



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

## Note from the Chair

Spring is starting to make itself felt. It seems to be getting warmer and the daffodils were well out for St David's day. I have been keeping more of an eye on the weather, and particularly the lovely sunny days we have had lately, since installing solar panels on the roof of my house. Sunny days mean lots of electricity is generated, reducing my bills and helping to avert global warming, at least a little.

Things are also moving in the Education world. The Vale is part of the Central South Consortium with four other local authorities. The Consortium will provide School improvement services to local authorities and schools in the five counties from next September. You will find more information elsewhere in this newsletter, but I would like to draw one piece of information to your notice. Brian Jeffreys, Director Lifelong learning at The Vale has been appointed as the new Interim Director for the Consortium, and I would like to pass on the congratulations and best wishes of the Vale School Governors' Association to him as he takes on this new role.

One of the manifestations of the new Consortium was the very useful joint conference for School Governors held

in Nantgarw at the beginning of March, which was addressed by the Education Minister. I went to a particularly interesting session on schools data and how to use it. Governors need to be looking at all the information they are given and looking behind the figures. They need to question where the numbers come from and what they actually mean. Estyn inspectors will be looking for evidence that Governors have challenged their schools and used the data to inform their decisions. So, looking at a rising graph of standards in English, the questions may be: How are standards being measured? What strategies did the school put into place to improve things? Are they still working? What is the breakdown between boys and girls? Are children on free school meals also following the same trend? How are the looked-after children doing on this measure? So get thinking about the information you get as a Governor. Is it understandable? Is it the right information? What else do you need and why?

**Martin Price**

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

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### 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

### In association with the Vale of Glamorgan Council

Governor Support Unit  
Vale of Glamorgan Council,  
School Improvement Service  
Provincial House, Kendrick Road, Barry CF62 8BF

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

It's [VSGA@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:VSGA@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

alternatively you can contact VSGA by post at:

#### VSGA

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# SLA Standards Board – Services to Schools Brochure 2012/13

The SLA documentation produced via the Standards Board has now been issued to all Schools so that they may consider adopting them in the forthcoming financial year. Schools need to confirm their adoption of the agreements no later than Friday 16th March in order to ensure service provision from the 1st April 2012. For the first time, this Brochure contains Service Agreements for non traded services in addition to the traded services previously available. These are School Organisation & Access, Governor Support & Libraries along with Primary School Catering which was included last year. These documents clarify the roles and responsibilities for service providers and users as well as the level of service provided to schools by the various teams. They have been drafted to work alongside the Partnership Agreement which remains in place.

The council was pleased with the high number of schools choosing to purchase council services last year and hopes to build on this for 2012/13. The termly performance reports of the Standards Board have been sent to your Cluster Chair and are also available to view on StaffNet. They are generally very positive and give service managers useful information to develop their service further in line with the needs of individual schools. The main responsibility of the Standards Board in preparing these reports is to monitor the performance of services delivered to schools throughout the term of the agreements and resolve performance issues. This can only succeed however if schools ensure that they keep the Standards Board informed of any issues they have experienced with regard to services received. Each cluster has nominated a representative for this purpose; Mr Julian Davis, Cowbridge Comprehensive School for the rural Vale cluster, Mr Mark Middlemiss from Palmerston Primary School for the Barry Cluster and Mr Huw Jones, Albert Primary School from the Penarth cluster.

If you would like an issue relating to service performance to be brought to the attention of the Board, or you would like to discuss the council's Services to Schools Brochure in more detail please either contact your cluster representative

or

**Lisa Lewis, Strategic Planning & Performance Officer**

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## SEN Pupils - Transport Review

The Directorate of Learning and Development is currently undertaking a review of the SEN Transport Service. The focus of the review is to consider the existing provision and policy for providing home to school transport to pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) identifying areas for improvement and financial savings in order to provide a comprehensive service and clear policy statement whilst addressing budgetary considerations.

### Objectives and Purpose of the Review

- To examine existing service provision for ALN pupils in the Vale of Glamorgan and identify any gaps and overlaps in provision.
- To examine examples of best practice in the area of ALN Transport and identify what the service can learn from these examples.
- To investigate potential areas of inconsistency in application of entitlement and clarify policy and procedure in these areas
- To investigate creative ways of providing a quality service within a reduced budget
- To make recommendations on the above points to the Council's Executive.

As part of the review, the team are consulting directly with Schools, parents, pupils, other council services and transport providers as well as other interested parties. If you wish to find out more about this review, or take part in this consultation process, please contact the Chair of the review Group

**Lisa Lewis**

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or via email

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## Sgwad 'Sgwennu Y Fro

Sgwad 'Sgwennu Y Fro had an exciting start to the year when Mererid Hopwood came to visit their writing squad at Ysgol Nant Talwg. Members are talented Year 5 and 6 pupils who have shown exceptional ability to write creatively through the medium of Welsh. The squad spent the day composing poems and were incredibly fortunate to be introduced to the complicated art of cynghanedd by one of its masters. Mererid who is the first woman to win the Chair, the Crown and the Prose Medal at the National Eisteddfod, was thrilled with their writing ability and has asked to return to work with them again. As Ysgol Nant Talwg was the venue, Mererid composed a verse to celebrate the opening of the new school.

*Yn Nant Talwg down fel teulu  
at ein gilydd, down i ddysgu  
beth yw byw a bod yn Gymry,  
beth yw'r byd a sut i'w garu.*

A memorable day was had by all and we look forward to working with her again in the near future.

Not to be outdone by their younger counterparts Years 7 and 8 from Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg set up their own Sgwad Sgwennu which met for the first time at the beginning of February. Bethan Gwanas, a prolific Welsh language author for adults and children lead the workshop. Pupils spent the day writing stories and were encouraged by Bethan to read their work aloud. She gave the squad invaluable guidance on how to edit their work and shared an insight into the realities of working as a full time author. A productive and very enjoyable day was had by all.

**Ceryl Rowe, Athrawes Fro**  
School Improvement Service



## 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	Dr	M	Price	St Richard Gwyn R/C School
12	Mr	P	Sampson	Cadoxton Primary
13	Mr	D	Treharne	Ysgol Gwaun y Nant
14	Cllr Mr	M	Wilson	Albert Primary & Victoria Primary
15	VACANCY			
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



# Central South Consortium (CSC) Update

## Background and Context

The newly established CSC is comprised of Bridgend County Borough Council, Cardiff City Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council.

At present, three of the five Local Authorities in the CSC access school improvement services via the joint Education and School Improvement Service (ESIS). Cardiff City Council and Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council currently operate their own Local Authority based School Improvement Services.

The five Local Authorities that form the CSC recognise that although the current models have performed well, they will not be sufficient to support future school improvement service needs whilst remaining financially viable. The pressures forcing the change are as follows:

- A renewed national focus on school improvement services to help drive up school standards;
- A presumption for regional consortium based on four national consortia;
- Significant financial pressures on the member Local Authorities;
- The parallel need for both a step change in the rigour of challenge and intervention and an increase in delegation to schools to allow greater freedom in the commissioning of support services;
- The need to ensure that accountabilities of schools and Local Authorities are clear; and

- Recognition of the difficulty in delivering a robust challenge role and a responsive service in the same organisation without a potential conflict of interest.

To address these issues, the CSC wish to establish a Joint Education Service that has the primary objective and the means such that in three years the CSC schools will universally achieve good outcomes as measured by Estyn inspections. This new vision of a CSC will require a departure from the existing models of school improvement services and will build upon identified best practices from across the region.

## Work So Far

**To date extensive work has been carried out to the design of the new CSC Joint Education Service. Numerous Working Groups have been established and strong progress is being made.**

Representative Stakeholder Groups have been established and the CSC is in consultation with Headteacher representatives from each member Local Authority who will be involved in the future direction of the CSC Joint Education Service.

The CSC are working closely with Trade Unions and relevant teaching organisations around Human Resource issues and the table that follows gives a timeline of key actions that the CSC are working to.

The timescales set by the Welsh Government are ambitious, but we have already made strong progress to ensure that our new school improvement service should be ready to begin shaping educational support from September 2012.

The input of those who are contributing their expertise and advice is invaluable and the continued support of those individuals is essential to ensure that the CSC develops a new school improvement service that is fully fit for purpose and ensures the delivery of high quality challenge and support services to schools.



## Our schools were the 'Tops for Tŷ Hafan'

I'd like to report back on a scheme that has seen Tŷ Hafan receive an unusual gift, thanks to the involvement of over a third of Vale schools and the determination of a local RAF man, Dave Roberts, with whom I have had the pleasure of working in his "Tops for Tŷ Hafan" project.

In 2010 the Council's Waste Management and Cleansing Section were approached by Dave to see if we could assist with securing the involvement of schools in a scheme to collect plastic milk and pop bottle tops for recycling.

Dave started his scheme after a similar charity initiative folded, so he duly sourced a company, bpi.recycled products, who would both recycle the plastic and make a donation at the culmination of the scheme.

Working under our umbrella waste awareness campaign 'What's in your bin?', and in conjunction with Eco-Schools, following a successful pilot we promoted the year long scheme to all Vale schools and soon some 22 schools were busy showing their unerring support for recycling.

The finale of the project saw two milestones. The collection by participating schools of some 1.15 tonnes of tops, which would be comparable to the weight of a Mini Cooper. And, although delayed by his work duties, in a proud end to the project, Dave presented a picnic table with built in play mat, donated by bpi, to the hospice. The table is made from the very type of plastic collected as thousands of tops for the project, ideal for Tŷ Hafan where, being so close to the salty sea air, wooden furniture can deteriorate quickly.

On behalf of Dave, sincere thanks to pupils, staff and their collecting communities at the Vale primary schools who were able to take part. These are St Bride's Major, Y Bont Faen, Pendoylan, Llanilltud Fawr, Rhws, St Nicholas, Llancarfan, Colcot, Ysgol Gwaun y Nant, Cadoxton, All Saints, Palmerston, Holton, Romilly, Ysgol Gymraeg Pen y Garth, St Joseph's, Albert, Victoria, Sully, Bute Cottage and Cadoxton Nurseries and Dinas Powys Infants School.

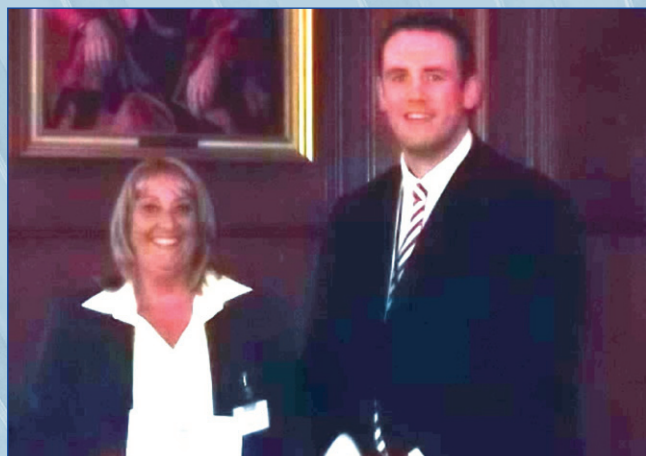
**Sam Harrison, Waste Awareness Officer**  
Waste Management and Cleansing Section

To find out more about the Vale's recycling services either visit our recycling pages or contact us via email [visible@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:visible@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk) or telephone: 01446 700111.





# Schools Achieve Catch Up Excellence Awards in Literacy and Numeracy Interventions



*Sharon Nawrocki – Wick & Marcross C I W Primary*



*Sylvia Nickels & Sue Brown – Evenlode Primary*



*Sue Croome – Romilly Primary*



*Sue Bolton - Cogan Primary*

Catch Up Literacy is an excellent and long established intervention in the Vale of Glamorgan and Catch Up Numeracy is fast acquiring the same reputation for helping learners with difficulties. The Vale of Glamorgan is seen as a 'flagship' in developing and extending the work of both Catch Up Literacy and Numeracy. The Catch Up literacy and numeracy are one-to-one interventions which target individual pupil needs in literacy and numeracy

The Catch Up Organisation have introduced an Excellence Award to recognise and celebrate schools' (or other settings') successful implementation of the Catch Up interventions. The award celebrates learner achievements and excellent Catch Up practice. Schools provide quantitative and qualitative evidence to show positive learner outcomes, as well as evidence of high quality delivery and management of the programme or programmes. There are three levels of Catch Up Award: bronze, silver and gold. Schools have to demonstrate excellence in either Catch Up Literacy and Numeracy as to gain bronze, in both to gain silver and with additional evidence of sustained high quality management to attain the gold award.

We are delighted that three schools have successfully submitted and been awarded the Gold standard: Evenlode, Wick and Marcross and Romilly Primary. Congratulations also to Cogan Primary who submitted and has been awarded the Bronze standard. This is a significant achievement by all four schools and the success is due to the commitment of LSAs who supported the learners, gathered the materials and made the submissions. Catch Up Director, Julie Lawes, was very impressed with the very high standard of submissions by all the schools. They received their certificates from Lindsay Harvey (Head of Curriculum 7 – 19 DfES (Sept 2011)) at the annual Catch Up Conference in Cardiff. Some of the LSAs, who submitted for the award, confidently delivered presentations of their experiences, and those of their learners, at the conference.

Once again, many congratulations to those involved.

For further information regarding the Catch Up programmes or training, please contact:

**Kath John on 01446 709862**

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