

HAPPY NEW YEAR

The order of this newsletter is as follows:

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THIS IS THE FIFTH NEWSLETTER TO BE ISSUED USING ONLY TWO ROUTES – DAG WEBSITE AND THE DAG INTERMEDIARY GOVERNOR. THE NUMBER OF IGs HAS NOW RISEN TO 160 AND I AM VERY GRATEFUL TO ALL WHO HAVE SIGNED UP. THAT STILL MEANS HOWEVER THERE ARE 200+ SCHOOLS WE ARE NOT IN DIRECT CONTACT WITH. TO ENSURE WE REACH THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF GOVERNORS PLEASE PASS THIS ON TO YOUR FELLOW GOVERNORS. MEANWHILE I HAVE CONTACTED EVERY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR TO ENCOURAGE TAKE UP OF THIS FACILITY.

DAG

AREA MEETINGS.

The next round will take place as follows:

Lapford Primary School, Wed 21 Jan - South Molton, Chulmleigh, Crediton LLCs

The Park School, Barnstaple, Tue 27 Jan - Barnstaple, Bideford, Braunton, Ilfracombe and Great Torrington LLCs

King Edward VI CC, Totnes, Thur 29 Jan - Dartmouth, Ivybridge, Kingsbridge, South Dartmoor, Totnes LLCs

Broadclyst Primary School, Wed 4 Feb - Clyst Vale and Exeter LLCs - **PLEASE NOTE NEW DATE**

All meetings 7.00 - 9.00p.m. with refreshments available from 6.30

Meetings are open to all and not restricted to named LLCs (eg some people from S. Molton may prefer to go to Barnstaple meeting, some from Crediton to Exeter meeting etc)

Please let Ivan Godfrey sueivan@godfreyi.freeseve.co.uk or me, dmrmtall@mvdartmoor.freeseve.co.uk know if you intend attending.

REPRESENTATIVES / LA COMMITTEES -

We now have a Governor from a Community School, Sue Roberts, to sit on the Local Admissions Forum, but we now seek a Parent Governor to sit on this important body.

Additionally you will note from the website that several people double up on various Committees and it would be great to spread the burden / skills base, so if you have a particular interest, do please let me know and I will negotiate succession or even increased representation.

The plans for next year's Conference are beginning to firm up. It will held on **4 July** at County Hall. We have secured the services of Sue Palmer, renowned for her book "Toxic Childhood". She is noted as a brilliant public speaker and we consider her attendance as something of a coup. In addition we are delighted that Chris Keates the Secretary of the NASUWT will also speak. Our third speaker is David Triggs the CEO of THE academies Enterprise Trust in Essex. Mr Triggs is also the Principal of Greensward Academy.

Online application will be available from 31 January– but you can register early interest direct to me. We anticipate a “sell out” so to ensure your attendance you are advised to book early.

The theme for the Conference will be “Self improvement = School Improvement”

Although it is planned to be an all day event the programme will be designed so that Governors can dip in and out and attend at their convenience

One of the highlights of last year’s Conference was the contribution from a number of our youngsters. We are keen to continue that involvement, so if you have any groups (hand bell ringers / Morris Dancers / choirs etc) at your schools whom you would like to promote, celebrate and see perform on a wider stage please let me know at your earliest convenience. DAG will pay reasonable expenses and make a contribution to school funds. We are delighted to have secured the services of Mary Tavy PS’s Gospel Choir, but could accept one more contribution as described above.

The Conference is once again being supported by NPS (SW). DAG is most grateful for that support

RECOGNISING YOUR PTA

Governors are reminded of the National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations (NCPTA) Gold Star Reward Scheme for 2009, together with The Learning, Education and Parental Partnership (LEAPP) Award scheme for 2009. More details from www.ncpta.org.uk/awards. Your PTA could be rewarded to the tune of £1000

RECOGNISING YOUR CLERK

A total of 159 Clerks were nominated nationally for the 2009 Clerk of the Year Award. I am delighted to inform you that 2 Clerks to Devon GBs have been short listed (1 other on the list) regionally. This is a fantastic achievement and we send warmest congratulations to Maggie Dunlop Clerk to Clyst Heath Primary GB and Ann Inman, Clerk to Horrabridge Primary GB.

Congratulations also go to Jo Evans, Headteacher of Kenn C of E Primary School, who was awarded Gemini FM's 'Teacher of Year 2008' at the recent Toast of Devon ceremony.

SONG FOR DEVON

DAG is very pleased to recognise the marvellous achievement of Karen Higginson, a teacher at Whitchurch Community Primary School in Tavistock. She found out she had won Devon County Council’s Song4Devon competition live on the BBC Radio Devon Breakfast Show by presenter Matt Woodley on Monday 15th December.

Karen’s song ‘D-E-V-O-N’ was one of four finalists whose tunes were put to the public vote on the Devon County Council website. The song can be accessed via the LA website

GENERAL

The EO is attending the North of England Education Conference in Chester 7 – 9 January

The EO is meeting members of Minority Groups’ Committees on 20 January

The next DAG Executive Committee Meeting is being held on 22 January

LA

Do you want to win £1000 for your school? If so you might like to look at the www.devon.gov.uk/index/learning/schools/governors.htm and participate in the Count Me In! – Volunteer Survey

Throughout 2008 Devon County Council has provided Premises related Health and Safety training including provision for one School Governor from every school to attend a 2 hour overview session. It is hoped to hold another session at Bidwell Brook Special School, Dartington on 11 February

During the spring and summer of this year Devon County Council has further developed its online booking system for various training courses, we would now like to take the opportunity to encourage all delegates via this method.

This one time registration will improve all future training applications and an added benefit of this new process is that we are now able to identify course venues and dates at the time of your booking. Your school administrator may already be aware of this system and therefore may be able to complete the booking for you.

Please go to www.devon.gov.uk/onlinebookings to book, but please do not hesitate to contact Emma Huxtable at emma.huxtable@devon.gov.uk if you require any more information.

I REMIND YOU The Devon Association of Primary Heads (DAPH) has been alerted to an e-mail dated 24 November 2008 sent to all Primary Schools regarding preparation for the 2009 Spring Term School Census otherwise known as PLASC, which contained the following important information.

”The LA has been advised by the DCSF that the four-week "phasing in" period for new pupils no **longer applies**. Funding will be based on the status of pupils on the census day (15th January 2009) and therefore, **in order to receive full-time funding for your pupils please ensure that they are in full time attendance by 15 January 2009.**”

Meanwhile the Single Point of Entry consultation has now concluded and early indications reveal support for SPE from majority of schools whereas early years settings are in favour of two intakes. Take up for deferment until term of/ before 5th birthday is actually low. The view is that it would be easier if census for funding was in September

DCSF

There are 2 new live consultations, launched in November on the DCSF Website

Ofqual was established recently. It is the Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator and has assumed responsibility for the regulation exams, qualifications and tests from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). The QCA will continue to advise on the National Curriculum (NC) and deliver Primary NC tests (SATs). You can learn more from www.ofqual.gov.uk

OFSTED

Please note: A focus on improvement: proposals for further education and skills system inspections from September 2009

We have reviewed arrangements for the inspection of the FE and skills system to ensure that they are coherent and well matched to the needs of the user and the quality of the service, and that they develop our ability to target inspection where it will make the most difference. Our proposals for a revised Common Inspection Framework and for the inspection of colleges, work-based learning and nextstep from September 2009 are set out in this consultation document.

The closing date for the consultation is 27 January 2009.

and

Indicators of a school's contribution to well-being – a consultation

As signalled in the Children's Plan and in the well-being guidance, the DCSF and Ofsted have been working to develop strong school-level indicators of pupils' well-being. These indicators will improve the information available to schools to help them assess the well-being issues their pupils face and to evaluate the school's contribution to promoting pupil well-being. Ofsted will be looking for evidence from all schools on well-being and therefore the indicators will apply to all maintained schools, primary, secondary, special and Pupil Referral Units and to academies. DCSF and Ofsted have now launched a consultation paper with proposals about those indicators.

Responses are requested by 16 January 2009.

NGA

The NGA has elected Clare Collins from West Sussex as Chair.

In addition the voice of the SW Region continues to be strong amongst the officers with Colleen Arnold (Torbay) being re-elected to the position of Vice Chair and Carol Woodhouse (DAG) elected to the position of Honorary Secretary. Regions generally will be more strongly represented at Officer level with Doris Neville-Davis (Regional Director SE) being elected one of the NGA Vice Chairs.

The next NGA AGM will be held on 7 November 2009 in Birmingham. DAG will be represented

We are receiving regular updates from John Pay our Regional Director and we welcome these links very much

The NGA has produced the first of its weekly newsletters. They will be e-mailed to all members for whom they hold e-mail addresses, whilst the Bulletin is sent to Local Associations. I will always forward the BB to IGs, and place it on our website, but if you would also like the weekly newsletter please let me know.

PRIMARY SNIPPETS

National Braille Week is being this week until 10 January and celebrates the 200th birthday of Louis Braille. See www.nationalbrailleweek.org

Appetite for Action Day will take place on 23 January 2009 and is aimed at KS2 pupils. See www.appetiteforaction.org.uk for an update.

The Times has launched a free books for schools initiative. Please see www.freebooksforschools.co.uk

Remember it is now just 22 months (September 2010) before all primary schools are due to have foreign language teaching in place across KS2, with progression from Y3 – Y6.

SECONDARY SNIPPETS

The Times has launched a free books for schools initiative. Please see www.freebooksforschools.co.uk

The English Chess Federation has launched a national campaign to get more pupils playing chess with up to 10 free sets / school. To receive your sets e-mail chessforschools@englishchess.org.uk

Daley Thompson is supporting Olympic-themed resources for schools at www.onyourmarks.london2012.com

The renewed Secondary Frameworks have been developed by the National Strategies. Science, maths, English and ICT are now online at www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/secondary/frameworks

Secondary Governors may wish to be aware of the new exhibition, Body Worlds and the Mirror of Time which is running at the O2 Arena until August 2009. Suitable for KS3 onwards. See www.bodyworlds.com/en/prelude/education_uk (Note underscore between education and uk)

What if there had been 3 wise women?????

They would have asked directions, arrived on time, helped deliver the baby, cleaned the stable, made a casserole, brought practical gifts and there would peace on earth!

David Tall Executive Officer to DAG

5 January 2009