

This first update for 2005/06 should be read in conjunction with the Checklist that should have arrived in your school during the second week of term.

There appears to be no diminution whatsoever in the amount of innovation and changes occurring ... with the resultant pressure on both staff and governors. There are no fewer than 5 meetings / sets of meetings for governors before half-term that all seem worthy of attendance. Hopefully this update will help you identify some of the key priorities over the coming months but the Checklist really does need very attentive reading.

- a) Urgent Matters - DAG/DGS Conference (All) : Staffing Structure Review (CoG/Personnel/Finance) : Headteacher Worklife Balance (CoG/Personnel)
- b) Volunteers Sought - (i) DAG Assistant Secretary (All) (ii) Secondary / Special School Parent Governor Representative
- c) Consultations - Nursery Places : School Admissions : Youth Matters : Foundation Status for Primaries
- d) Meetings in the future - ' The Child at the Centre ' (All) : Review of School Staffing Structure (CoG/Personnel/Finance) : Autumn Term Area Meetings (All) : Collaboration in LLCs (All) : Headteacher Worklife Balance (CoG/Personnel) : Link Governors
- e) Arrived in schools (i) paper (ii) by e-mail NB Governors are reminded that they can access information about the weekly distribution of e-mails / paperwork to schools by going in to <http://www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/distribution/index.html>
- f) New Items on Websites (i) DAG (www.devon.gov.uk/dag) (ii) others
- g) Papers available from me
- h) Brief items - Effective Governing Body (All) : Annual Review Visit (CoG) : New Parent Governor Representative (All) : NASG/NGC Merger (All) : Bored Teenagers (All) : Workforce Remodelling (Personnel) : Induction of New Governors (All) : Thanks! (All)

..... and finally

- a) Urgent Matters
 - (i) DAG/DGS October Conference ' The Child at the Centre ' - there are still some places available [see item d) (i) below] – please try to ensure your school is represented
 - (ii) Review of School Staffing Structure - this is, probably, the top priority for this term (particularly for all secondary schools and any primary schools where there are currently management allowances). Note that there is a December 31st deadline for deciding future structures ... but a much later date for full implementation. It is a process in which the GB has to be fully engaged. In NGC's recent Bulletin Board they have summarised the issue as follows. " The Fourteenth Report from STRB recommended that management allowances be abolished and Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLRs) introduced. Teaching and Learning Responsibilities are not direct replacements for management allowances. All schools will have to carry out a complete review of their staffing structures by 31 December 2005 in order to introduce TLRs. This new challenge to schools has provoked some lively debate on NGC's email forum.
 - The DfES has published a guide to the process of reviewing the staffing structure. This appears on GovernorNet under recent additions at <http://www.governornet.co.uk/publishArticle.cfm?topicAreald=4&contentId=1067>
 - Devon has also been issuing guidance material for schools both on paper in a pack to each school and also on the following website page (right hand side!): www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/dgfl/admin.html
 - DGS are running 3 courses for governors on this topic within the next few weeks. Fliers have been sent to all schools but with limited places it is important to book early. [see item d) (ii)]
 - (iii) Jane Collings (a governor in Totnes), is working with DGS on a project to support governing bodies in addressing the issue of work/life balance for headteachers. As part of the Workforce Remodelling agenda GBs have a statutory duty to ensure headteachers have an appropriate work life balance. If schools are to improve the work life balance of all staff it is important head teachers are role models of healthy work life balance. Devon Governor Services are undertaking a project led by Jane that aims to raise awareness with governors of their responsibilities to headteacher work life balance. Over the next six months the project will
 - consult with headteachers, governors and other relevant agencies
 - raise awareness with governors on WLB issues
 - deliver training sessions on WLB
 - give advice and support on WLB issues
 - develop resources to encourage healthy work life balance
- If you already have any good practice that you can share on developing healthy headteacher work life balance Jane would like to hear from you on 01392 383611 or at governor@devon.gov.uk
See also courses under Item d) (v)

- b) Volunteers Sought
 - (i) DAG is looking for an Assistant Secretary to replace Jenny Currie from January 2006. The work entails working with the County Secretary in the production of minutes for the 6 DAG Executive early evening meetings and the March Annual Assembly (all held in Exeter) as well as assisting with the 8 evening Area Meetings held

around the county. There is an honorarium available for the post. Jenny will be happy to talk with anyone interested about what is involved - she assures us she has really enjoyed working with the Executive and is only standing down because of work and family commitments. Please let me know if you are interested .. or if you know of someone else who might be.

(ii) DCC will be inviting nominations for the position of secondary / special school parent governor representative later this term. If you are interested in standing and wish to know more about what is involved please contact Gerry Rufolo at gerry.rufolo@devon.gov.uk

c) Consultations - notified by NGC. All consultations can be found at: www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/ The consultations may be completed online at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/>. Details of how to respond can be found in the NGC Bulletin Boards on the DAG website (and NGC website www.ngc.org.uk) NGC gives a compilation response from comments received which is in addition to individual responses from governors/ GBs. If you respond through NGC (Lonsdale House, 52, Blucher Street, Birmingham B1 1QU or e-mail ngc@ngc.org.uk) please give your name, association, school (phase/ type) and governor category. If you respond directly to DfES or other bodies, please copy your response to NGC.

(i) Draft Code of Practice on the Provision of Free Nursery Education Places for 3 and 4 Year Olds The consultation is seeking views on the draft Code of Practice on the provision of free nursery education. DfES Deadline 30 September 2005. Deadline for comment to NGC 16th September 2005

(ii) School Admissions: draft School Admissions Code of Practice, School Admissions Appeals Code of Practice and assorted regulations The draft Codes reflect legislation which requires admission authorities to give priority to looked after children in their admission arrangements. DfES Deadline 18 October 2005. Deadline for comment to NGC 1 October 2005

(iii) Youth Green Paper, Youth Matters. Youth Matters builds on the aims of Every Child Matters, which promotes the idea that all young people should achieve five key outcomes (being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being). It aims radically to re-shape services for young people. The consultation sets out a comprehensive package aimed at improving outcomes for all young people, with a particular emphasis on those who are disadvantaged. DfES Deadline 4 November 2005. Deadline for comment to NGC 16 October 2005

(iv) Proposals to extend the streamlined route for schools to acquire foundation status to primary schools. DfES Deadline 8 November 2005. Deadline for comment to NGC 21st October 2005

d) Meetings before half-term - all very important!! You will need to share the workload across the GB!

(i) DAG/DGS Conference, ' The Child at the Centre ', at the Crossmead Centre, Exeter from 6.00p.m. Friday October 14th to 4.00p.m. Saturday October 15th. This will provide an opportunity to explore the impact on the children and young people in our schools and local communities of the 'Every Child Matters' agenda. We have obtained nationally and locally well-known speakers / workshop leaders to take us through the opportunities to make a real difference. Details were in last term's Devon Governor or can be obtained (together with bookings) from Jane Lucas on 01392 383611 or jane.lucas@devon.gov.uk

(ii) Review of School Staffing Structure - these sessions will give an overview of the requirements within the staffing structure review, the timetable for action and the scale and scope of the review. Guidance and models will be made available. Deborah Magill, Deputy Director, EAL, and Julie Bannon, Senior HR Officer will facilitate the sessions. Dates and venues:

Tues. 27 September Crossmead Centre, Exeter

Wed. 5 October Barnstaple Hotel

Thur. 6 October Dartmoor Lodge Hotel, Ashburton

Each meeting will commence at 6.30pm and finish at 8pm. Light refreshments will be available from 6pm. Childcare and travel expenses are payable.

(iii) Autumn Term Area Meetings to discuss key issues based on the Checklist / this update are being held as follows from 7.00 - 9.00p.m.

Tuesday 27 September The Park School, Barnstaple for Barnstaple, Bideford, Braunton, Ilfracombe, South Molton, Torrington LLCs

Wednesday 28 September Tiverton High School for Tiverton, Culm Valley, South Molton LLCs

Thursday 29 September The King's School, Ottery St Mary for Ottery St Mary, Axe Valley, Honiton, Sidmouth, Exmouth LLCs

Wednesday 5 October Clyst Vale CC, Broadclyst for Clyst Vale, Crediton, Exeter LLCs

Any governor outside these areas is also welcome to attend - just let me know. Other areas will have meetings in the Spring term.

(iv) Working together - a topic close to my heart!! A Conference for all Headteachers and Chairs of Governors (or representative) entitled Achievement through Collaboration will be held at the Riviera Centre, Torquay on Wednesday, 19 October. Details have been sent to schools. It is an all day event, including lunch. Building on the key element of Devon's Vision for Learning with its emphasis on LLCs working together it seeks to mark a significant step in developing a joint agenda for improving outcomes in learning for all our children and young people in Devon.

(v) Headteacher Worklife Balance. Dedicated Headship Time is one statutory element of the National

Agreement for September 2005. Southwest Workforce Reform Advisors have developed a "key message" document to support schools in identifying what dedicated headship time is and in implementing it. This half day session is an opportunity for headteachers and governors to consider the "key message" document. The completion of a time audit by the headteacher prior to the session will inform discussion. Each school attending will receive £150 towards supply, travel and the time audit preparation. The programme leaders are Sarah Davies (Workforce Reform Consultant) and HR Representatives and the target audience Head and Chair of Governors (or Governor representatives). Dates and venues:

19 September 09.30 - 12.00 Kitley House Hotel, Nr Ivybridge
27 September 13.30 - 16.00 RHS Rosemoor, Great Torrington
29 September 09.30 - 12.00 Dartington Hall, Dartington
4 October 13.30 - 16.00 Tiverton Hotel, Tiverton

... and for after half-term

(vi) The Link Governor meeting theme this term is the New Relationship with Schools and all that this encompasses, including the new Ofsted Framework for Inspection. It is hoped to get feedback from members of those Devon schools who have already gone through the process (some did in first week of term!!). Details in Checklist.

e) Arrived in schools

(i) paper

- Food Policy in Schools: a strategic policy framework for governing bodies, published by NGC in June, is the culmination of a joint project with the Food Standards Agency. The publication was launched by Jacqui Smith, School Standards Minister, at the conference 'Governors: leading from within' on 15th June. Governors may have seen the wide press coverage of this event or heard NGC's Chief Executive Officer, Jean McEntire, interviewed on Radio 5 Live. A copy of the publication should have arrived in your school.

(ii) by e-mail NB Governors are reminded that they can access information about the weekly distribution of e-mails / paperwork to schools by going in to <http://www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/distribution/index.html>

- Change to DCC Maternity Policy In light of recent Employers Organisation guidance, with effect from the 1st September 2005, the DCC Maternity Policy has been amended - www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/docs/sep05/0536026.doc

- Workforce Remodelling Updated version of Frequently Asked Questions Summer 2005 - www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/docs/sep05/0536042.doc

- New term update - the welcome back message from Phil Norrey - always worth a read www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/docs/sep05/0537031.doc

f) New Items on Websites

(i) DAG (www.devon.gov.uk/dag)

- NGC Bulletin Boards for July, August and September
- NGC Autumn Newsletter

(ii) others

- Premises Board - the minutes from the Premises Board meeting on the 24th June 2005 can be accessed via the following link www.devon.gov.uk/eal/capitalstrategy

- Devon Local Admissions Forum - the Forum is a statutory requirement, and its role is to ensure that admission arrangements serve the interests of local parents and children. The agenda and minutes of the latest meeting can be viewed on the following website

www.devon.gov.uk/schools/admissions_transfers/admissions_forum

- Learning and Skills Council In response to governors' concern over their lack of knowledge about the LSC, voiced at the NGC Chairs' Conference in January, NGC has worked with the LSC to produce information for governors. The resulting leaflet, The School Governors' Guide to the Learning and Skills Council, will be available from NGC in September and will be posted on the website www.lsc.gov.uk

g) Papers available from me

- The interim report from the 'Leading Appointments' research at NCSL on headteacher recruitment and selection

h) Brief items

(i) I have seen the very impressive draft DGS folder on 'The Effective Governing Body' produced by a Governor Services group led by Jane Lucas. There have been some inevitable hiccoughs in the production process but it should be with CoGs within the coming weeks. Worth waiting for!!

(ii) Annual Review Visits. For this year's ARVs the only documentation schools will be asked to provide will be the OFSTED Self-Evaluation Form (SEF). There is an expectation from the DfES that all schools will have these on line from September. At the beginning of this term schools should have received from dcs (Devon Curriculum Services) a briefing paper, which provides further information and support for the ARV. The CoG or a senior governor is invited to attend part or all of the visit. It is particularly important for schools who have not had an inspection for a few years to have their SEF as complete as possible by September. OFSTED have made their

intentions clear that in broad terms the next 3 years will see inspections follow a pattern of:

- . Year 2005/06 - those last inspected 5-6 years ago
- . Year 2006/07 - for those last inspected 3-4 years ago
- . Year 2007/08 - for those inspected 1-2 years ago.

Naturally, there will be a number of exceptions to this broad pattern depending on circumstances. Some Devon schools have been 'done' already this term!!

(iii) Mrs Jane Day (a parent governor at Malborough with South Huish Primary) has been elected to serve as the primary school Parent Governor Representative for the LEA from 1 August 2005 for a period of 4 years to 31 July 2009. There is still a vacancy for a secondary / special school PGR [see item b) (ii)] Considerable thanks to Simon Howes and Margaret Ladbury who have been most diligent as PGRs for the last 4 years.

(iv) NGC / NASG merger. The 2 national governor organisations have been in talks throughout the past year with a view to forming a single national body to represent governors. Proposals are currently being developed to present to the respective AGMs for possible approval later this term. If you have any views or would like further info. please let me know.

(v) Ask Kevin!! " Somewhere to go? Something to do? " Have you a young person in your family? The Government has issued a consultation called Somewhere to go? Something to do? which is aimed specifically at young people, asking them ' How would you make life better for teenagers? ' If your bored teenager would like to contribute to this consultation, it can be found at: www.dfes.gov.uk. Responses can be made online (<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/>); by email to: somewheretogo.consultation@dfes.gsi.gov.uk; or by post to Consultation Unit, DfES, Area 1A, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 2GJ.

(vi) Workforce Remodelling: Pack IV Pack IV of Workforce Remodelling - a Guide for Governors (available from NGC) deals with PPA time, Management and Leadership of the School, Work/Life Balance, Invigilation and the implications of Extended Schools. For a free copy contact NGC office. I shall have copies at the Area Meetings.

(vii) Induction of New Governors NGC would like to produce guidance on successful induction of new governors. They are looking to current governors to provide examples of good practice. Contributions from Governor Support Services, Associations and individual governors are very welcome. Please email lindy@flaxfield.demon.co.uk if you can help.

(viii) Thanks!! I cannot let this update pass without expressing real thanks to those of you, both individually and/or through your schools, who have given support to Hospiscare and Children's Hospice SW as we undertook our Pyrenean trek. We would be delighted to come to your school and give a slideshow presentation on it (and for secondary schools I'm more than happy, as a linguist, to offer it in French to pupils studying French) - it's called broadening the curriculum!! We hope that you have been able to look at the 100+ photos / weblog / other details on our website www.godfreytreks.co.uk Donations can still be made through Pyrenees Trek, c/o Vicky Lachenicht, Hospiscare, Dryden Road, Exeter, EX2 5JJ and we hope other schools, large and small, might use some of their charity events to support our 2 chosen charities.

..... and finally

Chuckles - letters from parents

Sorry Mary was not at school yesterday she had dire rear.

John will not be in school today. He has a cole slaw on his top lip.

Elizabeth will be absent because her mother has had twins. I can assure you it will not happen again.

You remember all those nose bleeds George has been having and made him stay off school? Well, the doctor is having him taken into hospital to have his nose circumcised. So that should be the end of his problem.

Q. How many folk singers does it take to change a light bulb?

A. 2 - One to change the bulb and one to write a song about how wonderful the old bulb was