

SWALSS NEWS



Issue 2
June 2010

Chair's News

I am very grateful to the members of the Executive for their commitment to **SWALSS**. They are all busy people yet give generously of their time and energy to ensure that our organisation is always looking ahead and that initiatives and developments are well planned and carefully implemented. I am especially grateful to Paul Holland, our Chief Executive, who has ensured that what might remain as good ideas are followed through and brought to fruition: 'from rhetoric to reality'. Indeed, although Paul is meant to work on a part-time basis, I am sure that he puts in considerably more hours than many people on full-time contracts!

SWALSS is going from strength to strength; both in terms of its growing membership and what it offers to its members. This newsletter is a good example of an initiative that offers something for everyone: news, support, humour and a means of bringing together the relatively small but very important community of leaders in SEN which is spread across the South and West.

The feedback from this year's Headteachers' and Deputy Headteachers' Conferences has been very encouraging and helpful in assisting planning for future events. It is clear that the new Thursday/ Friday format (with the option of arriving on Wednesday evening) for the Headteachers' Conference was well received. Interestingly, the Deputies seem to prefer the 'tried and trusted' arrangement of a Monday to Wednesday Conference and there is no reason why the arrangements have to be the same. Whilst it is a key aspect of the Executive's role to provide leadership, we also listen to members to provide what colleagues are looking for from **SWALSS**. So, keep talking to us!



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SWALSS Membership

Annual membership fee to each school / college is £95

Membership benefits:

- 10% discount on delegate fee for residential and day conferences / workshops
- Membership plaque
- Newsletter: 2 per year October and June
- A 10-15% reduction in service costs from Hays Education Services
- Website access
- Opportunities for networking and profession links
- Leisure and hotel concessions updates

The one-day Conferences that we held as a new initiative last year were very successful. If there are topics that you think **SWALSS** could address in a day or half-day Conference, please let us know.

Our collaboration with the National College is also very exciting. The aim is to deliver a high quality Leadership Development Programme for aspirant and existing middle and senior leaders in Special Schools. As with everything we do, it is intended to improve provision for young people with SEN.

It is also a time of change and challenge for our Sector. In my fourteen years in special education the changes, especially in terms of the profile of the needs of the young people in our care, have been enormous. We will also have to adapt to the impact of significant reductions in public spending over the next few years. The challenge for leaders in special education will be to ensure that we continue to provide high quality education, therapy and care for some of the most dependent and disadvantaged young people in our society. **SWALSS** will have an important role to play in representing the Sector and in providing support to colleagues.

I hope you enjoy reading this Newsletter and if you have any comments, suggestions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Executive.

Keep smiling!

Harry Dicks, Chair of **SWALSS**

SWALSS Membership

As a not-for-profit organisation, membership and Hays sponsorship / income underpins the operational costs in providing custom built programmes of CPD for a continuum of professionals supporting children with special educational needs within a range of educational and care settings in the South, South West and Channel Islands.

"The 10% membership discount on all conference / workshop fees, plus other benefits, has to be a 'yes' for every school / college" Headteacher, Devon

Further details: imogen.motley@virgin.net

School Administrators Conference

4th / 5th October 2010

The Grand Hotel, Torquay

Building on Experience – Extending the Expertise and Knowledge of the School Administrator

Programme includes: Effective communication (Jim Smith); Making a good school outstanding: the role of the Business Manager (Martin Kerlake); Time Management in being more effective at the job. (Charles Wise);

Domestic violence and the implications in school (Jacqui Kilburn); Responding to complaints and grievances and the impact of employment law and recent legislation (Vicky Hughes and team); School systems for safeguarding vetting and monitoring staff (Charles Hackett; OFSTED); Accessing additional sources of funding including grant giving trusts (Joline Lewis, Deborah Porret, Culvert Trust).

Delegate fee: **SWALSS** members (£295), non members (£335)

Details sent to schools week commencing 7th June.

Helpline: issy.johnson@n-somerset.gov.uk

Head Teacher's Conference Report

As a new girl to headship (I took up post at Southbrook College in Exeter in January 2010), I wondered whether it was wise to come away from school so early on in the term. However, I'm glad I did – and everything was absolutely fine back in school! Why did I think they needed me so much?

The **SWALSS** conference provided a great mix of essential, practical advice (Charles Hackett – OFSTED top tips), inspirational speakers (Michaela Breeze and Mark Davies) and an opportunity to develop thinking and ideas about effective leadership in special schools (NCSL input). It was also a great chance to meet and talk to colleagues informally and 'let our hair down' during the evening – some of us even ventured out on to the dancefloor!

The first morning's focus on Safeguarding, whilst presenting some horrifying information, gave me a deeper insight in to the work of organisations such as Women's Aid and the NSPCC. Jacqui Kilburn's input on the damaging effects of domestic violence was particularly powerful and she provided a toolkit of resources now being used by my PSHE co-ordinator. Further practical information I brought back was information on the NSPCC child Protection Helpline as a further enquiry route for schools on Safeguarding questions and following the SWGFL input, we shall be contacting them to carry out parent workshop sessions – a very fruitful morning!

It was two days extremely well spent and I shall be looking forward to next year's event.

Bronwen Caschere: Headteacher,
Southbrook College

Sponsored by:



Our preferred recruitment provider

The **SWALSS** Executive Committee is pleased to announce Hays Education as the official **SWALSS** sponsor for the next year 2010 – 2011, with the option of a further year.

The Agreement is underpinned by Hays further developing services to special schools, PRU's and mainstream based centres, including therapy and nursing care resources.

In return, Hays will have access to partnership and marketing opportunities at all **SWALSS** day workshops and residential conferences.

Thanks to Fabia Cipolat, Senior Manager Hays and Lesley Pidwell, Regional Manager South West.

Chief Executive's News

SWALSS was established in 1984 with the aim to promote collaboration between professionals throughout the region, in improving the quality of education and care for children with special educational needs. This is achieved through specifically focused CPD programmes delivered annually via residential / day conferences and workshops.

In 2009/10 there have been three successful residential conferences – Heads, Deputies / Assistant Heads, Administrators / Business Managers. In addition, three well attended day workshops on the New Ofsted Regulations for leadership teams and governors.

Links have been re-established with colleagues in South Wales and the Channel Islands where discussions are on-going regarding **SWALSS** stage managing multi professional training days.

Working in collaboration with David Gregory, Head Fosseway School, Radstock and in his role as the SSAT Special Schools Consultant; it has been decided to plan and deliver three day workshops of a bespoke nature. Content is being determined in consultation with schools with post-16 to be included.

Details to schools by July.

Helpline: David_Gregory@BATHNES.gov.uk

There exists an excellent working relation with G.O.S.W. with regular meetings, exchange of information and consultations.

The Chief Executive was a speaker at a special school conference in Dublin in October and it is probable that delegates from Ireland will attend the residential conferences in 2011.

Our thanks for all your continued support and cooperation.

My thanks to Issy Johnson, Finance Manager and Imogen Motley, Secretary / Marketing Assistant for their expertise, commitment, reliability and not least of all good sense of humour.

Paul Holland: Chief Executive.

Deputies / Assistant Heads Conference

A selection of feedback comments from the Conference March 2010 held at The Grand Hotel, Torquay

- *Nice pupil centred start*
- *Wonderful!*
- *Very inspirational speaker – very knowledgeable*
- *Practical enthusiasm that got me out of comfort zone but inspired me*
- *Must think about this!*
- *Excellent speaker*
- *Good presentation and knew what went on in special schools*
- *Good opportunity to discuss the way forward*
- *Refreshing!*

Next Conference: 7th / 8th March 2011 at The Grand Hotel, Torquay

SWALSS Consultancy

Are there times when you would value a second opinion on some aspect of school life? Perhaps a development for your school that you are considering or an area of your provision that you feel needs attention?

SWALSS is able to help in two ways:

- a) bespoke consultancy from our Chief Executive to member schools at concessionary rates
- b) a brokerage service that puts you in touch with a **SWALSS** Headteacher / school leader with a proven track record of success in the area in which you are seeking advice

Further details are available from the Chief Executive – contact details are on the back page.

SWALSS / Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT)

The (SSAT) is driven by the principle of “by schools, for schools” thereby ensuring Headteachers take the leading role, through the national Headteachers steering group, of shaping the activities of the Trust.

Recently the SSAT has restructured its organisation around newly created “Leadership and Innovation Centres” from which a team coordinates regional activities for the three education sectors. Each centre is linked to a regional Headteachers steering group.

As a result we will be looking to increase the number of events and workshops offered to special schools in the south west during the course of the coming year, but will avoid replicating the work of SWALSS, in effect looking to channel resources into activities that tackle areas of the special school agenda which are not currently being addressed.

The SSAT also offers a “Leadership Suite” of generic professional development programmes, these have been supplemented by the very successful Executive Leadership course for established Special School Headteachers and soon to be launched range of special school specific courses aimed at Aspiring Leaders, through to Teaching Assistants and Teachers New to Special Schools. Each of these courses is being developed with the support of established Headteachers who will also be instrumental in their delivery.

Whilst it is important to meet regional needs the SSAT also recognises the value of school networking both at a national and international level. Consequently three national conferences for special schools are organised each year and during the coming year there are opportunities to visit and observe practice in New Zealand, China and the United States. Also during the course of this year delegations from Australia and China are attending conferences and visiting SSAT affiliated schools in England.

Finally I would urge colleagues of schools from both the maintained and non-maintained sector that have not yet attained specialist status to take advantage of the additional government funding currently available to specialist schools. Details and support are available from lorna.grant@ssatrust.org.uk and www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/specialistschools.

*David Gregory, Fosse Way School
SSAT SW Special School Consultant*

David_Gregory@bathnes.gov.uk

Hays Recruitment Services

Severndale is one of the largest Special Schools in the UK. We have a staff group in excess of 225. We meet the needs of over 300 students on a daily basis and provide an outreach service to Shropshire Primary and Secondary Schools.

Our average yearly requirement for Teachers is 8 and for support staff 16

We were advertising locally and Nationally with varying degrees of success, some times for promoted posts we did not get a response.

We discussed with Hays a contract to Market Promote and Advertise Jobs. They organised Open Days which proved to be exceptionally successful. The quantity and quality of all application field has improved.

As a school the process of employing new staff has been improved and reduced the workload of school based staff enabling them to focus time and skills on other areas.

Chris Davies: Headteacher, Severndale School

Partnership with The National College and SSAT

Two key CPD developments are being explored for the academic year 2010/11, involving working in close collaboration with both The National College and Specialist Schools and Academies Trust.

Leadership in Special Schools (National College / SWALSS)

A seven day programme aimed at middle / senior leaders, assistant heads and deputies. There will be three regional clusters:

- (1) Devon, Cornwall, Torbay, Plymouth and Somerset;
- (2) Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Herefordshire / Worcestershire Bristol, South Glos and BATHNES;
- (3) Dorset, Poole, Bournemouth, Hampshire, Southampton and Portsmouth.

Nick Hind, Educational Consultant (former head, LA inspector) and experienced local headteachers will deliver the programme within an operational framework at competitive delegate rates. Details to schools by June.

SSAT / SWALSS

Three day conferences to be run during the academic year 2010/11. Details to schools by September.

Helpline: pauldholland@tiscali.co.uk

The Autism Bill 2009

The Autism Bill finally made it through Parliament to become The Autism Act 2009. Not only is it the only piece of autism specific legislation, it is also the first disability specific legislation to be passed in this country (extending to England and Wales only). Local Authorities have new duties imposed upon them which they will have to comply with.

What it means in essence is the following should now happen:

- Improved data collated on the number of children and adults who have autism.
- Improved transition from child to adult services
- The lack of support for adults with autism will be addressed with an adult autism strategy (April 2010)
- Consideration to be given to the needs of children with autism in the preparation of a children and young peoples plan

It is made very clear that there is a duty to recognise the needs of persons with autism and offer appropriate support. It also clearly states that autism includes all types of autistic spectrum disorders including Asperger Syndrome. Historically, many people with autism, and particularly those with Asperger syndrome or high functioning autism found themselves falling between services that refuse to take responsibility for them, as autism is a developmental disability and not a learning disability or a mental health problem.

It is likely to have implications for the range and types of provision and services available not only to children with autism but also to adults. The Bill also contains measures to promote multi-agency working in the delivery of these services.

Allison Hope-West

Farewell and Welcome

Members of the **SWALSS** Executive wish to express their sincere appreciation and best wishes to colleagues who have chosen to relinquish **SWALSS** responsibilities. Each individual having given valuable and unselfish commitment to the successful development of the organisation. We hope they will keep in touch.

Geoff Hogg: Director of Children's Services, Swindon Borough Council. Chair, Secretary and latterly, LA representative. Involved with **SWALSS** since its inception 25 years ago as a Headteacher

Carol Penney: Formerly Headteacher, Baytree School, Weston-super-Mare. Chair of **SWALSS** for 10 years

Keith Smith: Formerly Headteacher: Crowdys Hill School, Swindon. Hon Treasurer for 8 years

Phil Morgan: Formerly Headteacher, Shrubberies School, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire. Chair of Deputies / Assistant Heads Conference Committee for 10 years

Joan Webb: Business Manager, Crowdys Hill School, Swindon.

Assistant Heads / Deputies Conference Committee:

Best wishes and continued success to the following colleagues who have moved on: Shani Brough: Vale of Evesham School, Evesham; Lindi Reynolds: Chippenham; Denise Youngs: Mountjoy School, Bridport; Phil Beaumont: Downlands School, Devizes

2010/11 Assistant Heads / Deputies Committee:

Judith Gudgeon (Chair): Fort Royal School, Worcester; Martin Dean: Headteacher Bidwell Brook School, Dartington; Glynis James: Heronsbridge School, Bridgend; Ken Battye: Beacroft School, Wimborne; Nicki Davis: Heart of the Forest School, Coleford, Gloucestershire; Gail George: Ysgol Maes Dyfed, Barry; Colin May: Mayfield School, Torquay; Sean Jenks: Ysgol Bryn Castell, Bridgend

2010/11 Bursars / Administrators Committee

Issy Johnson (Chair): Bursar Baytree School, Weston-super-Mare; Joline Lewis: Administrator Windwhistle Primary School, Weston-super-Mare; Carol Robertshaw: PA to Headteacher, Severndale School, Shrewsbury; Joan Webb: Business Manager, Crowdys Hill School, Swindon.

Chief Executive Paul Holland attends all committee meetings

The Grand Hotel, Torquay

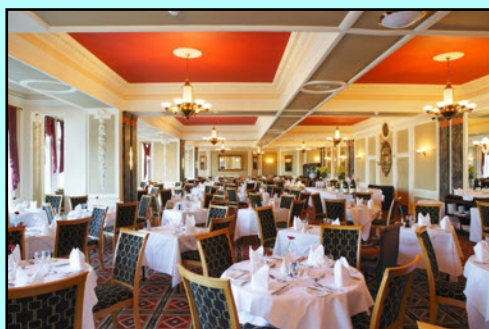
The Grand Hotel, situated on the seafront is one of Torquay's premier hotels. It is known for the standard of its 4 star hotel accommodation, food and facilities and loved for its dedicated team of staff that make every effort to deliver a warm welcome and a professional, friendly service. Testimony to its good food is the award of an AA Rosette - an honour in the industry for a hotel of The Grand's size.

Quality is the keyword at The Grand Hotel, reflected not only in the standard of service delivered by a professional team of staff but also in the surroundings. Much care has been taken with interior design to ensure a modern feel that harmonises with the Art Deco and Victorian characteristics of the building.

The Compass Bar and Lounge offers plenty of

comfortable seating in a spacious and airy environment, with floor to ceiling windows that take full advantage of the sea views over Torbay.

Wi-fi is now freely available throughout the ground floor of the hotel.



The hotel has extensive leisure facilities. There is an outdoor pool with sun terrace and a children's splash pool plus an all weather tennis court. The Grand indoor leisure facilities include swimming pool and Jacuzzi, multi-gym, sauna, sun shower, a Beauty Centre and a car care facility.



The hotel has limited covered parking and additional reserved spaces in the adjacent Torquay train station car park available on a complimentary (first come, first served) basis. Street parking is also available.

By Road

Excellent road communication with the M5 motorway to Exeter, A38 and A380 dual-carriageway connection to Newton Abbot and a pleasant drive into Torquay.

By Rail

The Grand is situated just a minutes walk from Torquay station.

By Air

Both Exeter and Plymouth Airports are just 35 minutes drive.



Dates for the Diary

Residential Conferences, The Grand Hotel, Torquay

4/5 October 2010: Administrators / Business Managers

27/28 January 2011: Heads / Principals

7/8 March 2011 Deputies /Assistant Heads

Details of conferences and day workshop dates will be emailed to each school.

SWALSS will also be collaborating with SSAT run courses in sending information to **SWALSS** member schools / colleges.

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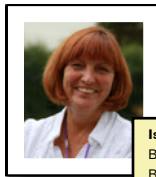
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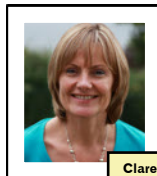
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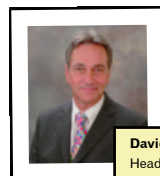
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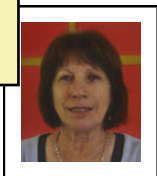


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