

DAG MONTHLY NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2007

As per last newsletter, I have laid out this month's newsletter order as follows:

DAG
NGA
DCC
DfES/DCSF

DAG

There is only one way to start this third newsletter and that is by congratulating Ivan Godfrey, former DAG County Secretary, and well known to most Devon Governors, and a Governor Two Moors PS at Tiverton, on his selection as the SW Regional Governor of the Year. This is a fantastic achievement and is thoroughly well deserved.

Ivan will attend the National Awards ceremony in October and we wish him well at that event. Other “winners” in a variety of categories are outlined below and we offer them too DAG’s warmest congratulations.

Whilst acknowledging achievements, it is a particular pleasure to note the success of Seaton PS (www.seatonprimary.co.uk) in their fantastic award by the Ashden Trust, www.ashdenawards.org They were placed second in the national category for sustainable schools and DAG sends warmest congratulations to everyone involved, but particularly the children.

DAG is always interested to hear of any school achievements and best practice, so please do let me know of them. Do not hide your lights – we can help publicise them, via our website and through these newsletters!!

Members of the DAG Executive met for an Away Day on Saturday 23 June. The full Executive will be briefed on the outcome of those deliberations on 5 July and these will be passed on in due course to Devon Governors.

The Chair, EO and John Gale from the Executive met the Plymouth and Torbay Governors’ Associations on Saturday 30 June to discuss matters of mutual interest. We have agreed to meet these Associations on a termly basis.

The Autumn Term Area Meetings have been agreed as follows on the various dates / venues and representation, though any Governor will be welcome at any meeting.

Tuesday 25 September - Clyst Vale CC - Clyst Vale,
CREDITON and EXETER LLCs

Wednesday 26 September - Tiverton High School - Culm Valley and
TIVERTON LLCs

Thursday 27 September - The King's School OSM - Axe Valley, Exmouth,
HONITON, OSM and SIDMOUTH LLCs

Tuesday 2 October - The Park School Barnstaple Barnstaple Braunton,
Bideford, Ilfracombe and Torrington LLCs

Further details in forthcoming Checklists.

We expect the announcement about Exeter's bid for Unitary status to be made just before the Summer Parliamentary Recess, which begins Thursday 26 July.

Did you know? The Office of Manpower Economics has released the following findings for 2006 about the average weekly workload for teachers at various management levels. They reveal that the average hours / week worked was

Sec HT 65.1
Sec Dep 61
Sec Dept Hd 51.5
Sec Teacher 49.1
PS HT 53.5
PS Dep 53.4
PS Teacher 50.1

Additionally Governors may be interested to know that 34500 people gained QTS in 2006, but by March this year fewer than 21000 were registered as working teachers – though there were still shortages in specific areas – physics and chemistry and in some particularly challenging schools.

NGA

NGA conducted the final interviews for the CEO's post on 26 June, after which Phil Revell was appointed to succeed Jean McEntire as CEO on 1 August 2007.

Phil was a teacher in the past, more recently he has been a freelance journalist, writing for TES and The Guardian. He has also worked in research for NAHT and other organisations.

Don Paterson, Chair of DAG, has written to Mr Revell to congratulate him and to seek an early meeting with him.

DCC

The Chair, Vice Chair and EO will be meeting Anne Whiteley on 17 July

Awards

TEACHERS, staff and governors at Devon's schools have won a series of honours at this year's South West Teaching Awards.

Devon staff won the awards for Teacher of the Year in both primary and secondary schools, Primary Headteacher of the Year, Teaching Assistant of the Year, Governor of the Year and Sustainable School.

Specifically, **Gill Chalkley from Withycombe Raleigh Church of England Primary in Exmouth** won the primary teacher of the year award while **Ian Jamison from Kingsbridge Community College** won the secondary teacher accolade.

The primary headteacher of the year was **Christine Thompson from Ilfracombe Infant School** while **Sheila Thompson from Ladysmith Junior in Exeter** was teaching assistant of the year.

The sixth award was for **Yeo Valley Primary School in Barnstaple** as sustainable school of the year. Bideford College won a runners-up distinction in this category.

Also awarded distinctions were **Ivan Chrisene from Isca College** in Exeter as secondary teacher of the year, **Pam Bassett from Wynstream Primary in Exeter** as teaching assistant of the year and **Graham Osborn from St Andrew's Primary in Buckland Monachorum** as governor of the year.

Commendations were awarded to **Scott Hampton from Milber Junior School** as primary teacher of the year, **Heather Tozer from Stoke Hill Infant School in Exeter** as primary headteacher of the year, **Steve Hitchcock from Newton Poppleford Primary** as outstanding new teacher and **Mary Thomas from Webber's Primary at Holcombe Rogus** as teaching assistant..

Crosby Chacksfield from The King's School, Ottery St Mary was commended for his Lifetime Achievement and **Carolyn Ballard from Gatehouse Primary in Dawlish** was recognised in the governors'awards while **Withycombe Raleigh Primary** was commended in the sustainable schools' section.

The winning headteachers, teachers, teaching assistant, governor and sustainable school each received a Plato, the Teaching Awards symbol of excellence in education. Runners-up were rewarded with a distinction or commendation and an engraved glass award.

The winners go forward to the televised UK ceremony held in London in October.

Financial Training

DCC have arranged a series of training sessions for Primary Governors with regard to the forthcoming introduction of FMSiS. You should note the Authorities advice that “These sessions will be led by colleagues from Audit and Finance Services and will explain what is required by the new standard and how schools will need to demonstrate compliance. We strongly advise at least one governor from each governing body and the head teacher attend. Chairs of finance are likely to find it especially helpful”.

There will be 6 sessions in both the summer and autumn term throughout Devon at various primary schools.

Gov/FMS July 3rd or Sept 11th 07 4.15-6.15pm at Two Moors Primary School, Tiverton

Gov/FMS July 4th or Sept 13th 07 6-8pm at Blackpool Primary School, Newton Abbot

Gov/FMS July 5th or Sept 18th 07 6-8pm at Horrabridge Primary School, Yelverton

Gov/FMS July 10th or Sept 20th 07 6-8pm at Yeo Valley Primary School, Barnstaple

Gov/FMS July 11th or Sept 25th 07 6-8pm at Countess Weir Primary School, Exeter

Gov/FMS July 12th or Sept 27th 07 4.15-6.15pm at Axminster Primary School, Axminster

Please telephone 01392-383613 or book via www.devon.gov.uk/governors There is no charge to subscribing schools.

For more general information go to: www.fmsis.info.

DfES / DCSF

DfES has been replaced by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), under new Secretary of State Ed Balls, and the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills, led by Secretary for State, John Denham. In the new DCSF, Jim Knight remains as Schools' Minister and Lord Adonis as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State. One might enquire where the word education has gone??

Our Chairman has written to Mr Balls to welcome him to his new appointment and to highlight some concerns. Similarly he has written to Ben Bradshaw, the new Minister for the SW Region.

The following consultations are live:

The Primary National Strategy has launched "Letters and Sounds", which gives further guidance on teaching phonics as set out in the renewed literacy framework. This free programme comprising two booklets and a DVD, replaces previous National Strategy publications, such as "Playing with Sounds" and "Progression in Phonics". Each school should have received 5 copies of the programme in May. Has yours? Extra copies can be ordered through www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/local/clld/las.html, search for DFES-00281-2007

From Sep 07, all maintained schools, academies, CTCs and Las for PRUs will be required to provide suitable full-time education from, and including, the sixth day of any period of fixed-period exclusion of six days or longer. A Q and A document on this subject can be viewed at www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/exclusion

Schools are required to comply with various strands of equality legislation; the Disability and Race Equality duties have been around for some time and new Gender Equality Duty came into force on 6 April 2007. The DfES, in conjunction with the Implementation Review Unit, has produced a short toolkit pulling together the various strands of equality legislation for schools in one place. The toolkit can be viewed by following www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=11059

There is also more information on the Equal Opportunities Commission website:
www.eoc.org.uk

Did you know? On 29 March new money was announced for text messaging systems to help schools with the highest levels of absence. However, to date, no further details are available on the delivery of text messaging systems to schools. Any queries should be directed to BECTA on 02476416994

You can order a free wall map of Europe can be ordered at http://ec.europa.eu/unitedkingdom/information/publications/maps/maps_en.htm noting there is an underscore between map_en in the address. The maps have been produced as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations of the EU, and they show the 27 EU Member States as at 1 Jan 07. Schools can order as many as they require.

Seeing BECTA mentioned reminded me of the frustration many Governors feel about the use of acronyms and “educational” phrases – so I will end with some jargon busting, which I hope you will find useful:

Academies = publicly funded independent secondary schools with sponsors from the private or voluntary sectors or from churches or other faith sponsors.

Associate member = a person who is appointed to the Governing Body to work with a committee but who is not a governor.

BECTA = British Educational Communications and Technology Agency

Benchmarking = comparing school expenditure with broadly similar schools from the LA, the region and nationally

Core subjects = English, maths and science

Disapplied Pupils = The National Curriculum has been designed to make sure that all children are assessed. However, there may be a small number of pupils who are not able to take part in some assessment, even allowing for the full range of arrangements that can be made.

EWO = education Welfare Officer employed to help pupils and parents, particularly regarding attendance.

MFL = Modern Foreign Languages

All the best

David Tall
EO to DAG