

## **Association News – December 2014**

As I start to run through some of the events of the past term, I happen to have by me a copy of “We Will Remember Them”, a collection of writings by local pupils to commemorate the centenary of the start of the First World War. I was moved by the insight that was shown by so many of them in respect of the experiences of young people, most not very much older than the pupils themselves, of that conflict. There is no longer any living survivor of those dark days but we can, and must, hope that today’s generations can learn something of the futility of war and of the suffering – and prevent further repetition.

### **Primary School Sports Premium**

The Conference, held at Saltwells on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, attracted in excess of 110 delegates to the afternoon session, by far the highest number attending such an event in recent years. We were fortunate indeed to have secured as our keynote speaker the highly motivational Baroness Sue Campbell, Chair of the Youth Sports Trust, which is based in Loughborough within the University grounds. She spoke with passion and gave a remarkably clear presentation which was commented upon by those lucky enough to be present. Sue had originally trained as a teacher of physical education but also represented her country as a player, a coach and as a team manager. After graduating she taught in Manchester and lectured at both Leicester and Loughborough Universities. After four years as an Officer with what is now Sport England, she moved to the National Coaching Foundation and was its Chief Executive for eleven years and then became Chief Executive of the Youth Sport Trust, eventually becoming its Chair ten years ago.

Amongst many other honours Sue has received ten Honorary Doctorates and a CBE for her services to sport in 2005. During the first seven years of this millennium, she was non-political adviser to the DfES on physical education and sport and was appointed to the House of Lords as an Independent Crossbench peer in 2008. Significantly Sue chaired UK Sport from 2005 to 2013 during which time she had responsibility for the Olympics and the Paralympics in London in 2012.

How could we possibly have done better?

Following Sue’s presentation, delegates were able to take part in their choice of two workshops selected from the six which were made available, before coming together for the final presentation, by the Black Country BeActive Partnership Director, Simon Hall, who spoke of the advice and guidance available to all schools in maximising the value of the Sports Premium.

The only negative was the lack of requests for an evening session (which had been planned) and which we had to cancel instead.

The event was free for all participants, thanks to the generosity of the Black Country Consortium, who covered all catering and printing costs – including lunch for everyone !!!

### **Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM)**

We had previously reported on the introduction of UIFSM in earlier Newsletters and on our correspondence with David Laws, Minister of State for Schools. Schools first saw the release of the scheme in September and, although there have been a few teething issues (predictably) it has settled in to the system for Reception and Key Stage 1 children. The Local Authority, relying on the feedback gathered from schools in the Summer Term, assumed that the take-up would be 75% of those eligible – in fact the figure has, to date, averaged at 82% with individual schools ranging from 70% to 100%. Any funding shortfall will be corrected shortly so we can be reasonably confident about the revenue funding issue.

We had previously contacted David Laws about the Government Capital Funding programme of £150 million, as we believed that it would be inadequate to cope with the necessary works associated with enlarging or modifying kitchens and dining areas to cater for the increased numbers of those taking meals. Dudley actually received about £860,000 of this figure and, predictably, it has proved insufficient for the job in hand. David Laws has subsequently arranged for the release of a further £20 million for capital projects and Dudley has submitted a bid for additional funding from this. We would be naive if we thought that our correspondence with the Minister and other representations we have made in this context were solely responsible for the additional funding – but we do know that it has been contributory to achieving it.

At our request the Local Authority has put together a report on the implementation of UIFSM within Dudley and its financial elements – this is on the Schools Forum agenda – and we also intend asking for a report on the effects of UIFSM within the Borough in terms of its impact upon childrens' learning and behaviour etc.

Predictably perhaps we intend continuing the dialogue with David Laws to let him know of the actual impact of the scheme locally and how it matches the original claims.

Watch this space !!!

### **Healthy Lifestyle Competition**

We have successfully run this competition for five years now and are planning to repeat it for 2014/2015. Talks with Dudley's Public Health team are ongoing and currently we are hoping to be part of the project to make Dudley fitter and healthier. The details will inevitably take a little time to be honed into shape but we will release them as soon as we

can. We are hoping to get an even larger take-up this year and in consequence the usual time scales may require some modification.

### **In Conclusion**

Because of space shortage this report is shorter than usual but please rest assured that your Association is continuing to work on your behalf. We would like to remind you that if there are any issues which you would like us to address then your DAGB Representative should be requested to communicate them directly to us (either by e-mail to myself, or via Governor Support at Westox House).

Our best wishes go to all members for a happy and successful 2015.

*Brian Patterson*  
*Chair, DAGB*