



Vale School Governors' Association Cymdeithas Llywodraethwyr Ysgolion y Fro and Governor Support Unit **Newsletter**

Note from the Chair

The air is full of doom and gloom following the UK Government's Comprehensive Spending Review. The Welsh Assembly Government is working on what it means for Wales. As Governors we wait in trepidation to find out the consequences for Education in the Vale of Glamorgan. The indications are not good.

Your Vale School Governors Association representatives will be contributing to the debate through the Education Budget Forum and arguing the case for schools very strongly.

One of the first casualties is the Annual Governors' Conference at the Vale Hotel, which has been such a highlight of our programme for several years. Instead we will be joining the Central South Consortium Local Authorities Governor Conference which is being

held on Saturday 5 March 2011 at the ESIS office in Nantgarw. However, one bonus will be the opportunity of discussion with governors from other local authorities to compare experiences in a wider context.

But amid all this gloom, there is something to bring us back to the things that matter in life. Last Wednesday my first grandchild was born. What sort of world is Gethin going to grow up in? He isn't aware yet of funding issues and the national debt, though they will no doubt be having a significant effect on him over the next few years. One day he may also be a School Governor, as well as playing rugby for Wales.

Martin Price

Chair of VSGA and Vice-Chair of Governors, St Richard Gwyn Roman Catholic High School, Barry

Your School is part of the mandatory Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC)

As a council, we are currently in the first reporting year of the CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme. This is a U.K. mandatory scheme in which participating organisations must monitor their energy use, and purchase allowances, sold by the Government, for each tonne of carbon dioxide they emit.

All participants are then placed on a league table, their position dependent on their carbon reduction performance. In order to do well in the scheme, the Vale aims to considerably reduce emissions year on year.

At the moment we are in the process of exchanging energy meters in all schools with new Automatic Meter Readers (AMR). These new meters take readings every half an hour and submit the data directly to the supplier and customer. Your school will no longer have to waste time and effort in correcting estimated bills as they will now all be based on actual reads.

In addition to the accurate billing, AMR will also enable your school to keep a much closer eye on its energy consumption. By accessing the half hourly data, potential energy savings can be spotted.

Please help us in raising the awareness of energy saving as a reduction in emissions is not only great news for the environment, but also for the budget of your school!

David Powell

Energy Manager, Vale of Glamorgan Council

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Issue 21 Autumn Term 2010

Special points of interest:

- AVAGO was formed in 1996 and re-launched in 2006 as Vale School Governors' Association (VSGA)
- The Management Committee is made up of 15 elected governors together with 2 elected parent governor representatives

VSGA was set up to:

- Promote best practice in governance in schools within the Vale of Glamorgan LEA
- To promote partnership amongst schools and between schools and the LEA
- To work with stakeholders to ensure adequate resources for schools within the LEA
- To represent the Association's views on issues relating to school governance and the management and resourcing of schools to relevant authorities and organisations

School Improvement Service 2010-11

We have another busy year ahead in terms of school improvement. The annual analysis of school performance has taken place, the results of which will form the focus of the work of the School Improvement Service. As a result of this, relevant foci have been devised for the work of the Review and Development (R and D) and Targeted Support Programme.

The work of the R and D Programme is essentially the work of Link Advisers in Primary, Infant, Junior, Special and Nursery Schools and the Link Adviser Team in Secondary Schools.

The work of the Targeted Support Team is essentially the work of our subject and Curriculum Development Advisers in all schools, including Special Schools and PRUs.

The results of data analysis for the Authority is shared during Head teacher Meetings, but what we can already say is that analysis has revealed the need to increase the focus of our work on developing writing in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. This will be closely linked with a review of assessment procedures and policy.

Initial work will take place with all schools, but follow up work will take place with targeted schools in two tranches across two academic years.

We have devised a support package for targeted schools which combines the expertise of our Advisers and Catch-Up LSAs with additional expertise from Ros Wilson. Ros is the author of the acclaimed writing development programme Big Writing and has kindly agreed to work with us to develop a more bespoke programme for Vale schools. The support programme will take place over the full academic year.

Post Inspection Action Plan for Education Services in Vale.

Our Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) addresses the key recommendations from our Estyn Inspection which took place in March 2010. As part of our programme to address these, we have made some changes as follows:

1. The Vale Enhanced School Data Pack: Annual Performance Review Meeting (APR)

During the Autumn Term, schools will be sent an enhanced Vale School Data Pack which will identify the performance of individual vulnerable pupils. This information will be used to:

- i) identify those pupils who may be at risk of future, potential underachievement
- ii) evaluate the effectiveness of provision to support them. The data pack will be used by Link Advisers and our ALN Advisers, to support schools to continue to implement effective provision, for individual pupils, in order to improve outcomes and wellbeing.

The enhanced School Data Pack will also contain a summary of the Core Data Set which schools currently access from DCELLs.

2. Target Setting and challenge.

As part of our drive to continue to improve outcomes and wellbeing for every learner in every setting, we are renewing our focus on the use of Fischer Family Trust Data to inform our target setting procedures in schools. Our aim is to develop a shared understanding about the use of appropriate target setting bands and procedures for groups of pupils. This shared understanding will focus on the need to ensure that targets are appropriately challenging for all groups of learners.

3. School self-evaluation, School Improvement Planning and the new Estyn Common Inspection Framework (CIF)

In order to provide schools with planning resources which best reflect the new CIF, Advisers have produced a range of optional templates for schools to use. For example:

- i) A Self-Evaluation Report (SER) Template
- ii) Two versions of a School Improvement Planning (SIP) Template. Obviously, schools are free to use whatever format they so wish, however, Estyn has requested that the SER follows the CIF and it would make sense to align this with the SIP.

We have also produced an at-a-glance Estyn Audit Tool using the Estyn Questions from their Self-evaluation Manual. This is intended to be used as an aid to school self-evaluation. This will be made available to schools electronically.

Additionally, for schools that are due for inspection this year, extra Adviser time will be made available to support Head teachers writing their SER.

4. School Effectiveness Profile (SEP)

Electronic copies of the SEP will be sent to schools. The intention is to align the use of the SEP with the foci for the R and D Programme. Link Advisers will engage Head teachers in professional dialogue about specific areas that the school has identified via the use of the SEP. In this way, the next steps needed for improved effectiveness, in any one specific area, can be better exemplified and illustrated in the SEP.

Lynette Jones

Head of School Improvement and Adult Community Learning
Vale of Glamorgan Council

Education Update and Briefing Sessions

In a joint venture agreed between the Governor Support Unit (GSU) and the Vale School Governors' Association (VSGA), a new key event for governing bodies in the Vale was launched in 2009.

The Education Update and Briefing Sessions provide an opportunity for:

- **Bryan Jeffreys** – Director of Learning & Development
- **Paula Ham** – Head of Service for Strategic Planning & Performance
- **Lynette Jones** – Head of Service for School Improvement
- **Caroline Rees** – Head of Service for Additional Learning Needs

to brief and update all Chairs and Vice Chairs of school governing bodies in the Vale on current and forthcoming local and national initiatives.

The Panel also respond to questions submitted in advance by the VSGA Management Committee, Chairs and Vice Chairs of governing bodies.

Who can attend?

The Education Update and Briefing Sessions are open to attendance by the VSGA Management Committee, Chairs and Vice Chairs of governing bodies. If a Chair and/or Vice Chair are unable to attend, the Chair/GB can nominate a replacement from its governing body.

Please make every effort to ensure your governing body is represented at these key events.

The three events held in the Mount Sorrel Hotel, Barry were very successful with representation from governing bodies throughout the Vale. Comments and feedback from the events included:

- *"Good to meet the Heads of Service and to obtain an understanding of vision and objectives for the future."*

- *"Direct contact between governors and LEA Heads of Service and Director ensuring good communication with governing bodies"*

- *"This was a very promising start. If future sessions are as good, governors will not wish to miss them. Well done, an excellent initiative."*

The events have considered areas such as:

- How do I know if my school is improving? - Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (MER)
- Review of Service Level Agreements (SLA's)
- Vulnerable Groups, in particular 'Looked After Children' and fielded a wide range of questions on funding, effective management of schools, post 16 transport consultation.

We will be continuing in 2010/11 to schedule these key events with an Education Update and Briefing Session in the Autumn 2010 and Summer term 2011 with a Governor Conference for governors planned in between for the Spring term 2011.

The Autumn term Education Update and Briefing Session is scheduled for:

Date: Tuesday 7 December 2010

Time: 6.30pm start

Venue: Mount Sorrel Hotel, Barry

Governing bodies may wish to include the 'Education Update and Briefing Sessions' as a standing agenda item at their full governing body meetings to discuss feedback from the sessions and to consider any questions they may wish to submit to the Panel at future sessions.

Jeremy Morgan

Governor Support Unit

Management Committee Membership 2010-12

The Management Committee is comprised of 15 elected governors plus each Parent Governor Representative of the Primary & Secondary sector.

No.	Title	Initial	Surname	School
1	Cllr Mrs	M	Alexander	Gladstone Primary & High Street Primary
2	Dr	C	Brown	Wick & Marcross C/W Primary
3	Mr	N	Craggs	Gwenfo C/W Primary
4	Cllr Mr	C	Elmore	Holton Primary
5	Mrs	M	Gibbs	Cadoxton Nursery & Llantwit Major School
6	Mrs	S	Hodges	Ysgol Sant Baruc & Ysgol Gwaun y Nant
7	Mr	K	Ingram	Ashgrove School & Albert Primary
8	Cllr Mr	G	Kemp	Cowbridge Comprehensive & Rhws Primary
9	Mrs	A	Males	Cogan Primary & St Cyres Comprehensive
10	Mr	M	Mason	Llanilltud Fawr Primary
11	Mrs	J	Pearce	Llantwit Major School & Wick & Marcross C/W Primary
12	Dr	M	Price	St Richard Gwyn R/C School
13	Mr	P	Sampson	Cadoxton Primary
14	Mr	D	Treharne	Ysgol Gwaun y Nant
15	Cllr Mr	M	Wilson	Albert Primary & Victoria Primary
PGR	Mr	P	Lewis	Cowbridge Comprehensive
PGR	Mr	S	Williams	Rhws Primary
Observer	Mrs	G	Evans	Ysgol Iolo Morganwg
Observer	Mr	G	Scott	High Street Primary

Governor Training Sessions – Autumn 2010

All governors should have already received their Autumn Term Governor Training Programme. Please see below details of those remaining courses scheduled.

If you would like to reserve a place on any of the training, please contact the Governor Support Unit on 01446 709106/8 or email: governors@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Jeremy Morgan
Governor Support Unit

Date	Course	Time	Location
Tues 30 Nov	Working in partnership with your Link Adviser to discuss school performance data and target setting	7.00-9.00pm	Mount Sorrel Hotel, Barry
Tues 7 Dec	Education Update & Briefing Session (Chairs & Vice Chairs)	6.30-8.30pm	Mount Sorrel Hotel, Barry

ICT in Excellence Awards

The ICT Excellence Awards is an awards scheme for schools, local authorities and other organisations supporting schools. These awards aim to identify and reward whole school excellence in ICT and reward those organisations who support school improvement with ICT

Building on Becta's self-review framework and the ICT Mark they provide clear examples of excellent practice from schools and organisations across the UK.

The ICT Excellence Awards 2010 winning schools and organisations were announced on Thursday, 14 October 2010.

Best Whole School UK Primary

Joint Winner: Barry Island Primary School, Barry

Best Whole School - Wales

Winner: Barry Island Primary School, Barry

ICT at Barry Island Primary School is everywhere! The forward thinking and creative vision has resulted in a vibrant and exciting learning culture where all the children are highly proficient users of technology. The vision successfully extends outwards to cover the needs of parents, families and lifelong learners in the wider community.

Children are always at the heart of the natural use of ICT in the school. New technologies are encouraged and the school is proactive in testing and trialling to allow the children to experiment and find out how resources such as i-pads and i-touches can support their learning. The 21st century curriculum embraces technology as a routine part of learning content, process and presentation.

Barry Island sets high expectations, as demonstrated by encouraging some children to begin GCSE equivalent qualifications in Year 6 and then providing ongoing support even after changing school. It also creates opportunities for all children to achieve their best from an early age. Young children actively create their own web space, take photographs, make videos and upload their work to share with friends and family at home. They are always encouraged to make informed and independent choices about where and when to use ICT.

WAG – Schools' Portal

The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) is pleased to announce that their new Schools' Portal is now live. This is meant to provide single point of access to a number of key web sites, which schools and governors may find very useful. The address for the site is:

www.schoolportalwales.org.uk

The site offers you several choices of web sites which you may find useful; you can access these web sites by clicking on a logo. WAG will be adding more links in the future.

Wendy Evans
Assistant Information Officer
Vale of Glamorgan Council

An Introduction to the Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Scheme (WNHSS)

The Vale of Glamorgan Healthy Schools Scheme is part of the WNHSS, funded by Welsh Assembly Government.

The aim of the scheme is to promote and protect the physical, emotional and social health and well being of children and young people in Wales.

Recognised by the World Health Organisation as playing a key role in promoting the health of children and young people, the Healthy Schools Scheme has been rolled out across Wales since 2000, and is part of Schools for Health in Europe (SHE).

All maintained schools in the Vale participate in the Scheme.

The Vale scheme is managed by Public Health Wales, and actively supported by the Local Education Authority and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board.

The underlying principles of the scheme are:

- The importance of pupil participation in core areas of school life which affect health and well-being
- The importance of the understanding and commitment of the whole school community
- A positive approach to health
- Equity
- Links to other national and local programmes and policies

Schools are helped to identify and implement a range of activities and programmes that reflect national and local health targets, set within a framework of:

- Leadership and communication
- Curriculum
- Ethos and environment
- Family and community involvement

What is a Healthy School required to do?

All schools appoint an In-School Coordinator who is responsible for coordinating the scheme in his/her school, preferably with the help of a Healthy School team.

Schools are required to develop, implement and evidence annual health action plans. At the end of each year schools are assessed by a team of locally trained assessors. Those schools that have met the required standard and delivered on their Healthy Schools targets are awarded a plaque from Welsh Assembly Government, presented at an annual awards ceremony.

The WNHSS National Quality Award was introduced in 2009.

To qualify for this award schools must have reached the 9th year or more, of active involvement in their local healthy school scheme, and need to have achieved all the indicators outlined in The Indicators for the Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Schemes National Quality Award." WAG 2009, supported with a variety of evidence for the actions undertaken.

Opportunities to Support Your Healthy School

The emphasis throughout the Healthy Schools Scheme is on the need for a whole school approach, and the support of senior management and school governors is particularly important in ensuring that health and well-being is embedded in the school.

Governors with a particular interest in health and well-being may like to consider being a link governor to their school's in-School Healthy School Coordinator.

There are also opportunities for one or more School Governors to sit on the Healthy Schools Steering Group or Nutrition Sub Group.

If you would like more information please contact:

Carol Maher
Vale of Glamorgan Healthy Schools Coordinator
Tel. 02920 350627
Email: carol.maher@wales.nhs.uk

Foundation Phase practitioners Play to Learn!



Vale of Glamorgan P.E. & School Sport Co-ordinator and Foundation Phase Advisors recently held three FREE training days to support Foundation Phase practitioners in Physical Development and Creative Movement. The training days were extremely popular, with practitioners from playgroups, primary and nursery schools from all over the Vale attending. Delegates enjoyed participating in workshops to learn more about children's health and wellbeing, whilst enhancing their knowledge and understanding of children's physical and creative movement skills.

"Fantastic day, fantastic resource."

(Sarah Trigg, Llanfair Primary School)

"The best, most applicable course I have been on! I look forward to using the pack."

(Liz Stone, Eagleswell Primary School)

In addition to the *FREE* training day, each of the schools and playgroups were given a *FREE bilingual box of resources valued at approximately £500 which included:

- 3 sets of A3 and A5 story books;
- Activity Cards and Technical Skills Cards to support practitioners in the teaching of physical skills;
- Audio CD's;
- Posters; and
- an Interactive CD-Rom which included planning support materials, and video footage.

(*Schools with two or more Reception classes received two resource boxes)

The Vale would like to acknowledge that training days and resources were made available through Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) funding.

Lesley Dancey

P. E. & School Sport Co-ordinator, Vale of Glamorgan Council
Tel: 01446 701820 • email: LDancey@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

A Successful Partnership with Show Racism the Red Card and the Vale of Glamorgan

Over the last 3 years Show Racism the Red Card has delivered anti-racism workshops to 34 of the 52 Junior, Primary and Secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan. This has meant 65% of Junior, Primary and Secondary schools have now been visited by Show Racism the Red Card. These schools now have the resources to use in their schools. The teachers in these schools have an improved knowledge and increased confidence towards on teaching anti-racism.

So far roughly 1650 young people have been taught anti-racism through Show Racism the Red Card. One pupil's response after a workshop was, "I told the teacher, but it was not against me, it was my friend. It was not very mean but it was still racism".

These are some of the responses from schools in the Vale about the partnership with Show Racism the Red Card:

"Really good initiative! Children really enjoyed the DVD; it gave the opportunity for lots of discussion."

St David's Primary School

"This was a fantastic initiative and one which we will continue to support with great enthusiasm. Many thanks!"

Evenlode Primary School

"A very worthwhile event which increases pupils understanding of racism."

Jenner Park Primary School

The annual all Wales schools competition was the most successful yet and schools in the Vale of Glamorgan have started to embrace it. This was reflected with the number of registrations, entries and prize winners from the Vale.

- 8.4% of registrations were from the Vale of Glamorgan
- 21% of entries came from the area
- 35% of the schools that will have prize winners are from the Vale of Glamorgan

Martine Coles

Lead Professional for English as an Additional Language, Vale of Glamorgan Council
Tel: 01446 709130 • email: MNColes@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

HR Update

There have been some changes to School Teachers Pay and Conditions (STPCD) in 2010 as highlighted below:

SEN allowance

SEN allowance is now a range between £2001 and £3954 (rather than two distinct allowances). There is specific criteria that determines when SEN allowances must be awarded and the governing body will need to determine the value of the allowance and set out the arrangements for awarding them in their Pay Policy. The full provisions of these changes are outlined in the 2010 STPCD and Headteachers will be sent a briefing note on these changes which will include details of safeguarding arrangements. These arrangements are effective from 1 September 2010.

There are also some legislative changes that will affect staff.

Removal of default retirement age from October 2011

Under new legislation, it will no longer be legal to retire someone at age 65 unless this can be objectively justified – it is unlikely that a school would be able to fulfil this test. This change affects anyone who is 65 on or after 1 October 2011. The current arrangements whereby employees can make a request to work on past 65 will be removed. Phasing in arrangements mean it will only be possible to retire someone at 65 if they are 65 before 1 October 2011, plus they are given the right to make a request to work on by 5 April 2011 at the latest. Headteachers will be given information

specifically relating to their staff affected by this change shortly.

Equality Act 2010

The Act which came into force on 1 October 2010 consolidates and harmonises all previous anti-discrimination laws (sex, disability, race etc). In addition it allows new provisions to include:

- Employees who care for a disabled person (e.g. child, partner or parent) are protected from discrimination or harassment.
- Employers are potentially liable for harassment against employees by a third party.
- It is potentially discriminatory on the grounds of disability to ask a job applicant health or disability related questions before a job offer has been made. It has always been the Vale's practice that health questionnaires are only requested as part of a conditional offer of employment and we are reviewing the questionnaire to ensure it complies with the new Act. However asking health related questions before an offer of employment is made could be discriminatory so we have removed this section from the Application Form and are recommending that questions about health/absence are not asked at interview stage.

If you have any questions about these matters please contact the Council Personnel Department on 01446 709125/176/870.

Sue Alderman

Principal Personnel Officer

Tel: 01446 709870

email: stalderman@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Spend to Save Fund for Energy Saving in School Buildings

My name is Ben Markham and I am the Council's Carbon Management Plan Assistant. Part of my role consists of improving the energy efficiency properties of the Vale schools in order to reduce their carbon footprint and fuel costs. I work with the Energy manager trying to improve the schools' energy efficiency using a number of different eco-friendly technologies such as cavity wall & loft insulation, energy efficient lighting and controls and any other energy saving improvement that can be shown to produce enough savings.

If your school is suitable for improvement measures then using our "spend to save fund" we can install the measures without it costing your school anything up front. The measures pay for themselves within 5 years typically using a fraction of the utility bill savings resulting from the installation of the measure(s).

To date we have had great success with Vale schools. We have already completed £50,000 worth of projects which will reduce school fuel costs by £17,500 per year save over 107 tonnes of carbon each year. Over the lifespan of the technologies it is estimated that the reduced fuel costs will save schools over £1 million and reduce carbon emissions by over 6,000 tonnes.

I am trying to be systematic in my approach and have concentrated mainly on insulation and will be considering other measures in the future. If you know that your school has un-filled cavity walls or an un-insulated loft then please contact me.

Ben Markham

Carbon Management Plan Assistant

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email: bmarkham@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

The Vale of Glamorgan Council

- Scrutiny Committee for Lifelong Learning

Learning and Development Directorate - Reports of the Director of Learning and Development

Schools and governors can access a number of reports produced for the Councils Scrutiny Committee by the Learning and Development Directorate.
Some key reports from the last year include:

Date of Scrutiny Meeting	Report
8 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ School Based Counselling■ School Performance Data
11 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 21st Century Schools Strategic Outline Plan■ Additional Learning Needs Strategy 2010 - 2015■ Audit of School Councils■ The Ethnic Minority Achievement Service■ Support for Looked After Children■ More Able and Talented Provision for Pupils
13 September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Community Focused Schools■ Review of the Children and Young People's Plan■ Welsh Education Scheme 2009 - 2014
26 July	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Estyn Inspection on the Quality of Local Authority Education Services for Children and Young People - Post Inspection Action Plan■ SEF Briefing Paper
28 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Estyn Inspection - Education Services for Children and Young People in the Vale of Glamorgan
2 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ School Investment Strategy - Update
19 April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The Proposed Publication of Statutory Notices to Establish New Seed Schools in Barry and Llantwit Major■ School Attendance and Absences
15 February	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Consultation on Post 16 Transport Provision

The full list of reports can be accessed via the Vale Website:

http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/our_council/council/minutes,_agendas_reports/agendas/scrutiny_ll.aspx

In association with the Vale of Glamorgan Council

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VSQA has an email address that you may contact us on.

It's VSQA@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

alternatively you can contact VSQA by post at:

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