

To be read in conjunction with the Spring Term Checklist which should have arrived in your school in the second week of term. I am continuing the regular format using the headings below. I also try to indicate where a particular person within the GB might have a specific interest. Please remember that all the updates are also placed on the DAG website in the DAG Updates section. If you would prefer just to receive the list of titles below rather than the full text please let me know.

- a) Urgent Matters - Workforce Remodelling ( Personnel / CoG ) : 2005/06 Budget ( Finance ) : Governors' Discussion Board Web Forum ( All ) : Tsunami Fundraising in Schools ( All )
  - b) Volunteers Sought ( All ) - Devon Arts in Schools' Initiative : Web Forum ' monitors '
  - c) Consultations ( All ) - Proposals for Dealing with Allegations against Teachers and Other Staff : School Term Dates
  - d) Meetings in near future - DAG Area Meetings ( All ) : DAG Annual Assembly ( All ) : Workforce Remodelling ( Personnel / CoG ) : Promise MarkIV ( Buildings ) : Extended Schools ( Church Schools ) : Safeguarding Children : Health & Safety of Children
  - 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/eal/dag](http://www.devon.gov.uk/eal/dag) ) (ii) others
  - g) Papers available from me
  - h) Brief items - Pen-portrait of Ruth Kelly ( All ) : Extended Schools All ) : Education Bill ( All ) : Job Evaluation ( Personnel ) : Teachers' TV ( All ) : Phil Norrey letter ( Curriculum ) : CRB Checks for Governors All ) : Collaborative Working ( All ) : Budget Carry Forwards ( Finance ) : Taking Photographs in Schools ( All )
- ..... and finally ( on a drab January day! ) .....

a) Urgent Matters

( i ) Workforce Remodelling. The final phase of the National Agreement on 'Raising Standards and Tackling Workload' is due for implementation in September 2005. Sarah Davies ( a Devon primary HT ) has been appointed to the post of Primary Remodelling Consultant from the beginning of January to join Philippa Court who has been leading Devon's work in this field. Philippa has produced a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on 10% PPA time that is available to all schools. These are thought to be so good that the regional remodelling team want to issue them to all schools in the south west. Devon's remodelling website is now up and running and can be found at

<http://www.devon.gov.uk/dcs/improve/remodel>

Look for the FAQs document and the Winter 2004 Workforce Remodelling newsletter. The latter is also on the DAG website ... or I can e-mail you a copy. Finally check section d) below for important courses for governors on Workforce Remodelling.

( ii ) Budget details were sent to all schools during the week commencing Jan. 17th. The 2005/06 budget looks satisfactory in terms of % increase, but, when the County Council reviewed it they minuted " (c) that it be noted that the Government is continuing to provide funding for each Devon pupil at an average £185 per year less than the average of the South East Shire Councils (In 2003/04, this figure was £183)

( iii ) Governors' Discussion Board Webforum. This is a forum where you can raise matters of concern / share views with fellow governors. As I write it is being established. Go in to the DGS website Home Page and at the bottom of the ' Find Out More ' section you will find Discussion Board. You need to register first and then you can begin to contribute.

( iv ) Tsunami Relief Funds. Many schools will already be organising events to support the tsunami relief appeal. If your school has done so / is planning to do so please log on to [www.schoolaiduk.org.uk](http://www.schoolaiduk.org.uk) where you can register the amount raised to create a combined total for individual schools' initiatives. In this way it is hoped to unite all schools in a common cause, increase the total amount contributed by schools to the joint charities fund and provide publicity and recognition to children across the country who have shown a magnificent response to the plight of others following the tsunami.

## b) Volunteers Sought

( i ) DAISI ( Devon Arts in Schools Initiative ) are looking for an interested governor to join the Board and become a trustee. The basic commitments of a DAISI Trustee are:

- to attend all Board meetings approximately 5/6 a year. These are generally held on a weekday between 5.30 and 7.30pm.
- to attend the DAISI staff and trustees away day which is held once a year.
- to attend a selection of DAISI events that are held throughout the year if possible.
- to visit a selection of schools projects run by DAISI and complete observation forms for these visits.
- to be available to DAISI staff and Board members for support and advice, for example by telephone or email.

Anyone interested please contact me

( ii ) Judy Burgess is looking for further governors/clerks/heads who would act as moderators for the new webforum discussion board. Please contact Judy ( 01392 383633 or [judy.burgess@devon.gov.uk](mailto:judy.burgess@devon.gov.uk) ) if you can help

## c) Consultations

( i ) Proposals for Dealing with Allegations against Teachers and Other Staff. This consultation arises from the commitment in the Five Year Strategy for Children and Young People to publish proposals aimed at defending teachers from false allegations, ensuring that teachers are not subjected to damaging delays where their integrity is in question, and that swift action can be taken against those who make false allegations. The consultation can be found at: [www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/proposals](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/proposals). Written responses should be sent to Child Protection: Education Policy Team, Ground Floor E, Mowden Hall, Staindrop Road, Darlington, DL3 9BG. Email responses should be sent to: [terry.hegarty@dfes.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:terry.hegarty@dfes.gsi.gov.uk) Alternatively there is a briefing and a questionnaire relating to the DfES consultation in the members section of the NGC website ( see item f (ii) ). DfES Deadline 10 February 2005. Deadline for comment to NGC 24 January 2005.

( ii ) School Term Dates for the 2006/2007 Academic Year Governor comments on the consultation calendar are invited on a consultation questionnaire sent to schools, which can be returned electronically, by 4<sup>th</sup> March 2005.

## d) Meetings in near future

( i ) Details of this term's area meetings are in the Checklist and have been circulated to all schools in the relevant areas. Any governor from elsewhere in the county is welcome to come along .... but please let me know in advance!!

( ii ) Annual Assembly - look out for booking forms coming out in the next few weeks for the DAG Annual Assembly on April 16th in Exeter. Our guest speaker will be the new Deputy Director for EAL, Deborah Magill.

( iii ) Workforce Remodelling. There are still places available on these evening courses for governors ( not all the details were in the Checklist )

Thursday 27 January at the Devon Hotel, Exeter

Thursday 24 February at the Barnstaple Hotel, Barnstaple.

Thursday 3 March at Buckfast Abbey, Buckfast.

Call 01392 383611 or email [governor@devon.gov.uk](mailto:governor@devon.gov.uk) for booking information

( iv ) Workforce Remodelling / Worklife Balance Look out for information / booking forms going in to schools soon about a whole day conference in Exeter on March 9th for headteachers / governors focussing on headteacher worklife balance / cutting down on bureaucracy / managing the changing culture in schools. There is likely to be a very high demand so keep your eyes open for this!!!

( v ) A further Promise MarkIV road-show has been arranged in Exeter. The road-show is an opportunity for Heads and Governors to meet with representatives from Devon Property, Education Arts and Libraries, and to ask questions and receive further information on PROMISE Mk4. The meeting will be held on Monday 7th February 4.30 – 6.30 at County Hall - Clinton Room, Exeter. Please follow signs from Main Reception. Booking details are in school.

( vi ) Extended Schools Mini-Conference The Churches' Response - a discussion day for governors of Church schools and any governor involved with local churches. Paper copy sent to schools. Sat. 19th March Free

( vii ) Advance notice of 2 summer term day conferences entitled Safeguarding Children - Embedding Good Practice in Schools. The conference aims to explore issues around protecting children against predators and look at best practice in relation to the recruitment and maintenance of a workforce that will safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The day is aimed at Headteachers and Chairs of Governors and other professionals who are involved with staff appointments. Places are limited. Time 9.30 - 4.00 p.m. Dates and Locations 5th May Tiverton Hotel : 6th May Buckfast Abbey COST £100 per school including lunch ( 2 max from each school ) Information already in schools.

( viii ) An evening session entitled: Health and Welfare of Children at School. Two speakers: Jill Rose the lead nurse for school nursing, and Jan Pinnegar, the school counsellor at Priory High School. Weds 2nd March, 7 - 9pm at the Lecture Theatre, Faculty of Health and Social work, University of Plymouth in Exeter, at Earl Richards Road North, just off Topsham Road and very near to Priory High School. Governors are invited to come along to the presentation. Other members of the audience will include health professionals including school nurses, and members of the teaching profession. If you would like to go please ring Tom Murray on 01392 660483. This fits really well with the ' five outcomes ' agenda ( Every Child Matters ) and the healthy schools agenda.

e) Arrived in schools

(i) by paper

- Checklist
- January DfES Spectrum
- Portfolio of Services for 2005/06
- Schools Budgets 2005/6
- Information about The School Governors Yearbook 2005 + an Order form. This annual guide

gives support to governors through the school year. £8-50 + p & p

(ii) by e-mail

- DAG Area Meetings Feedback ( Autumn term )

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/eal/dag](http://www.devon.gov.uk/eal/dag) )

- NGC December Bulletin Board
- NGC January Bulletin Board
- NGC Newsletter Spring Term 2005
- Workforce Remodelling Newsletter Winter 2004
- Keep local collaboration strong - six national associations' joint press release on value of collaborative work ( both the latter are in DAG Documents Miscellaneous section )

(ii) others

NGC website. As your school buys in to DGS / DAG your school governors are automatically members of NGC. As such you can register for the member's area of the NGC website ( where you will find consultations etc. ) by contacting Gemma Hall at the NGC office on [gemma.hall@ngc.org.uk](mailto:gemma.hall@ngc.org.uk).

Jane Phillips ( NASG ) has recommended the Freedom of Information guide and supporting information available for easy download at: <http://www.microsoft.com/uk/education/resources/foi/>

Further information on this topic is also available on the website at

[http://www.devon.gov.uk/freedom\\_of\\_information.htm](http://www.devon.gov.uk/freedom_of_information.htm)

g) Papers available from me

TEN papers ( providing excellent summaries and comment ) on

- Inclusion and Special Educational Needs This briefing reports the findings of a DfES commissioned study on the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in mainstream

schools. It also summarises a recent Ofsted report which examines the extent to which the inclusion framework has had an impact on the capacity of mainstream schools to cater for pupils with SEN. I just quote one conclusion and comment from TEN: " The findings of the Dyson study, that schools and LEAs have no reason to fear that an inclusive approach to pupils with SEN will have a negative impact on attainment, are important. They are particularly pertinent when looked at in conjunction with the Ofsted report which found that the inclusion framework has had little effect on the proportion of pupils with SEN in mainstream schools. The Dyson report suggests that school level factors are a more important determinant of attainment than levels of inclusivity, and although the Ofsted report shows that effective practice in schools for pupils with SEN is patchy, it does usefully highlight some features of emerging good practice which could usefully be disseminated. It is also noteworthy that many LEAs still have some way to go in providing strong strategic management of SEN and developing effective evaluation systems. "

- Draft statutory guidance: children's trusts This briefing summarises the draft statutory guidance on children's trusts and statutory guidance on interagency co-operation to improve the wellbeing of children

#### h) Brief items

( i ) Brief pen-portrait of Ruth Kelly. Ruth Kelly was appointed the new Secretary of State for Education and Skills, following Charles Clarke's move to the position of Home Secretary. The Cabinet reshuffle has also resulted in Schools Minister David Miliband moving sideways, to be Minister of State at the Cabinet Office. His colleague Parliamentary Under Secretary Stephen Twigg is promoted to take his place as Minister of State at the DfES. Derek Twigg ( no relation! ), previously a Whip, joins the DfES to take his namesake's place as Under Secretary.

The new Education Secretary, who has three sons and a daughter, was educated at Queen's College, Oxford, where she gained an MSc in Economics. Her schooling was at the direct grant grammar Sutton High School and Westminster, one of Britain's top public schools. She worked on The Guardian as an economics writer in the early 1990s before joining the Bank of England. She was elected to Parliament as Member for Bolton in the 1997 general election and the following year became Parliamentary Private Secretary to Nick Brown at the Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. She spent three years at the Treasury, where she was Economic Secretary, before becoming Financial Secretary from May 2002. She then became Minister of State for the Cabinet Office in September 2004. With her new appointment, she becomes the sixth woman in Tony Blair's Cabinet.

( ii ) Extended Schools A further update went in to schools at the end of last term with contact numbers for appointed Local Co-ordinators for Extended Schools work in Local learning Communities.

( iii ) Education Bill: The Education Bill was published on 30 November 2004. Most of the issues covered are those which were described in the New Relationship with Schools and The Five Year Strategy, that is: changes to the inspection system; introduction of the School Profile; rationalising the collection of data from schools; introduction of three-year ring-fenced budgets for schools, possibly in line with the academic year; extension of the role and remit of the TTA to include the training of staff across the whole school workforce. NGC will be providing briefing on the contents of the Bill. There is also a School Transport Bill: This has already received its second reading, and is carried over for the remaining stages. It will allow up to 20 LEAs to pilot school travel schemes aimed in part at cutting car use, and will enable LEAs to charge pupils who are not in receipt of free school meals, provided that the money raised is reinvested in transport and that the charges are affordable. In addition, the Disability Discrimination Bill will strengthen and broaden the Disability and Discrimination Act, and the Child Benefit Bill will extend financial support for 16 to 19 year olds.

( iv ) Personnel / staffing governors need to be aware / keep up to date with the ongoing Job Evaluation programme. Look at the newsletters on the DAG website.

( v ) Teachers' TV, the channel dedicated to education, starts on February 8th. Within the schedules are programmes for governors including 3 'Just for Governors' programmes: 'School Improvement' ( 11 Feb ), 'Being Chair' ( 3 March ) and 'Setting Targets' ( 17 March ). Teachers' TV will be available as a digital television channel, broadcast 24/7 on digital satellite and cable. It will also be broadcast overnight on Freeview. Information on schedules will be available very soon. It will be free to view but you may

need a subscription to satellite or cable. For further details go to [www.teachers.tv](http://www.teachers.tv) Tune in to the series and you may see some people you recognise!!!!

( vi ) Extract from a letter to all schools before Christmas from Phil Norrey ( not all of which was about results!! ) " Despite all the day to day difficulties of managing the education of 100,000 youngsters in a world that refuses to stand still, I am very proud of the progress being made by Devon schools. Just looking at the bald results, the national rankings for Devon schools stand at 55th and 46th out of 150 for primary and secondary sectors respectively: our funding rank is 129th. That speaks volumes for the dedication of heads and teachers who are working with fewer resources than average, but achieving more. "

( vii ) CRB checks The guidelines that the LEA works to state that a Governor can be checked at any level as directed by the Board of Governors ensuring that they carry out at least a Department of Education List 99 check. Governors are volunteers so CRB checks are free.

( viii ) In a statement issued earlier this week, the six national associations representing headteachers, governors and education managers urge the Government to ensure that schools continue to work collaboratively within their local children's service. They have written to Education Secretary Ruth Kelly welcoming the government's plans for education, but warning that autonomy for secondary schools must be balanced by local partnership, if all children are to be served well. ( Full version on DAG website )

( ix ) At the recent Schools' Forum meeting schools were congratulated by officers and members on the fact that, in the national context, they maintain a better than average control over budget carry-forwards. For the past 12 months the amount going in to schools and the amount being spent has balanced.

( x ) New guidance on taking photographs in schools. I pass on this information received from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) that " aims to dispel the myth that data protection prevents parents from taking photographs of their child and friends at the annual school nativity play. "Photographs taken purely for personal use are exempt from the Data Protection Act (DPA). This means that parents, friends and family members can take photographs of their child and friends participating in school activities for the family album and can film events at school. In the press release accompanying this Assistant Commissioner, Jane Durkin, said: "I am delighted to be publishing our good practice notes on taking photographs in schools. It's a shame that people have been misinformed in the past and prevented from taking photographs of their children. Fear of breaching the provisions of the Data Protection Act should not be wrongly used to stop people taking photographs or videos." In the very small number of circumstances where the DPA does apply, if permission is sought by the photographer this will usually be enough to ensure compliance. Photographs taken by the media are usually exempt from the Act. The DPA does apply where photographs are taken for official use by schools and colleges, such as identity passes, and are storing these images with personal details such as names.

..... and finally ( on a drab January day ) .....

#### Headlines

- " Red Tape Holds Up New Bridge "
- " Enraged Cow Injures Farmer With Axe "
- " Hospital Sued By Seven Foot Doctors "

A father spotted his four year old daughter out in the garden brushing the family dog's teeth.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

"I'm brushing Bruno's teeth," she replied. "But don't worry I'll put your toothbrush back, like I always have."

Thought for the week.....If at first you don't succeed .....don't try sky diving