

Association News – Easter 2015

Mark Wyatt

Although there will be few governors in the Borough by now who are unaware, I regret to have to advise all that Mark Wyatt lost his battle with cancer recently and passed away, at the age of 58, in February. He had been Director of Childrens' Services, in succession to John Freeman, for a quite short period of time until ill-health intervened. Mark was a very caring person, as well as being very good at his job, and those of us who had the pleasure of meeting and working with him are all too well aware how much he will be missed. He leaves a widow and five sons, aged between 12 and 22. DAGB was represented at his funeral by Vice-Chair, Jim Conway, and by myself.

Free Milk in Schools

Not to be confused with Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM), it is now required that schools provide free milk to all those who receive Free School Meals and for whom the school can receive the Pupil Premium. This also applies to those under the age of five attending a day care or early years setting. Schools must make milk available to **all children** at a time **during** the school day (which means that milk served as part of a Breakfast Club or an After-School Club does not satisfy this availability criterion) and this applies both in Secondary as well as in Primary settings. Those who do not satisfy the free entitlement may be required to pay for this. Children in receipt of UIFSM may have milk at lunch-time as part of their free meal and its cost must, under such circumstances, be met from the £2.30 allowed for the meal. The milk should be of a lower-fat variety. For further information visit the web site www.coolmilk.com.

Primary Schools Sports Premium (PSSP)

The allocation of funding to Primary Schools of, typically, about £9000 per school per annum is currently continuing into the 2015 – 2016 Financial Year. Its extension beyond that may well be influenced by the outcome of the General Election in May, although the present government has indicated that they would intend it to go on for some years after that.

However a significant number of schools have been found as being not compliant with associated Health and Safety issues (such as the failure to use crash mats) and in one nearby Authority the only available evidence suggests that fewer than 10 per cent of schools are actually compliant. Note “the only available evidence” as it may well be that more are in fact compliant but that there is insufficient **evidence** to show this – evidence is critical.

The money must not be used to provide core facilities but only to enhance them, for example swimming is a core entitlement and UIFSM money may not be used to pay for this but it may be used to provide instruction which is not covered by the schools core funding.

Web sites should reference the impact of this additional funding – and this means that there need to be both base line measurements as well as those taken after the additional steps have been taken – again, without this (however it is measured) there is no evidence to back up any claims.

It is essential that governors and head teachers recognise that they will be held accountable (especially by Ofsted) if they fail to do what is legally required of them –

Governors Accountability and Legal Requirements – Sport Premium

Since September 2013 Ofsted inspectors report on how primary schools spend their PE and Sport Premium funding.

Schools are legally required to publish details of how they spend their Primary PE and Sport Premium funding on the school web site. DfE will commence a review of websites starting on April 4th 2015. Schools **must** include the following:-

- The allocation of PSSP funding for the current academic year
- Details of how the school intends to spend this allocation
- Details of how the school actually spent the previous year's allocation
- How it made a difference to the:
 - physical education participation
 - sport participation
 - attainment of pupils who attract the funding

N.B. Currently a number of schools publish some but not all of the required information.

Governors are further advised that:-

- Coaches must not either replace or displace teachers in curriculum time
- Coaches must have the appropriate NGB qualification – please see the Head Teachers portal at <http://www.sportscoachuk.org>
- For effective deployment and employment of coaches please see the afPE (association for Physical Education) national guidance at <http://www.afpe.org.uk>
- Please note that coaches supporting in the curriculum should not be left unsupervised as the law and employment regulations say that “duty of care cannot be devolved” – see page 65 of Safe Practice 2012 afPE
- Local Authority state funded schools must comply with the LA health and safety guidance.

School Meals

Apart from Ofsted's wider remit over the Sports Premium in Primary Schools, I need to advise you ALL that Ofsted, as from September 2015, '.....will include, for the first time, a judgement on personal development, behaviour and welfare. As part of reaching this judgement, inspectors will look at the extent to which schools and other providers are successfully supporting pupils to gain "knowledge of how to keep themselves healthy, including through exercising and healthy eating"..... They will look at the food on offer and visit the canteen to see the atmosphere and culture in the dining space and the effect this has on pupils' behaviour..... Inspectors will look for evidence of a culture of exercise and healthy eating throughout their inspection visit. Inspectors will also speak to school leaders about how they help to ensure a healthy lifestyle for pupils by helping them gain knowledge of a good diet under the judgement on "leadership and management " they will also consider the breadth and balance of the curriculum, of which practical cookery is now a part.'

Ofsted's interest in the Primary School Sports Premium, in all forms of sport and physical education and in food-related matters forms part of their core role during inspections and governors are expected to be aware of this and to be questioned about it.

Payment for Chairs

For some little while there has been a debate as to the provision of a payment to Chairs of Governors and this has been recently stirred by a Report on Governance which recommends that such payment might be made. At meetings of the National Governors' Association (NGA) this is raised periodically and very few governors support it. Yes, the role can be onerous and yes, the responsibility is growing rather than diminishing and yes, it can be difficult to persuade many to take on the role, but for most, the task is not about being paid. Rather the vast majority of Chairs are chairs for reasons which transcend financial incentives; a sense of duty, a moral commitment, a desire to make a contribution, an aspiration to support childrens' education, feeling a need to "give something back". For many there is sufficient reward from doing 'good work'.

General Election 2015

Members will be able to read, on our website, statements from the three main parties, what differences they would expect to make as far as education in Dudley is concerned should their party win the election, and it should also be possible to read equivalent statements made in 2010.

Annual Genera Meeting

This will be held at Saltwells on Tuesday June 30th, starting at 7.00 pm. All members are cordially invited to join us on that occasion.

Brian Patterson
Chair, DAGB