

Latest update for the Summer Term.

- a) Urgent Matters - Workforce Remodelling (NB Action required by ALL CoGs)
 - b) Volunteers Sought - Parent Governor Representatives (Parent Governors)
 - c) Consultations - Schools' Views of the LEA (CoGs) : Changes to Needs-led Formula (Finance) : Making Safeguarding Everybody's Business (All)
 - d) Meetings in near future - Secondary Schools Workforce Remodelling : DAG/DGS Autumn Conference : Autumn Term Area Meetings
 - 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 - Children + Young People's Plan (All) : Wildlife Gardens (All) : Falling Rolls (All) : Education Improvement Partnerships (All) : Revised Model Grievance Policy & Procedure (Personnel) : Annual Review Visits (CoGs) : Primary School Meals (All)

..... and finally a challenge to the intellect

a) Urgent Matters

Please remember that the 10% PPA time guarantee for all teachers comes in to effect from September 1st and is NOT an optional extra - it has to be delivered!! With this in mind the LEA Workforce Remodelling Team are in the process of sending out a questionnaire to ALL schools. They are asking the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and other representatives to complete and sign off the questionnaire indicating their progress towards implementation of the National Agreement. It should be returned by fax or post to Jane Fogden, Workforce Remodelling Administrator, dcs, Great Moor House, Sowton, Exeter EX2 7NL, Tel: 01392 386481/Fax: 01392 382181 as soon as possible, but no later than Friday June10 2005.

If schools require additional advice and support on the implementation of PPA time they are invited to tick the appropriate box on the questionnaire. Guidance on dedicated headship time will be available in June, and a number of workshops will take place on this issue later this term. Workshops for secondary schools on the invigilation of external examinations will take place early in the Autumn term. This will include details on the appropriate roles and responsibilities of teachers and support staff from September 2005. Copies of the "Invigilation Resource Pack" produced by The Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group can be downloaded from the National Remodelling Team's website www.remodelling.org or ordered from Prolog 0845 602 2260 Ref: NRT/0065/2005.

b) Volunteers Sought

Arrangements for a postal ballot of eligible parent governors to elect two representatives for the next 4 years are being sent to schools. The current parent governor representatives are Mrs Margaret Ladbury for secondary / special schools and Mr Simon Howes for primary schools. Full details about the election and nomination forms will be sent out, direct, to all parent governors in the week beginning 13 June 2005. Prospective candidates will then have until 4 July 2005 to return their nomination papers. Ballot papers will be sent out direct to all parent governors during the week beginning 11 July 2005, to be returned by Monday, 25 July 2005. Votes cast will be counted on 27 July 2005.

c) Consultations

(i) The fourth national on-line school survey of schools' views about their LEA will be held later this term. The survey will ask school managers and governors for their views about the LEA's strategy and support to education, and the quality of services provided (or procured) by the LEA - that is, by the whole of Devon County Council and not just the education service. This is an opportunity for you to identify services which can be improved, as well as those which are performing well, and to indicate whether you believe the LEA is currently moving in the right direction.

Information will be confidential to the Audit Commission. Unless you give permission for your school to be identified your responses will be kept anonymous and the Audit Commission will provide the LEA with aggregated information only. The survey will be open during the five week period from Monday 23 May 2005 to Monday 27 June 2005, with a possible two-week extension until Monday 11 July 2005. The survey form will be available on the internet during this period at: www.audit-commission.gov.uk/schoolsurvey You will be able to access the survey from any computer, using your LEA and school DfES number. The website will provide instructions for completing and submitting the survey directly to the Audit Commission. You will receive further information about logging-in to the website nearer to the survey's start date. In 2004 there was a modest response-rate. It is hoped that more governing bodies will want to take part in this year's survey.

(ii) LEA consultation with Primary Schools with regard to possible changes to the primary schools needs led funding formula, mutual fund scheme and threshold reimbursement (UPS 2) (e-mail correspondence www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/docs/apr05/0518015.doc) Reply required by: Friday 17 June 2005. There are

consultation briefings (4.45 Coffee, Meeting 5.00 - 7 pm.) for the following dates / venues (N. + W. Devon meetings already held).

- 19 May 2005 Dartbridge Inn, Buckfastleigh
- 24 May 2005 Passage House, Kingsteignton
- 25 May 2005 The Loop Centre, Exeter

Further details from: Helen Barker on 01392 382784 or fsetrain@devon.gov.uk.

(iii) LEA consultation with Secondary Schools with regard to possible changes to the secondary schools mutual fund scheme and threshold reimbursement (UPS 2) (e-mail correspondence www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/docs/apr05/0518018.doc). Reply required by: Friday 17 June 2005

(iv) Making Safeguarding Everybody's Business: A Post-Bichard Vetting Scheme The consultation is being put forward jointly by the DfES and the Department of Health. It seeks views on proposals to create a new centralised vetting and barring scheme for people (including volunteers) working with children or vulnerable adults in the light of vetting failures identified by the Bichard Inquiry following the tragic deaths of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman in 2003. A briefing paper will be available soon from NGC. It will be posted on the NGC and DAG websites. The consultation can be found at: www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/ The consultation may be completed online at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/>. Email responses should be sent to: bichard.consultation@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

Jane Phillips (former Chair of NASG) comments: " This is of huge importance to governors and we have covered it in the last two issues of GN. I think there are two separate issues for governors

1. in relation to their role as employers
2. in relation to themselves being subject to a full disclosure.

And there will be cost implications for school budgets! Governors should respond to this consultation. " See also Item g) (i) below.

d) Meetings in near future

(i) A day workshop for secondary schools on pulling together the requirements, and sustaining the implementation of the National Agreement, is scheduled to take place on Monday 27 June. Details will be circulated electronically.

(ii) Autumn Term Major DGS/DAG overnight conference on the theme ' The Child at the Centre ' ... an investigation of the Every Child Matters agenda. Fri. Oct 14th 6.00p.m. to Sat. Oct. 15th 4.00p.m. National speakers. Full details in Devon Governor sent out after half-term. Book early to be assured of your place.

(iii) Dates for DAG Area Meetings in the Autumn term will be given in the next update. They will be held in the East Devon, North Devon, Exeter and Culm Valley/Tiverton areas.

e) Arrived in schools (i) paper (ii) by e-mail

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(i) - Devon County Council: Parent Governor Representation on the LEA - paper copy letter for the attention of the Governing Body and, in particular, parent governors.

- Headlines - a fortnightly update on current issues to Headteachers from the LEA

(ii) - Community Primary Schools + Secondary Schools + Voluntary Aided Schools + Foundation Schools - Guidance on Admission Arrangements for 2006 - see www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/docs/apr05/0518022.doc

- Devon Local Education Authority School term and holiday dates A calendar showing school term dates for 2006/2007 Academic Year - see www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/docs/apr05/0518010.doc

- Extended Schools The Extended Schools agenda continues to be very central to national policy development. Over the last year the emphasis has changed as Extended Schools have become even more closely associated with the Every Child Matters outcomes and with the development of the Devon Children's Trust. A document has been forwarded which gives an update on both national developments and the delivery of Extended Schools within Devon - see www4.devon.gov.uk/eal/docs/may05/0520026.doc

f) New Items on Websites (i) DAG (www.devon.gov.uk/dag) (ii) others

(i) NGC Bulletin Board for May

g) Papers available from me

(i) The Education Network (TEN)

- Making Safeguarding Everybody's Business This policy briefing summarises key points from the above consultation issued by the DfES on 5 April 2005. The consultation sets out proposals to create a new centralised vetting and barring scheme for people working with children or vulnerable adults (paid or unpaid) in light of vetting failures identified by the Bichard inquiry following the tragic deaths of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman in 2003. The consultation invites comments from those who work with children and vulnerable adults, and in particular those who employ them.

- Election outcomes This briefing lists the new team of Ministers at the DfES, along with their detailed areas of responsibility for education and children's services. It also lists the changes of control arising from last

week's local and mayoral elections.

h) Brief items

(i) Children and Young People's Plan - IMPORTANT This is probably the most far reaching change that is going to take place in the way schools work with children since the 1944 Education Act. Schools will be receiving over the next few weeks a Children and Young People's Transition Plan. Please take time to read this document as it will explain the way Devon is going to be working in the future. It involves the Children's Trust and the collaboration of all the children's services. It will be a new way of working collaboratively.

(ii) A repeat request from the last update on a wildlife garden A small primary school governor seeks advice for a working party of parents who are currently planning to redesign the garden area at the school and are considering including an area to be set aside as a wildlife garden. Are there any other Devon schools that have already established wildlife gardens that they could perhaps visit/talk to for ideas, best practice, things to avoid etc.?

There is a useful website Learning through Landscapes at www.ltl.org.uk/ which can give some information on this type of issue.

(iii) Falling Primary Rolls. The issue of falling rolls has a bearing on funding, remodelling and much else. In the last year NGC has worked with others on a project board (a sub-group of the School Funding Implementation Group) to consider how to give advice to schools and LEAs facing this situation. The project board used the Audit Commission's research into falling rolls in this work. The result is a website which gives advice and methods of approaching this difficult subject. It can be found at www.teachernet.gov.uk/fallingrolls.

(iv) Education Improvement Partnerships. In Devon we have talked a lot about collaboration. This prospectus is sub-titled local collaboration for school improvement and better delivery. It aims to promote ' the expansion of high quality collaboration, the rationalization of partnership activity where appropriate ' and ' the devolution of responsibilities and resources from local authorities to groups of schools and other partners ' . It is suggested that EIPs will have potential in a variety of contexts: 14-19 provision, behaviour improvement and alternative educational provision and the development of childcare and extended services. The prospectus can be ordered from: DfES Publications, PO Box 5050, Sherwood Park, Annesley, Nottingham, NG15 0DJ; tel: 0845 6022260; fax: 0845 6033360; e-mail: dfes@prolog.uk.com, quoting reference: DfES-1462-2005DOC-EN. It is available online from: www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/sie/se/educationimprovementpartnerships.

(v) Revised Model Grievance Policy & Procedure for school based staff. In light of the Employment Act 2002 (Dispute Resolution) Regulations 2004, the Devon County Council Corporate Grievance Policy & Procedure and Model Grievance Policy & Procedure for school based staff has been revised. This revised policy should now be adopted by your school and the old policy should no longer be used. The revised policy can be found at:- <http://www4.devon.gov.uk/private/corporate/policy/hr/grievance/homepage.shtml>

(vi) Annual Review Visits + Self-Evaluation Forms Devon Curriculum Services are proposing to use the new on-line Self Evaluation Form, the SEF, as the basis of future Annual Review Visits. The SEF will be central to inspections and it is expected that all schools will have the SEF in place from September 2005. DCS intend that the Annual Review Visit process will provide the opportunity to discuss a school's self evaluation, possible refinements to procedures for identifying evidence and how the outcomes are used to prioritise school improvements. They see the Annual Review Visit as providing both support to schools in completing the SEF and in providing challenge through a professional dialogue focused on school self-evaluation.

(vii) Primary School Meals. Following consultation meetings about proposed changes to Primary School Meals provision, the views of all schools responding were carefully considered. There are clearly some anxieties about taking on responsibility for catering, and in particular the financial risk. DCC also had some ongoing concerns about the data they had to inform final decisions. It is therefore proposed that the current limited pilot for Primary School Meals should be extended as a whole-county pilot for one year from September 2005 to September 2006, with DCC retaining the risk. This means that schools do not need to consider the options floated at consultation. It is hoped that this will encourage schools to stay with DCC as a supplier. This decision will help to support the viability of the one year pilot and allow schools to judge for themselves the quality and popularity of what is on offer.

..... and finally

There has been a mixed reaction to the jokes section, so this month you have a choice between the corny and the intellectual (the latter offering you a chance to feature in next month's update!!)

Firstly the corny

What do you get when you cross a parrot with a lion?
I don't know, but when it talks you had better listen.

What is the difference between a pigeon and a yuppie?
A pigeon can still lay a deposit on a Porsche.

A cowboy strolled out of a saloon, ready to ride out of town. But he saw that someone had painted his horse green from head to hoof. The cowboy stormed back into the saloon.

"Which one of you painted my horse green?" he demanded.

"I did," said a huge mean looking guy rising to his feet.

"Right," said the cowboy. "just letting you know that the first coat's dry."

And now for the intellectuals - " A prose by any other name "

The Washington Post's Mensa Invitational asked readers to take any word from the dictionary, alter it by adding, subtracting, or changing one letter, and supply a new definition. Can you do better than any of these? If so, send in your ideas for the next update.

Intoxication: Euphoria at getting a tax refund, which lasts until you realize it was your money to start with.

Reintarnation: Coming back to life as a hillbilly.

Foreplay: Any misrepresentation about yourself for the purpose of getting laid.

Cashtration (n.): The act of buying a house, which renders the subject financially impotent for an indefinite period.

Over to you!!