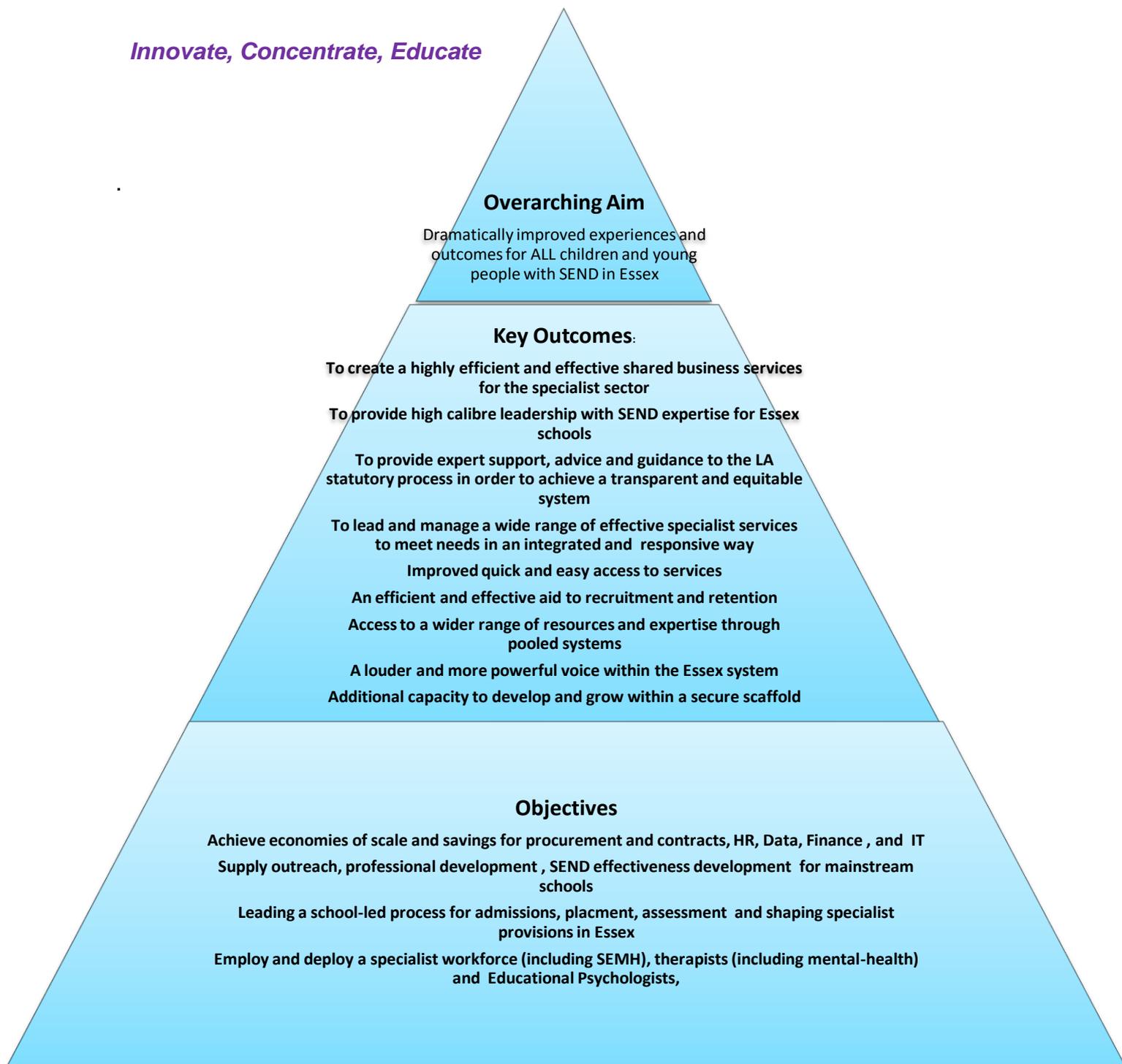
The ESSET proposal is the culmination of significant research and consideration from sector leaders and each separate element of the proposal plays a part in a broader strategic plan. The overarching education vision held by the Local Authority

is that each school will be good or outstanding by 2018. Currently the specialist sector is the education strongest sector with the percentage of schools judged good or better being above the national average.

National 2014 SEND Reforms put parents, children and young people at the heart of the new system; as a major part of this reform Essex Local Offer development aims to make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations; offering high quality integrated local provision which is both efficient and successful; ESSET proposes to lead the way.

Diagrammatic Representation of Strategic Development Plan

Innovate, Concentrate, Educate



ESSET Developments

1. Essex Steps



Last time we told you that ESSET had been commissioned by the County Council to develop and deliver the Essex Steps approach to all Essex Schools. Essex Steps is grounded on sound practice based evidence which has been well monitored and evaluated. It is endorsed by Essex County Council and included on the Essex Local Offer.

The programme is designed to provide high quality understanding and training in the management of behaviour and the prevention of behaviour from escalating. It includes ethical restrictive physical intervention (restraint) training.

ESSET have now managed to deliver the training to staff from 95 Essex Schools with over 500 staff being trained

There are now 56 trainers qualified to deliver the Essex Steps Course

Evaluation of the course has been outstanding with 90% of course evaluations being rated excellent.

Restraint impact in ESSET schools

At this stage, the impact on restraint reduction is predominantly anecdotal in nature, we have had countless testimonies to the effectiveness and impact of Steps from ESSET tutors.

Here are just a few of the testimonies from tutors from ESSET schools when they were asked to reflect on how Steps has developed in their schools:

'Big change, ethos is very different. Restraint is down from as many as 7 a day to 1 a term! Elimination of restraint is almost there. 3 children where there may be an issue. No step up needed!'

'We put a plan together for a specific pupil and there has been no RPI; we have just focused on de-escalation. Just using Roots and Fruits has been enough.'

'Only 4 audited need for students to be on an Individual Child Risk Management Plan. One student has been restrained once since September whereas previously it was 2-3 per week.'

Essex Steps operates on a business model so an operating surplus has been generated to invest in refresher courses for Steps trainers.

2. Aspiring Leaders in Special Education Programme

ESSET has been commissioned by the County Council to develop and deliver a Leadership Programme that will ensure a future supply of outstanding leaders for special schools and specialist provisions in the future. This is a key component of ESSET's succession planning process. The course has now been renamed as above and the first module has undergone a successful pilot with delegates from Essex Special Schools and some mainstream SENCOs.

The ESSET Team of

Emma Paramor	Headteacher	Langham Oaks
Jo Hodges	Headteacher	Shorefields
Julian Cochrane	Headteacher	Southview
Dianne Ryan	Headteacher	Oakview
Gary Bloom	Programme Manager	ESSET Director of Operations
Viv Rosier	Course Design and Delivery	Consultant

are currently finalising a practitioner lead accredited programme, which under an innovative partnership with University of East London will form three units of a Masters qualification as well as a standalone diploma.

Candidates will be able to book onto the course which is competitively priced from September 16. The qualification will be seen as the benchmark for future special school leaders.

Again a business model ensures that both ESSET benefit and ESSET schools are reimbursed for their time in supporting the delivery of the programme.

3. New ESSET Members

ESSET welcomes a new member to the company and with it a new director onto the board. Ramsden Hall School has become an academy under the sponsorship of the Parallel Learning Trust. Garry Walker, Headteacher will represent Ramsden Hall on the ESSET Board.

In addition discussions are underway with Grove House School (which is Essex's first Special Free School) about joining ESSET. As a company ESSET are keen to ensure that all special schools and academies in Essex have the opportunity to join ESSET.

4. Investing in Specialist Provision

ESSET continues to work closely with the Local Authority in the co-design of new specialist provision being created to offer an Essex place to every Essex pupil.

The following ESSET representatives

Ian Boatman	Edith Borthwick School
Emma Paramor	Langham Oaks
Judith Salter	Glenwood School
Carol Mitchell	Wells Park
Michelle Armstrong	Wells Park/Oak View

have been meeting with the Local Authority and their appointed architects to consider how these new provisions need to be designed and resourced to create provision for pupils whose needs are currently not being met in Essex

ESSET have also collectively identified a therapeutic model that would be required in schools to fully support this agenda.

5. Working Together

ESSET members have started work on designing a shared induction and training programme and some initial work on an ESSET wide system of assessment without levels. Working collegiately to ensure consistency of practice across ESSET schools will reduce the workload on individual schools.

6. Collaborative Officers Report

Here are some of the highlights from Paul Ellis's (ESSET Collaborative Officer) latest report.

ESCB Development Day

This was a development day in which the members present were challenged with considering how to improve the effectiveness of the board and how to influence the bodies they represented. The thrust was to examine if the correct people were members of the board and sufficiently influential to effect change and hold managers and leaders to account within their organisations. There was full and frank discussion following each presentation, and a resolve by the members to improve their commitment to the activities and actions of the board. A new work plan and sub-committee structure will be presented at the December board meeting for adoption.

Association Chairs and Officers

This meeting was to secure support for the ESSET plan moving forward. We discussed the issue of the Specialist Teacher Service, how it is funded, what it is commissioned to deliver and to whom. We discussed the ways this might integrate with the development of Local Cluster for School Improvement. How these might fit with proposed SEND clusters managing the local funding for EHC and One Plan needs. It was a challenging discussion as so much is still to be resolved. There was good will towards ESSET and an expectation that we are part of the solution moving forward.

The discussion moved on to the teacher supply situation which was a serious concern to all sectors. The particular issue in the primary sector was the quality of candidates emerging from the Teaching School Alliances. There was a perception that all was not well in this area and that quality teachers were in short supply. The discussion moved on to Headship and it emerged that at a recent conference for Deputies less than 10% of those present wished to consider headship.

School Lead Improvement (SLI) Board

The board discussed the current round of grants to local bidders agreed on the 7th October. The expected impact of these grants was discussed and the next round of bids was also considered. I was a little late for the meeting as it had changed its venue. The discussion was initially centred on the peer review system that mainstream schools have in place in some areas. The question of how to build the robustness of these reviews to provide a real local challenge to schools not performing was discussed. The next question was how this challenge would locally develop into a system of local responsibility for supporting failing schools. Heads and governors having a locality responsibility greater than their current school based one. What structure and agreements need to be in place for such a system to work? What happens to schools who choose to be out of this system, school not currently engaged?

Strategic Hate Crime Partnership

There was a perception in the last set of minutes, where schools did not attend, that schools were not interested or concerned about hate crime. The presence of Pam Langmead and I helped with our contributions to dispel that notion. I was particularly interested in the aspect of under reporting of disability hate crime. I asked some pointed questions about the nature of our learners and my experience that the police and CPS found them unreliable or poor witnesses. I was assured that the police approach to our students and the learning disabled had improved considerably. The key issue seemed to be where and to whom hate crime (a crime in law prompted by hate) or hate related incident was reported. There are some voluntary and Council part-time centres for hate crime reporting, however they are poorly advertised and hardly known about. We might, through our networks, publicise these; perhaps through newsletters and web page links.

7. And Finally

We bid fond farewells to Peter Whelan at Cedar Hall and Sue Wraw at Wells Park following their retirements and welcome Nic Maxwell as the new head of Cedar Hall.

Congratulations to Jo Hodges and colleagues at Shorefields and Gary Smith and colleagues at Market Field on their recent “outstanding” inspections. Congratulations also to Carol Mitchell and colleagues at Well Park School on an outstanding care inspection.