

DEVON ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNORS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2009

The order of this newsletter is as follows:

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- Local Authority (LA)
- National Governors' Association (NGA)
- Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF)
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DAG

CONFERENCE

The plans for the 2009 Conference were all but complete. Sadly David Triggs has had to withdraw from the day for family reasons, but we are investigating to see if one of his colleagues can deliver his toolkit and workshop. I outline the current plans below:

- The theme for the Conference is **“Self improvement = School Improvement”**
- It will be held on **4 July** at County Hall.
- The Conference will be opened by the choir from **Whitchurch Primary School** singing their award winning anthem **D.E.V.O.N.**,
- We have 3 excellent speakers. The author Sue Palmer, renowned for her book “Toxic Childhood”, and whose appearance we consider something of a coup will address us first. Sue will be followed by Judith Johnson, the Head of Schools and Learning in Devon, will give us a local perspective.
- In addition Chris Keates the Secretary of the NASUWT will also speak. Ms Keates has a strong national profile and we are again fortunate to have secured her services.
- Lunch will be provided, during which time we shall be entertained by **Mary Tavy PS's Gospel Choir**. We believe it very important that our children have the opportunity to show off their talents and the Conference is a great event at which to show off!
- We shall run up to 3 workshops in the afternoon and anticipate finishing at 1545, noting the programme has been designed so that Governors can dip in and out and attend at their convenience
- **Online application** is now available at www.dag.gb.com . Places are still available.

This year we are holding a Poetry Competition and invite EVERY school to participate. There will be prizes for the winning schools from the 3 sectors and the LA have kindly offered to publish a digest of the poems the children produce. DAG has written to the Primary, Special and Secondary Heads' Associations inviting them to support this competition but Governors have a part to play too. The first words of the poem must be “Devon inspires me to..” **CLOSING DATE IS 30 JUNE 2009.** Please send entries to dmrmtall@mvdartmoor.freeserve.co.uk, or if you prefer, please contact me for postal address I know of at least one PS who sees this competition as an opportunity of engaging post SAT children to hone their creative writing even more. Please encourage your school to participate. It would be helpful if you could let me know if your school intends taking part. Thank you.

The Conference is once again being supported by NPS (SW). DAG is most grateful for that support and to Cornwall and Devon Connexions and Pecorama, Beer who have offered generous prizes to support the day and particularly for their help to recognise our youngsters' contributions.

AREA MEETINGS

Ivan Godfrey is arranging the next round of DAG Area Meetings and they are planned as follows:

Tue. Sept. 22nd at Lapford Primary: Wed. Sept. 23rd at KEVICC, Totnes: Tue. Sept. 29th at The Park School, Barnstaple and Wed. Sept. 30th at Exwick Heights Primary. More details to follow at the beginning of the Autumn term, but please note dates now.

The **DAG Executive** met on 21 May and at that meeting resolved to expand DAG's reach across the County and we shall be looking for a number of individuals to act as DAG's representatives in various capacities. Each post will receive an honorarium and recruitment starts soon. Information will be passed via your IGs, the website and Gold Sheets. Please keep your eyes open for the details.

REPRESENTATIVES / LA COMMITTEES-

A **Governor vacancy** exists on the Schools' Organisational Forum and the Schools' Commissioning Forum. Meanwhile, I am very pleased we have volunteers to represent Governors on the Learning and Achievement Forum and the Schools' Funding Group. If you wish to be a member of these important fora / committees please contact David Tall.

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.

SWINE FLU

This has now been declared a pandemic. You are reminded that Governors remain responsible for the provision of education throughout the crisis and determine how and where to employ the Staff. Is such provision part of any Emergency Plan you may have?

The training at Buckfast Abbey on 9 July, mentioned below, may be appropriate and helpful

Congratulations go to

Debbie Mumford from Ermington Primary School who has won the national school chef of the year title at the finals in Sheffield. Debbie, who works for DCCS, used local ingredients in her special dishes

West Down PS which has won the highest possible praise from education inspectors after being judged outstanding for the **fourth time** in succession. Only 15 per cent of schools across the country are judged outstanding by Ofsted. It says the outcomes of all learners at West Down Primary near Ilfracombe are outstanding and the school's approach to safeguarding its pupils is exemplary.

LA

Your HT and Cof G will have received the following briefing note issued on 5 May, reference Legionella.

All Devon County Council managed premises should now have received a Legionella Risk Assessment/Logbook. If you have not received the Risk Assessment/Logbook folder then please contact Nigel Coleman by email to establish any required next actions;
nigel.coleman@nps-sw.co.uk

Training provided to those in control of premises will have explained roles and responsibilities and there should now be robust management systems in place throughout the DCC estate.

Typical requirements are set out below, however If you are doing nothing you could be in breach of the law

- **Weekly** - Flush little used outlets or consider removing outlets and associated pipework which are not used within a 7 day period. Flushing is to ensure that any stagnant water is replaced.
- **Monthly** - Temperature checks at your sentinel outlets must be taken to ensure that cold water is below 20°C after 2 minutes and the hot water above 50°C within 1 minute of use respectively. Remedial action should be taken where they are outside of these parameters and an entry recorded within the faults log.
- **Quarterly** – Check and clean showerheads as required
- **Other 6 & 12 Monthly Checks** - For Schools within the Devon Maintenance Partnership and Premises within the DCC Corporate Estate the 6 & 12 monthly

inspections have been arranged using specialist providers by NPS (SW) Ltd.

Shutdowns of more than 7 days – Where Premises (especially schools) close down for a period of more than 7 days it will not always be possible to arrange weekly flushing, where this is the case

- On return ensure that all hot water heaters have been turned on at least 2 hours before any draw off, this allows for 1 hour establishing operating temperature and at least 1 hour at this level to thermally treat the water. Flush all hot and cold outlets to move any water that may have decayed through the system, for unflushed areas the minimisation of aerosol can be achieved by placing a refuse sack or similar, with a corner cut off, over the outlet or by removing the shower head and placing the hose directly over the drain outlet.
- For large or complex sites a protective face mask should be considered as additional protection from the possible water aerosols.
- Record your actions within your Logbook.

“Fortic” Style combination Water Heaters – Typically this type of heater is quite old in its design and heat is often shared between the hot water section and the cold water cistern situated on the top. This often means that the cold water can rise above the required 20°C. It is important to ensure that the hot water is maintained at 60°C within these heaters to ensure thorough temperature pasteurisation to minimise any risk from the elevated cold temperatures. At refurbishment you should consider replacing these for an alternative design.

Cold Water Storage Cistern Cleaning - 6 and 12 monthly inspections will consider water storage tanks, typically within roof spaces, but also including those sited on top of combination heaters. The accumulation of sediment, debris, sludge and scale including bio-films all contribute to environments that promote the presence and growth of bacteria such as legionella. When water tanks are identified as “dirty” then these should be cleaned.

Thermostatic Mixing Valves (TMV’s) – TMV’s regulate temperature at the point of use by mixing cold water with the hot supply just prior to the tap outlets (they are typically large chrome plated valves sited below basins and sinks). The valves have in-built strainers and require servicing in line with manufacturers guidance.

Where you need to take temperatures at these locations, these should be taken on the hot pipework as it enters the TMV.

The mixed water will deliver at about 43°C which is the preferred temperature for unsupervised use; however they can be found where hot water needs to be controlled as a scalding risk to other users due to proximity to heaters etc.

The Risks from Scalding - Where there is a small or medium water heater (non “fortic” style) serving one or two basins/sinks within close proximity of the heater itself then a local risk assessment can be made to allow 50°C at the tap outlets allowing the heater to reside at less than the prescribed 60°C. This may alleviate the need for TMV’s in some instances. You should ensure that this is suitable for any person using these outlets, and record you Risk Assessment findings within your Legionella RA/Logbook

The Devon County Council policy and procedures for the management of legionella support the requirements of Approved Code of Practice: L8. If you have chosen to use the services of an external specialist you should seek written assurance that the service they provide to you also satisfies all requirements of Approved Code of practice: L8

For assistance with any aspect of Legionella management contact:
Nigel Coleman Tel: 01392 383538 or e:mail nigel.coleman@nps-sw.co.uk

Fairer Funding Campaign

The Devon Education Forum will be leading on and coordinating a campaign to seek fairer funding for Devon schools for the next spending round 2011 – 2014 and you might like to know the sorts of key points and information they will be using in any discussion:

*The Government distributes funding for schools through local councils and each education authority historically has received different funding

- Devon currently stands at 148th out of 151 education authorities in its level of funding
- This year Devon is receiving £3,842 for every pupil
- The top funded authority in the country - City of London - receives £7,603
- The national average is £4,217 , so every pupil in a Devon school is effectively worth £375 less - every year - than the national average
- For a 1,000-pupil secondary school this amounts to £375,000 lost from the budget every year. (We would suggest you use your own unique example here, 10 teachers down compared to a school funded at the national average or drill down even further to what difference it would make on each class, half a week's teaching assistant etc)
- For a 200-pupil primary school this amounts to £75,000 lost from the budget every year
- Upwards of 80 per cent of the cost of running a school goes on staff and yet teachers are all on national wage scales not local or regional
- Schools face similar costs for books, equipment, heat and light wherever they are situated. Rural schools often face higher costs.
- So why are our children subjected to this type of postcode lottery funding? The Government will say that since 1997 education funding in Devon has gone up by £1,000 per pupil. But that's less than the average increase. We do not deny that education in Devon has benefited from more funding. However the Government has also increased funding elsewhere in the country and so where there was a gap between per pupil funding this has only been exacerbated and the problem has become even more acute.

SIP Summer term 2009 visits programme is detailed in the most recent Gold Sheet. I am happy to send on individual copies.

How ready are you for a 'critical incident' in your school or local community? A Conference for senior leaders and school governors will take place on Wednesday 8 July at Buckfast Abbey £95 per place (including lunch) For further details please contact: Sally Skinner, 97 Heavitree Rd, Exeter EX1 2NE

The Vetting and Barring Scheme, which was designed to both improve and to extend the current employment vetting practices, scheduled to go-live on 12 October 2009 has been delayed until July 2010.

Safer Recruitment Training:

In February all Chairs of Governors will have received a letter from the DCSF setting out the new safer recruitment requirements which are due to come into force in January 2010. These requirements will mean that: "from a given date no recruitment panel, or individual, will be able to recruit staff in school unless a member of that panel, or the individual, has completed Safer Recruitment Training. An appointment made by a panel or individual that does not meet the mandatory requirement would be unlawful and it is vital that schools avoid placing themselves in this position" **Governing Bodies also need to bear in mind the most recent findings from Lord Laming following the death of Baby P, one of which is the increased powers that will be given to Ofsted to limit the judgements given to schools where schools are not fulfilling their responsibilities for child protection. This could mean an otherwise 'good' school receiving a 'satisfactory' judgement for example. The governing body needs to ensure that sufficient school staff have undertaken accredited training to meet the requirement outlined above (ensure that arrangements would cover situations of staff absence), and consider who on the governing body should, in addition, undertake accredited training.** There are currently two options for undertaking accredited training: online at NCSL.org (duration is approximately 5 hours but can be completed at more than one sitting) or by attending an accredited day training conference. The next Safer Recruitment and Managing Allegations Conferences will be on: 19th June 2009 - Gipsy Hill Hotel, Exeter; 21st October 2009 - Exeter Racecourse and 25th January 2010 - Exeter Racecourse. Additional dates are likely to be offered and we will ensure that these are brought to your attention. Bookings for these conferences must be made online at www.devon.gov.uk/onlinebookings and NOT via the governor services website. In the category box you will need to select 'Working with Children and Young People' then in the sub category box select, '5.Multi-Agency' then choose the course title, 'Safer Recruitment and Managing Allegations'. For any queries regarding these bookings contact the Local Safeguarding Children's Board on 01392 383371.

JE

It is expected that following the recent Informal Appeals by the nominated Clerks that a final decision will be made by the end of the month. As part of the process the Appellant Group, supported by DAG developed an updated and more realistic Job Description. Whilst it is, at first sight, a very challenging document it is a realistic presentation of the extremely onerous duties and responsibilities our Clerks are required and expected to undertake to ensure GBs are properly advised.

NGA

The following has been received from the NGA

Cabinet reshuffle – No change at the top

Surprisingly, the cabinet reshuffle has not resulted in any change at the top of the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF). Rumours abounded that Ed Balls would by now be sitting in the Treasury, but he remains the Secretary of State for Children Schools and Families. Hopefully, this means that the eagerly anticipated White Paper will still make an appearance next week.

At the time of writing no announcements had been made about the other ministerial positions at DCSF although there will be some change

Policies ~ a request to members

We are trying to collect copies of policies on pupil behaviour and discipline and on school uniform, and examples of Home-School Agreements. We should be very grateful if members would share these with NGA. *Please email to: gillian.allcroft@nga.org.uk or send hard copies to the NGA Office.*

Extended Schools Toolkit for Governors (Revised Edition April 2009): A new and improved edition of the TDA's Extended Services Toolkit for governors – reflecting changes to the agenda, as well as the new duties on well-being and community cohesion – is now available. The toolkit was created by the TDA in partnership with the NGA, DCSF and extended services delivery partners. It is designed to help governors working with their schools, whether the school has the 'full core offer' or not, to ensure that existing or planned services are meeting the needs of pupils, families and the community – and are aligned with the school's vision and priorities.

This can be downloaded from <http://www.nga.org.uk/TDA.aspx> or ordered online from the Training and Development Agency for Schools at: publications@tda.gov.uk or by telephone on 0845 6060 323. (Reference TDA0664/03.09/COL).

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

The NGA has produced a number of its weekly newsletters. They have been e-mailed to all members for whom the NGA hold e-mail addresses, whilst the monthly Board Bulletin (BB) is sent to Local Associations. I 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.

DCSF

All GBs should have received an Updated Guide to the Law for School Governors dated April 2009. If you require more discs please contact the DCSF distribution team on 0845 60 222 60 or email dcsf@prolog.uk.com.

You are reminded that the DCSF target deadline to write a School Travel Plan (STP) is March 2010

Governors are being invited to contribute to a DCSF consultation on spotting the signs of gang life, to help create national guidance for professionals who work with young people. It closes on 19 June and is accessible, like all DCSF consultations via www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations. There are another 9 live Consultations.

I receive a very useful monthly e-mail from DCSF. If any of you would like a separate copy, please let me know and I shall try and remember to pass it on!!! Meanwhile I have extracted a couple of items of interest below.

OFSTED

The new Framework for the inspection of maintained schools from September 2009 will be made available on the Ofsted website shortly. The Framework will highlight the key features of the new inspection arrangements which have been driven by a greater focus on improvement, the views of parents and pupils and 'narrowing the gap'.

Ofsted has been piloting the new inspections extensively over the last academic year, and the findings from these pilots have informed the arrangements for September.

The changes to the inspection process have also been piloted alongside changes to the self-evaluation form (SEF) which has been streamlined to become an even more useful and manageable tool for school improvement. To help schools prepare for these changes, a copy of the new SEF has now been made available on the Ofsted website for schools to read. It is planned that the new version of the SEF will go online in July for schools to complete.

As part of the launch of the new Framework, Ofsted is holding a number of conferences around the country to brief local authority representatives and a small number of nominated headteachers from each local authority on the new arrangements. The conferences will be all-day events, and are set to take the form of presentations, round-table discussions, and a question and answer session. The materials from these events will be placed on the Ofsted website for all schools to read, and we will cover some of the questions raised through the conferences in the July issue of Ofsted News.

To read Part A of the draft SEF from the summer 2009 pilot inspections and a questions and answers document visit <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/20090027>.

PRIMARY SNIPPETS

You are reminded that from 1 April 2009 it is mandatory for all first time heads to hold the NPQH (National Professional Qualification for Headships) before they can be appointed.

Remember it is now just 16 months (September 2010) before all primary schools are due to have foreign language teaching in place across KS2, with progression from Y3 – Y6.

There will be a world record attempt on 20 June at the biggest simultaneous sleepover. The monies raised will go towards helping children's charities. www.giantsleepover.com

The week of 22 – 26 June has been set aside as D and T week. More info is contained in www.data.org.uk

Shine 09 gives students a platform to showcase their abilities by taking part in a national festival that aims to recognise and celebrate talent in schools. Visit www.shineweek.co.uk for further details.

Have you registered register for the Flora Cooking with Schools initiative? See www.cookingwithschools.com to do so.

Is your school a Fair Trade School? The Scheme is a national initiative by the Fairtrade Foundation to engage young people in development issues and help tackle global poverty through trade. Learn more about the 5 qualifying criteria at www.fairtrade.org.uk

Please inform your TAs that Teachers TV has launched a new hub for Teaching Assistants. See www.teachers.tv/ta

SECONDARY SNIPPETS

The nutrient-based standards for secondary schools will come into force from September 2009. The chief executive of the School Food Trust, the organisation charged with transforming school food, has written to headteachers and caterers to clarify some myths around the new standards, and highlight some achievements ahead of the deadline in September.

The Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) has given its backing to the Humanities Diploma, which will be available in September 2011. Representatives from the RSC will join a panel of experts who are developing the Diploma's content

You may be interested to visit an Ofsted report which showcases 12 schools in challenging circumstances rated as outstanding. The report can be downloaded at www.ofsted.gov.uk/ofsted-home/twelve-outstanding-secondary-schools-excelling-against-the-odds

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Functional Skills update - April 2009

As you will have heard, just before the Easter break Jim Knight announced that there would no longer be 'a link between the functional skills assessments and the GCSE'

This means that, while Functional Skills will remain a must-pass part of the diplomas and a separate, stand-alone qualification, the requirement that it be passed as a hurdle to accessing the higher marks in the relevant GCSE has been removed.

However, since Functional Skills remain an integral part of the new GCSE criteria as well as the diploma and Foundation Learning Tier, the work that centres have begun to address the teaching and learning issues raised by Functional Skills for all students should continue.

Devon Learning and Development Partnership (formerly Devon Education Services) Functional Skills team will continue to support centres in developing Functional Skills for all learners.

The text from Jim Knight's letter to Kathleen Tattersall, Chair of Ofqual, making the announcement can be found at <http://www.ofqual.org.uk/files/2009-04-02-letter-jimknight-to-kathleen.pdf>

There is a Conference at the Holiday Inn Plymouth on 23 June The objectives of the conferences are for your HT / Staff to:

- Take part in a strategic conversation with government about the 14-19 education reforms and the new requirement on all young people to participate in education or training until their 18th birthday
- Learn from your colleagues about their experiences to date, including those who have been teaching Diplomas and those who have participated in the functional skills pilots
- Have the opportunity to interact with Ministers

David Tall
Executive Officer to DAG

10 June 2009