

governors' agenda

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A 'new relationship'

John Dunford gives his views on the government's proposals in the *New relationship with schools* to streamline accountability procedures.

The plans

The government is developing plans for a different kind of relationship between itself, secondary schools in England and local authorities. The significance of this change has yet to enter the public consciousness, but headteachers are in no doubt that this is a major set of reforms. Newspapers gave little attention to a speech by David Miliband, Minister of State for School Standards, on 8 January 2004, since it took place on the same day as a Commons debate on top-up fees. Yet this speech could prove to have a more profound effect on secondary schools than almost any other recent speech by an education minister.

Directly acknowledging the paper on *Intelligent accountability*, published by the Secondary Heads Association (SHA) in March 2003, David Miliband set out a new relationship between central government, local government and secondary schools. There are six strands to the new relationship:

- a single conversation between the headteacher and 'a credible and experienced practitioner', acting as critical friend

- a different model of external inspection
- greater dependence on school self-evaluation
- high quality data, with a single data collection system
- school improvement partnerships
- a school profile in which to report to parents and the community on performance.

This kind of relationship would create a very different scenario for secondary school Heads and governors, contrasting with the confused and burdensome accountability regime under which we currently work.

The need for change

Since the publication of *Intelligent accountability*, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has made its first attempt to sort out the problem of the over-accountability of schools. There has been a high degree of determination to create this new relationship, which is counter-cultural to the way in which DfES civil servants are accustomed to working. Soon after the SHA report was published

continued overleaf

Contents

1-3	A 'new relationship'
3-4	Extended schools
5-7	Schools forums
7-8	14-19 Reform
8-9	Blueprint
10-11	Headteachers as consultant leaders
11-12	Combating obesity
12-13	The Children Act 2004
14	A safe workforce
15	Governing passions
16	Conferences

– and coinciding with the formation of the Implementation Review Unit (IRU) – a high-level team set out from Sanctuary Buildings to discover the reality of accountability at school level. They found that some aspects, such as using an external adviser to help carry out the performance review of the Head, were generally working well. But they found much that was duplicated and unnecessary, especially in relation to the multiple funding streams for which schools have to bid and, later, to account for. Meanwhile, the IRU (a group of twelve school leaders, given complete independence to comment publicly on the way that the government runs the school system) had started to uncover bureaucracy and initiatives that made life especially difficult for school leaders because of the way that the government or its agencies, or local authorities, had implemented their policies.

The ‘single conversation’

Out of this grew the idea of the ‘single conversation’ (or, more accurately, the single relationship, since there are likely to be several discussions) between the Head and a ‘credible, experienced practitioner’ – called a ‘school improvement partner’. Education policy in England and Wales has grown haphazardly over the last twenty years, with little regard for the overall effect on schools that have to implement all the policies. Over-accountability has occurred because each new initiative has been introduced with an extra layer of accountability, irrespective of what already existed. We have to be very careful, therefore, to ensure that the new single conversation replaces much of what already exists, and does not make the system even more burdensome.

The ‘school improvement partner’

The school improvement partner will report the conclusions of the single conversation to the local education authority (LEA), the Learning and Skills Council and other bodies which have hitherto separately held the school to account. He or she will also report to the governing body on the performance of the school. This will not change the direct relationship between the Head and the governing body, nor the way in which the governing body holds the Head to account. It will, however, replace the reports (often not seen by governors) by LEA inspectors and link advisers and should help to make governors better informed about the performance of the school.

SHA wants governing bodies to use the school improvement partner as the external adviser, to help with carrying out the Head’s appraisal. It surely makes sense to have a single person holding accountability conversations with the Head about his or her own performance and about the performance of the school. This part of the school improvement partner’s report would go to the governing body in the same way as the report of the external adviser under current arrangements.

Inspection and self-evaluation

An important part of the new relationship is a more mature Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education)

inspection regime. It was encouraging to hear the announcement by David Bell (Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Schools in England) in February 2004 of a consultation on a completely new inspection process, very different from the Ofsted regime to which English schools have had to become accustomed. The proposals are for very much shorter inspections with a small team of inspectors led by Her Majesty’s Inspectors (HMI), instead of the part-time contractors that have operated since 1992. Coming into the school once every three years at very short notice, the team will concentrate on the school’s own analysis of its progress, evidenced in its self-evaluation system. The new proposals are a big step towards external inspection as a validation of school self-evaluation, which has been advocated by SHA for the last twelve years. Even though a new Ofsted framework was introduced as recently as September 2003, it seems that the government wants to move quickly towards the new relationship and a change in Ofsted inspections is a vitally important part of this agenda. Pilots of the new Ofsted approach are already taking place.

In response to this new relationship, Heads and governors will need to look at their existing processes for self-evaluation. Fortunately, there is to be no single, government-approved model of self-evaluation, so schools will be free to develop a model that suits their own context. A revised Ofsted Form (SEF) (available in near-final draft on the Ofsted website) will provide the basis for this rigorous, objective self-evaluation. The purpose of the inspection will then be to test the rigour and quality of the self-evaluation. Lesson observation will, of course, be at the core of the self-evaluation process and most secondary schools now have protocols for observation. Schools in which self-evaluation processes are not already embedded will be able to develop a system with the help of the Ofsted materials and other commercially available self-review models.

A ‘single data set’

David Miliband said that he wanted the new relationship to be underpinned by high quality data. This will be both quantitative and qualitative, but must not create a massive bureaucracy within schools. Self-evaluation should be ‘data-rich and workload-light’, the Minister said, especially in the current context of workforce remodelling. The government and other agencies will have to modify their demands very considerably if we are to produce, as planned, a single set of data, collected once and used many times by central government, the local authority, the curriculum agency, Ofsted and others, which currently place intolerable demands for data on schools.

School improvement partnerships

For Heads and governors, school improvement must be at the heart of any major new initiative. What we need is a network of school improvement partnerships that enable schools to work collaboratively to raise achievement. The relationship between the single conversation, the school development plan and the improvement initiatives has yet to emerge, but will be critical to the success of the proposed changes.

The school profile

The final piece in the new relationship jigsaw is the school profile, through which schools will report on their performance to parents. This is intended to replace the governors' annual report to parents and the obligation to hold an annual meeting. Surely the nationally published league tables must change too, for they cannot for much longer be seen as part of a school's intelligent accountability.

A more mature relationship

For the time being, there will be much work for Heads and governors to do in order to ensure, at both national and local level, that the new relationship turns out to be as good as it seems on first acquaintance. This could be the start of a much more mature relationship between those who govern schools and those who lead them.

*Dr John Dunford
is General Secretary of the Secondary Heads Association.*

Extended schools

Julian Piper reports on the recent development of extended school activities nationally and offers some tried and tested practical examples of innovative ways for schools to offer extended services.

Recent developments

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) recently confirmed the anticipated £97 million for extended schools in 2005-06, which is largely in line with the projected allocations of which local authorities were advised in 2003. This is a massive injection of funding for what is now one of the government's flagship policies and should encourage a great flurry of activity leading up to and with effect from April 2005.

Since the original announcement in 2003 of the roll-out of extended schools to every local authority, there has been continual changes in the landscape in which they will be developed. *Every child matters* refers to extended schools on almost every page. They are written into the Children Act, the Health White Paper, the National Service Framework and they will be key delivery points for government targets such as childcare for working families, economic and community regeneration, co-location of services and improved service delivery. The DfES Five Year Strategy now makes it clear that **all** schools will be **expected** to provide extended activities and services and the recent consultative document from Ofsted indicates that schools will be inspected on their provision of such activities and services, which comes as no surprise.

All this means that what started out as a menu of activities that schools were expected to deliver in return for funding (as experienced by the first 60 or so full-service extended schools from 2003) has now developed into a transformational force that is gaining momentum almost by the day. This was particularly highlighted by the Demos report *Schools out*, published by the Hay Group in September 2004¹, which commented on the fact that schools would have to change quite significantly in their attitudes and behaviour if these agendas were to be met successfully.

Examples of extended school activities

Along with the increased momentum, we have also seen a growing excitement from schools that have started to explore this agenda seriously and have begun to question what it means for the entire establishment, as the needs of children and families increase in prominence. The following are just a few examples of what this might mean in practice.

Pastoral care structures

One large secondary school of 1,400 pupils looked at its structure for pastoral care, which was mainly delivered by teachers. The senior management team costed out this service at more than £110,000 per year in salary points, non-contact time, and so on. It then asked whether this traditional model provided good pastoral care or contributed to good teaching and learning. It was not alone in deciding that neither objective was met by this structure – several other schools have come to the same conclusion. In the context of being a full-service extended school, the leadership team was able, through staff movement, to create a team of pastoral officers (non-teachers) and an administration team to provide an enhanced student support service. The officers have created links with a variety of other agencies which can support pupils and their families when required so that it is no longer necessary to wait for teachers to become available or to buy in expensive supply cover. Nobody suggests that this new model is the panacea for all ills, and it does not take pastoral support completely away from teachers. Early signs are that the idea has considerable merits.

Parental involvement

Extended schools have begun to appreciate the importance of developing new ways of involving

parents. This has been highlighted by the research published in 2003 by Professor Charles Deforges (available on the DfES Research website) which suggests that, particularly in primary schools, the contribution that good parenting makes to a child's achievement is up to six times greater than that of the best teacher. Here are some examples of what schools are doing:

- Many schools are now beginning to change the way in which they conduct parents' evenings or consultation events. Many are providing one key member of staff and longer 'quality time' appointments.
- Some are rethinking their reporting systems. A good example is to provide graphs of progress, effort and attainment that show performance for each subject area over several years – a useful way of presenting information for parents with low basic skills.
- A growing number of schools are beginning to use modern technology, such as text messages and emails, to communicate with parents more regularly and immediately.
- When it is used in conjunction with workforce remodelling, extended school funding offers the opportunity to employ more parents and local people as support staff.
- One school has given priority to involving parents who were once angry with the school through recruiting them to training, volunteering and other activities. These schools speak of significant changes in the attitudes of pupils, families and communities as local people are seen to have more of a stake in the school and as they begin to act as advocates rather than enemies.
- The 'customer care' elements of schools are often being challenged by new extended schools co-ordinators, many of whom come from professions other than teaching. This is helping to make schools more approachable and accessible for adults in general, not just for parents.

External agencies and voluntary sector partnerships

The increased capacity provided by the funding for extended schools co-ordinators and improved customer care is also leading to new partnerships with other agencies and the voluntary sector. One primary full-service extended school has used some funding to match-fund a seconded social worker who is based in the school and carries a caseload but also has time for preventative work. The school has now been able to recruit additional staff to create a family support team. This co-location of services has had a dramatic effect on the local community, as problems that had lain uncovered for several years have been exposed. The compartmentalism of previous working practices had allowed much of this to remain undetected. The school reports a significant increase in the confidence of the community to come forward with information in the belief that things can now be changed – perhaps for the first time. As a result, the children

at the school are now better able to learn because many of the issues that affect them and their families are being successfully dealt with.

A secondary school that has been working with a fitness instructor, who was already active in the area and provided adult club sessions and classes, has received support from the local primary care trust (PCT) to develop more after-school provision to help improve the health and fitness of pupils. This model is to be funded and rolled out across the PCT area.

The future

These brief cameos are just a sample of the transformations that are taking place in schools – and not just those that are receiving funding already as extended schools. As the momentum builds and schools take a more objective view of their position in their communities and the need to improve standards continually by more innovative means, we shall see many more exciting developments which will, in turn, show significant benefits for children, their families and the communities to which they belong. The dreams that have received so much acceptance in *Every child matters* really can become a reality.

Julian Piper
is the National Manager of The Extended School Support Service at ContinYou.

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¹ www.haygroup.co.uk/Sectors/Education/index.asp?GoTo=sectors

In brief

Ruth Kelly MP

Ruth Kelly was appointed Secretary of State for Education and Skills in December 2004. She was previously Minister for the Cabinet Office. Ruth joined HM Treasury where she was, successively, Economic Secretary and, from May 2002, Financial Secretary.

Ruth was educated at Queen's College, Oxford, and the LSE, where she gained an MSc in Economics. She worked on The Guardian as an economics writer in the early 1990s before joining the Bank of England.

School profiles

According to a DfES spokesperson, following national consultation in summer 2004, the government's proposal for a school profile is currently being tested with 90 schools and with different groups of parents. The profile will replace the governors' annual report, the annual parents' meeting and the school prospectus in its present form. Final details of the proposals, to be introduced from September 2005, are not yet available.

Schools forums

In this article, members of schools forums share their experiences of working on a forum in the context of the recent survey commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills.

In summer 2004, ConfEd Extra (the trading arm of the Confederation of Education and Children's Services Managers), on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), carried out a survey on the operation of schools forums. The results of the survey were published in *Schools forums: a report* (September 2004).

Factors contributing to the successful operation of forums include:

- appropriate election and nomination processes
- good communication between members and the constituencies they represent.
- clarity over where the forum fits within wider structures of consultation
- sufficient resources devoted to the organisation, management and support of the forum
- provision of timely and accessible information, appropriate training opportunities and background briefing for members
- appropriate and timely feedback to the local schools community
- decision makers being interested in the forum's deliberations and taking its views seriously.

An active and independent Chair is crucial to success.

Members of forums also need to play their part by:

- attending meetings regularly
- contributing appropriately (ie taking the wider view and not pursuing sectional interest)
- taking responsibility for their own training and development
- maintaining contact with their constituency, both to gather views and to feed back the results of the forum's deliberations.

There should be periodic evaluations of the working of the forum.

Governors have an important role, but may need additional support to allow them to contribute fully and to be properly valued by other members of the forum. One of the most important factors determining the satisfaction of forum members was their degree of control over events and over the business of the forum. Having command of sufficient resources to support its work adequately is a mark of esteem for the forum and a clear signal that it is valued.

Overall conclusions from *Schools forums*

Following on from the survey, ConfEd held a series of conferences for forum members during the autumn term 2004. Here, participants at the conferences from the different constituent groups represented on schools forums comment on their experiences.

A view from the Chair

The Schools Forum is a very useful vehicle for enabling governors to be involved in financial decisions within the local education authority (LEA). Over the year we have considered a wide agenda, from supporting schools facing falling rolls to challenging schools with large surpluses. The Forum brings together governors, headteachers, LEA officers and association members so that informed discussion can take place and recommendations can be made. All LEAs are required to have a forum of this nature and I urge all governors to take an active part in ensuring that a schools forum has the correct representation from governors. In Rochdale, there are usually between six and eight meetings a year held after 4 pm. As Chair of Rochdale Schools Forum, I have had a valuable insight into the funding issues of schools, and feel I have made a worthwhile contribution to financial issues that all schools face.

Derek Wiggett
is Chair of Rochdale Schools Forum.

A headteacher's view

I am the teaching Head of a small Derbyshire primary school with 100 pupils on roll. I volunteered to join the Derbyshire Schools Forum in order to be involved in decisions about issues of funding. I hope that my involvement will help me to improve my own understanding of this complex issue.

At our first meeting it was difficult to work out the different categories of speaker, due to the size of membership (33). We were daunted by the consultation on the Local Government Settlement, changes to the funding formula for schools being high on the agenda. The Forum felt at that time that we didn't know enough to understand the implications of what we were being consulted on. Governors in particular are at a disadvantage, since they are not usually involved in the running of schools on a daily basis.

As members of the Forum have come to know each other and developed a better understanding of funding issues, meetings have become more efficient.

We have requested focused papers for agenda items and the presence of officers with specific knowledge of the items under discussion. There is a need, however, for information to be presented to the Forum from external, independent sources. It is difficult to make decisions without debating different points of view and having some idea of the implications of decisions. At the moment Schools Forum members rely on the recommendations of officers.

It was very useful to attend one of the recent schools forum conferences to find out how other forum groups function and to listen to the views of different stakeholders. I look forward to similar opportunities in the future.

Liz Walker
is Headteacher of Newtown Primary School, Derbyshire.

Governors' views

It is nearly two years since our Forum was set up. This article attempts to summarise the experience of the eight governor representatives in that time.

By bringing different groups together, we get a better overview of cross-sector issues and there is increased transparency. This has been particularly important in our work on developing needs-led funding formulae. Gloucestershire Governors' Association is only two years old, so the Forum has helped to establish its role. It is still quite difficult, however, to get a representative governors' view. We shouldn't try to be like Heads or LEA representatives, and we certainly shouldn't be intimidated because we don't know so much. We add value by asking the simple questions such as: 'Why?', 'How?', 'Can we go back to first principles?' or 'What's the point of that?'

We can challenge assumptions, bring a different perspective and focus on the main points. Forums shouldn't be limited just to considering the budget. We look at each major initiative and proposed change and ask about the financial implications. There is a willingness to work well together. We enjoy the meetings – never last more than two hours!

The jury is still out on whether the Forum really has made a difference – although, so far, the Cabinet has accepted every recommendation we have made.

On the down side, the jargon, acronyms and sheer volume of papers are intimidating. And no, the answer isn't to email everything instead! There is a lot of technically detailed stuff and we all have times when we feel out of our depth or ten minutes behind the argument. This has led to disappointed expectations for some members who thought they would be able to contribute more. Our hands are tied in many ways. The obvious example is the impact of the minimum funding guarantee – there is so little room for manoeuvre. However successful the meetings, we have had problems with the consultation process with schools – it can seem like a black hole! There is often also a sense of a large empty chair at meetings with 'DfES' written on the back. So much is prescribed, yet there is little chance for dialogue.

These three simple tips have helped us to be more effective:

- 1 Have a governors' pre-meeting to check understanding, agree questions, and so on.
- 2 Meet in a school – it reminds us of why we are there.
- 3 Look at the big picture – leave 'what's best for my school?' at the door or you get nowhere.

Gillian Hayward
is a governor representative on Gloucestershire Schools Forum.

Following the introduction of local management of schools, in Harrow a small group of officers, headteachers and, in later years, one governor, had the remit of making recommendations on the schools' funding formula to the LEA. The Schools Forum built on this experience with a number of the same personnel being appointed to the fifteen-member Forum. In practice, constituent groups make appointments by persuading enough 'volunteers' to fill the places. The daytime meetings, preferred by the majority of the Forum – and the officers, preclude many governors from considering this role.

Initially, on-the-job training was provided by the lead officer servicing the Forum. A year plan was agreed at the first meeting, and forward agenda setting is a standing item. At first some of the complexities seemed daunting but, well briefed by officers, we have grown in experience, confidence and the ability to initiate research to inform our decision making. There is a shared understanding of the impact of budgetary decisions between and across sectors, and a shared belief that school improvement should drive the decisions made by the LEA in the same way that it should in our individual schools.

Christine Millard
is a governor representative on Harrow Schools Forum and Chair of the Association of Harrow Governing Bodies.

An LEA perspective

Knowsley's Schools Forum has evolved from its Local Management of Schools Working Party and has drawn on good practice. There are now seven governor representatives on the Forum, as opposed to just three on the previous working party. This has given a wider perspective and it is important to ensure that all governors feel confident to contribute to debate.

The recent survey has provided a national picture and our Forum is now considering changes within this context so that we can continue to improve and to serve the community better.

One area that has worked well in Knowsley has been the establishment of a Forum budget. The 2004/05 budget of £41,800 is funded by schools (£20,800) and the LEA (£21,000) and covers the cost of external research, officers' time, venue costs and the production and distribution of agendas. The effective operation of the Forum relies on commitment from its members and I spend twenty per cent of my time on forum

matters, not least in researching issues and producing reports. The Forum is well attended and there is a true feeling of collaboration: after all, we are in this together – no one person or sector has all the answers.

Finally, I am delighted that the DfES is giving schools forums a higher national profile. The recent regional conferences were well timed and should be repeated. The importance and influence of the forum must not be underestimated nationally or locally. Appropriate national and local training is vital if they are to gain the recognition they deserve.

Diane Williams (IPFA)
is LEA representative on Knowsley's Schools Forum and Education Finance Manager for Knowsley LEA.

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1 Available from Alison Calvert, DfES,
alison.calvert@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

The Education Bill published on 1 December 2004 paves the way for the Secretary of State to be enabled to make regulations that will give decision-making powers to schools forums, specifically '... to agree to or refuse requests from their LEAs to:

- increase the level of central expenditure in the schools budget above that provided for by regulations; and
- vary the operation of the minimum funding guarantee for specific schools to avoid them receiving unfair budget outcomes.

If the forum does not agree to the LEA's request, the LEA will still be able to seek approval from the Secretary of State in the same way as now.²

If the bill is enacted, schools forums could be taking these decisions in respect of the financial year 2006-07 onwards.

²Extract from a letter from DfES dated 1 December 2004 to Chairs and clerks of schools forums.

14–19 Reform

Mike Tomlinson sets out the case for reform and explains how the proposals in the final report of the Working Group on 14–19 reform¹ are intended to meet the needs of all 14- to 19-year-olds in England.

Most governors, like many teachers, may well feel that the last thing needed is yet further change in our schools and colleges. However, the case for reform has been gathering momentum over recent years. Our system meets the needs of a significant proportion of learners, but it is not one which does this for all students, whatever their ability. In particular:

- the staying on rate at ages 16 and 17 is one of the lowest of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation) countries – we are 24th out of 28
- too many students around the age of 14 become disengaged from education or lack motivation
- employers and people working in higher education complain about young people's command of the 'basics'
- our vocational provision is fragmented and lacks transparency
- our assessment system has become too burdensome for students, teachers and lecturers.

After years of piecemeal change to the Key Stage 4 and post-16 curriculum and qualifications, it was felt that system-wide reform was the sensible option. Hence the 14-19 Working Group was set up in spring 2003. The final report setting out the proposals was published in October 2004. The proposals build upon the present strengths of our system and the innovative work found in the KS4 flexibility programmes and the

14–19 pathfinder projects, and evidence from systems in Europe and beyond, including the International Baccalaureate (IB).

The proposals set out a curriculum model for the 14–19 phase made up of a core and main learning, which together form a coherent programme. Here, coherence means that the programme includes everything needed to ensure easy transition to the next level – no dead ends for students. The core, common to all programmes, consists of:

- functional mathematics, functional literacy and communication, and functional ICT (information and communication technology)
- an extended project to replace all externally set coursework. The project would relate to the programme and offers students the opportunity to pursue a subject or topic which interests them.
- an entitlement to involvement in wider activities (informal learning). This recognises the learning achieved outside school.
- development, through the whole programme, of students' skills, such as interpersonal skills, group working, and managing their own learning
- high-quality, impartial advice and guidance and support for personal planning.

Up to the age of 16, the KS4 national curriculum requirements remain in place. The main learning,

which will occupy an increasing proportion of time from age 14 through to 19, is organised into about twenty lines of learning. One is 'open'; this will be the norm up to age 16 and will be available post-16. Essentially this enables students to follow a mix of subjects. The remaining lines post-16 will be specialist. The report argues for vocational provision to be available in all the lines from age 14 onwards, sets out the criteria that this provision must satisfy and seeks to offer it at all four levels. All students, irrespective of the school they start in, should have access to all the lines. This will require institutions to collaborate and provision to be planned in an area.

Contrary to what is reported in the media, the content of courses such as GCSE, AS-level, A-level, BTEC, and equivalent qualifications will remain and will be the components of the learning programmes. However, we have argued for an assessment system, at least up to Level 2 (GCSE equivalent) which would see a reduction in the volume of external assessment and a different balance between this and internal assessment done by teachers and lecturers. Fitness for purpose assessment is the key. We also want to see more time given to teaching and learning by reducing the assessment burden. The core 'basics' will continue to be externally assessed. At Level 3 (A-level equivalent) we propose reducing the number of units from six to four, but retaining the external assessment broadly as it is now. These components will be graded; Level 3 will be fine graded to meet the need to differentiate performance more easily than is possible at present.

The report argues for the whole learning programme to be the basis of the qualification, rather than a qualification being associated with each component. Hence the proposal for a diploma structure. There would be four diploma levels: entry, foundation (L1), intermediate (L2) and advanced (L3). Credits would

be built up until the threshold for a diploma had been reached. The diploma could not be achieved without the requisite achievement in the core's basic elements and the extended project. This would be the first time a qualification gave a guarantee of performance in the basics.

Implementation of the proposals must be evolutionary and not a 'big bang'. Proper support for all those working in schools, colleges and work-based training provision is vital, as is thorough piloting of some of the proposals before their introduction is agreed. Institutions will need to collaborate and this will require attention to a range of matters: the differing terms, conditions and salaries of school and further education teachers; funding; accountability measures; and the internal management of institutions.

At the heart of the proposals is the learner. We must ensure that everyone has access to an appropriate curriculum and is enabled to achieve as highly as possible and we must want every student to leave education with a thirst for continued learning throughout his or her life. If we can achieve these goals, then we can have a world-class education system. The 14–19 proposals offer us a way forward.

*Mike Tomlinson
is Chair of the Working Group on 14–19 Reform.*

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1 14–19 Curriculum and qualification reform:
final report of the Working Group on 14–19
Reform

*TEN (The Education Network) Policy Briefing
42/04, which summarises the final report of the
Working Group on 14–19 Reform, is available to
member LEAs on the TEN website: www.ten.info.
The full report can be downloaded from the DfES
website: www.14-19reform.gov.uk.*

Blueprint

Rosella Davenport describes a pilot programme that forms part of the government's strategy to develop drug education in England, highlighting particularly the support being made available to parents.

Most of us worry about drugs and whether or not our children will one day become hooked on them. Worrying, however, doesn't really help matters, but what will help is Blueprint – the good news is that the government is fully aware of our concern and is doing something about it.

So what is Blueprint?

Blueprint is a research programme designed to find out about and provide evidence of what works in educating 11 to 13 year olds about the risks of drugs. It is the largest drug education study that has ever been undertaken in the UK.

It is multi-component, which means that schools, parents, governors, communities, health professionals and the local media all work together to try to prevent or reduce the harm that drug use can cause. Earlier research shows that this is more effective than schools working alone.

The results of this programme, which is at the heart of the government's drugs strategy and is a partnership between the Home Office, Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and Department of Health, will guide and inform the development of drug education in England.

How might this affect schools in my area?

At this stage 5,000 young people from 29 secondary schools in Lancashire, Cheshire and Derbyshire are involved in Blueprint, but in the future all schools could become part of the programme.

What do the schools actually do?

Six of the 29 schools are comparison or control schools and they simply carry on as usual with their own drug education programmes. The other 23 schools are piloting specially designed Blueprint lessons and materials – ten lessons in Year 7 and five lessons in Year 8, including a presentation by the pupils showing what they have learnt.

And what have the children learnt?

All the Blueprint pupils are given accurate and up-to-date information about drugs – tobacco, alcohol, caffeine and prescribed medication as well as illegal drugs.

Through role-play and other interactive activities they are encouraged to challenge myths and common misconceptions surrounding drug use. Equally important, they learn to develop a range of skills needed to be able to resist peer pressure in both drug-related and other situations where they may feel vulnerable, threatened or simply uncomfortable.

The presentations particularly help the pupils to develop communication skills appropriate for dealing with a wide range of audiences.

To summarise, Blueprint is about building skills such as:

- communication
- social
- information retrieval
- problem solving
- decision making
- social resistance.

How do parents benefit?

Not only do young people benefit, but parents, carers and guardians are also given opportunities to participate and develop their skills.

All parents are invited to an evening 'launch event', where they learn about drugs and about communicating with young people, because – and let's be honest here – 'To talk to your kids about drugs you need to be able to talk to your kids!' Evidence suggests that good parenting skills including positive and open communications can help when it comes to discussing with children difficult issues, such as drugs.

Following the launch event, parents and carers who wish to learn more have the chance to join a series of workshops that cover in depth the following areas:

- **Listening:** a chance for parents to think about how well they listen to their children and to practise with other parents

- **Bullying:** skills and strategies to build children's self-esteem and help them deal with difficult situations
- **Sex, relationships and drugs:** research shows that children want to talk to their parents about drugs. Parents learn how to tackle difficult subjects with their children
- **Stress and the secondary school pupil:** strategies to help children to distinguish the important from the trivial and to enjoy their time in school
- **Setting boundaries:** being clear about where to draw the line and how to let the minor things go
- **Looking after yourself:** children are trying to cope with a riot of hormones. Parents learn what to expect and how to cope.

Parents can choose topics. Some parents initially put their names down to attend only three sessions, but most usually then ask to continue with the others as well. The programme is very flexible.

Particularly rewarding, is the fact that the Blueprint participants – parents, pupils, teachers, governors and others – speak very positively about the programme, stressing how much they both enjoy and benefit from it.

Who is running the programme?

The parents' part of the programme is being delivered by the Parent Trust – a consortium comprising Adfam, which works in the drugs and alcohol field supporting families; PESF, the Parenting Education and Support Forum; and ContinYou, which is dedicated to changing lives through learning.

I am employed by ContinYou as Blueprint Co-ordinator. This is probably the most worthwhile work I have done to date. As a former school governor, I can only say: 'Keep a look-out and make sure that governors are aware of future opportunities for involvement in Blueprint.'

Rosella Davenport

is Blueprint Co-ordinator for ContinYou. She can be contacted by telephone: 07887 878333 or by email: rosella.davenport@continyou.org.uk.

Governors' Agenda Publication schedule

Issue	Copy deadline	Week of publication
April 2005	4 March 2005	11 April 2005
June 2005	29 April 2005	13 June 2005
Sept 2005	15 July 2005	12 Sept 2005
Nov 2005	21 Oct 2005	21 Nov 2005

Headteachers as consultant leaders

Dr Jane Doughty explores some of the issues for governors relating to serving headteachers working as consultants.

NCSL leadership programmes

The National College for School Leadership (NCSL) offers a wide range of leadership development programmes and activities for school leaders at different stages in their careers. Programmes are available for individuals (for example, Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers), school teams (for example, Working Together for Success) and for schools as a whole (for example, Leading from the Middle). One of our most highly regarded programmes is the Consultant Leader Development Programme. This programme is available to experienced and successful school leaders who wish to extend their skills and expertise in relation to adult learning. Some of the issues particularly pertinent to governors relating to consultant leaders are explored in this article.

The 'consultant leader'

NCSL created the concept of the 'consultant leader' in 2001 as part of its Leadership Development Framework and defined the role as 'an experienced serving school leader who supports the development of other school leaders'¹. The concept supports and promotes the principle of the profession taking responsibility for its own future development and school leaders playing a key role in taking forward the reform agenda. The idea of the consultant leader also came from our desire to build the leadership capacity needed to ensure that NCSL's programmes are delivered to the highest possible standard. Experienced headteachers, working as consultant leaders with NCSL providers on national programmes such as the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) and the Headteacher Induction Programme, make invaluable contributions. In these two instances their expertise is critical in supporting the leadership learning of aspiring and newly appointed headteachers.

The development programme

To support school leaders in taking up this role, NCSL launched the development programme in October 2002. Since that time, around 700 experienced headteachers and other school leaders have undertaken the programme. In a telephone survey of 80 participant headteachers, 95 per cent stated that the programme is both stimulating and challenging. These school leaders told us how valuable they found the development experience, in terms of both

broadening their approach to headship and of enabling them to develop the skills they need in order to be successful consultant leaders. The programme consists of two residential modules, of three days' and two days' duration. Over the full five-day programme, participants look at a range of issues including the national context, policy priorities and the practice of creating and facilitating adult learning opportunities.

Other leadership programmes

In order to meet differing and specific needs, we have also, over the past eighteen months, made changes to the development experience. A good example of this on a national scale is the Primary Strategy Leadership Programme, where we now have around 2,000 primary strategy consultant leaders working with their local education authorities in this national initiative. On a more individual basis, we have worked with colleagues in a number of local education authorities to provide programmes that meet their specific needs.

Issues for governors

Governors will be interested in some of the practical issues relating to headteachers taking up roles as consultant leaders. First let me consider the principle of headteachers undertaking responsibilities beyond their schools. Headteachers are central to 'providing professional leadership and management in their schools'². They also have a role in 'contributing to the development of the education system as a whole'². All school leaders, particularly headteachers, have a great deal to offer the education profession. For example, in order to assure the best quality educational provision for our pupils and students, it is crucial that we find ways of capturing the wisdom of experienced leaders for the benefit of future leaders – the consultant leader concept helps us to do that.

Governors may wonder what kind of activities consultant leaders get involved with. One important contribution is working with NCSL and its providers on national programmes – as tutors and facilitators on programmes such as Leading from the Middle, NPQH and Strategic Leadership of ICT. A number of consultant leaders mentor newly appointed headteachers, while others act as facilitators at college conferences and seminars. They may also be working on the NCSL Primary Strategy Leadership Programme, or with their local education authorities as primary strategy consultant leaders or consultants on the remodelling agenda.

Governing bodies may have concerns about the amount of time headteachers are potentially out of school in order to undertake some of the activities listed above. The significance of this issue will vary from school to school and is something that needs discussion and agreement. Headteachers are well used to juggling priorities and delegating effectively, while ensuring that the key priority of pupils' achievements in their school is kept at the forefront of their minds.

There are obvious benefits to school leaders and their schools when colleagues work as consultant leaders. Headteachers tell us that they feel their schools benefit significantly from the ideas and experience they bring back from looking at, for example, school improvement strategies used in other schools. Working as a consultant leader provides Heads with opportunities to extend their skills and expertise and, as our telephone survey indicated, these transfer into

their headship roles. Since there is remuneration for this work, it can also generate income for schools. Finally, and importantly, individuals find working as a consultant leader energising and refreshing, allowing them to approach their substantive roles with renewed vigour.

Jane Doughty
is Director of Leadership Programmes at the National College for School Leadership.

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1 The leadership development framework, National College for School Leadership, November 2001

2 'The core purpose of headship' in National standards for headteachers (page 3), Department for Education and Skills, October 2004

Combating obesity

Colin Noble highlights some of the findings in the report on obesity produced by the Parliamentary Select Committee on Health in May 2004. He goes on to describe the action being taken by the government to address the Committee's recommendations and lists some of the things that governors can do to encourage their schools to be healthier places.

The Select Committee's report

The Parliamentary Select Committee on Health¹ produced a report on obesity in May 2004. Its conclusions were shocking, but unsurprising to the many teachers, governors and parents who have observed children getting larger over the last few years.

The Committee quoted the Health Survey of England (2002) which found that 5 per cent of boys and 7 per cent of girls aged 2 to 15 are obese and 21 per cent of boys and 27 per cent of girls in the same age group are overweight. Bearing in mind that this is the most active part of their lives, when they are still growing, this is a worrying statistic. Furthermore, these figures have increased by 400 per cent over the last ten years. The Committee found that the consequences of obesity were severe and included a much higher risk of physical health problems such as heart disease, high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes; psychological and social problems; and – from both individual and national perspectives – huge financial implications. It concluded that the present generation of schoolchildren are at risk of living shorter lives than their parents, which would be reversing a trend of the last two hundred years. Although the Committee acknowledged that the government had some strategies planned or in place, it felt that far more could be done and that many strategies would benefit from being more 'joined up' so that they worked together and supported each other.

From recommendations to action

Since May 2004 the government has been extremely busy trying to address some of the Committee's recommendations. In September 2004 the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) launched the Healthy Living Blueprint, which was sent to all schools.² In particular, it gives advice to headteachers about tackling the issues of physical activity and healthy eating. It also addresses a number of other related aspects of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). The Blueprint makes heavy reference to the National Healthy Schools Programme and recommends that schools join their local programme in order to obtain practical advice on the issues.

In November 2004 the Department of Health launched the Public Health White Paper *Choosing health: making healthier choices easier* which, among many other things, reinforces the government's concerns over obesity and its commitment to the National Healthy Schools Programme. It has a vision that by 2009 all schools will be working to achieve national healthy school status. In order to achieve this, a school will have to show how it is providing a whole-school approach to healthy eating and physical activity, as well as a comprehensive programme of PSHE that includes sex and relationship education and drugs education (including alcohol and tobacco). The White Paper has a great deal to say about physical

education and school sport and about the huge amounts of resources that will continue to be given to school sports partnerships, and the growth of specialist sports colleges.

In the meantime, the Department of Health has just completed an eighteen-month study of aspects of healthy eating in schools, including:

- breakfast clubs
- water provision
- healthy vending machines
- healthy tuck shops
- healthy lunch boxes
- the school dining environment
- cookery clubs
- growing clubs.

The study involved working with over three hundred schools to determine the most effective practice in establishing a range of healthier eating behaviour in schools.

The National Healthy Schools Programme will be providing training for all its local programmes – of which there is one in each LEA – between March and May 2005, so that this learning and expertise can be used in all schools. School lunches did not form part of the study. However, the DfES is currently reviewing the statutory regulations that suppliers of school lunches have agreed in their contracts, and is minded to change them from **food-based** to **nutrition-based** regulations, and at the same time to make them more rigorous. Subject to the passage of the Education Bill in spring 2005, Ofsted inspections from September 2005 will make judgements about how well schools are providing for healthier eating.

What governors can do

Governors have a great deal to contribute in the struggle against obesity and in making schools into healthier places. They could:

- encourage the school to join its local Healthy School Programme and help to establish, with the rest of the school community, the priorities for the school to work on
- appoint a lead governor to champion and scrutinise the work of the school in becoming healthier
- use their connections in the community to help bring in local sports clubs, associations and trainers to supplement and support physical activity
- review the school meals contract with the supplier and encourage mechanisms for pupils, parents and carers to help plan and monitor healthy and attractive options
- encourage attempts to get pupils more physically active by walking and cycling to school, as well as engaging in activity at lunchtime and after school
- ask for, or attend, presentations about the Food in Schools provision so that they fully understand the potential for promoting healthier eating in school.

To find the local Healthy School Programme for your area, look at the website: www.lhsp.org.

Colin Noble
is Acting Head of the National Healthy Schools Programme.

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1 www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200304/cmselect/cmhealth/23/23.pdf

2 www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/healthyliving/

The Children Act 2004

Jim Fitzgibbon gives an outline of the main provisions in the Children Act 2004 in the context of other recent publications affecting the development of services for young people.

It is a busy time for fans of laws, strategies and frameworks! Perhaps the most significant of those published recently are:

- the DfES (Department for Education and Skills) Five Year Strategy
- the 'Health' National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services (the 'NSF')
- the Public Health White Paper *Choosing health*
- the Children Act 2004.

All of these documents, with perhaps one exception, to which I will return later, are pulling in broadly the same direction, with a number of common themes:

- developing policy and practice to prevent failure of both systems and young people, 'getting' – in the jargon – 'upstream'
- working in partnership across agencies to avoid young people 'dropping' through the gaps between services

- focusing on outcomes for young people rather than processes or inputs (how things will be better for them)
- building services around young people rather than organisations or institutions.

This general direction has received a broad welcome. The reasons for all of this are many, including:

- the failure of the current system to meet the needs of all young people, particularly those from poor backgrounds and with additional needs
- the UK's patchy performance in various education and social care global 'league tables'
- the fragmentation of current funding streams and, hence, of provision for young people
- the various and separate hurdles young people have to 'jump' to have their needs assessed and met
- the costs of our relative failure of young people, as evidenced in poor achievement, what might be called antisocial behaviour and ultimately, for some, 'career offending'.

The Children Act was given royal assent, with hardly a word in the media, on 15 November. We now have legislation promising a 'long-term programme ... for developing more effective and accessible services focused around the needs of children and young people and their families'. It is worth stressing three things about this:

- The Act is about young people **and families**, something which gets lost in the general rhetoric.
- It will be a 'long haul', although some things have to happen quickly. The Minister for Children and Young People has talked about a ten-year programme.
- It is about joining up services in a way that is quite new.

It is important also to emphasise that the Act is about **every** child and young person. Confusion and, in some quarters, consternation have arisen because of the Act's part origins in the Climbié child protection tragedy, where gaps in communication and between services were perceived to be to blame for Victoria's death. There is an important section on child protection in the Act, but its scope is much wider.

I have said already that the Act stresses the importance of 'outcomes' for young people, for the first time embedded in legislation. They are grouped under the headings:

- being healthy
- staying safe
- enjoying and achieving
- making a positive contribution (largely about young people's behaviour)
- economic well-being.

The joining up of services will be done by local partnerships, engaging police, education, social services, health, probation, Connexions, housing authorities, and voluntary and community

organisations, which the government sees as both strategic partners and providers of services.

The new mechanism to deliver this partnership activity will be trusts – planning, budgeting and commissioning organisations – which are currently being piloted by the DfES. They are to be located in local government and are not mandatory – you **could** use current partnership arrangements as their basis. But it is 'recommended' that they be in place by 2006, and they will be 'expected' to be in place by 2008. The hidden stick or carrot in all of this is a new joined-up (health, education, social care and audit commission) inspection framework, against which it appears to be difficult to do well without the new partnership arrangements.

In order for councils to demonstrate their accountability they are 'expected' to have a Director of Children's Services and a Lead Council Member in place between 2006 and 2008.

Finally, the Act legislates for easier information sharing, an area of real difficulty up until now.

All of this could have very significant implications for individual schools. There is potential for some of these joined-up services to be based on school sites. This will be welcomed by some schools, which would like to forge closer links with colleagues in health, the police and social services. This arrangement could build upon the arrangements for extended schools and full-service schools. There could also be implications for individual members of staff, who may be asked to be 'key workers' for young people, taking responsibility for linking together inputs from other agencies. Child protection procedures are likely to become even tighter and – despite, oddly, some think, there being no **duty** on schools to co-operate in partnership arrangements – schools can expect Ofsted inspectors to look very carefully in future at how they are contributing to the achievement of the five outcomes.

Finally, I come back to my opening paragraph. The one document in the list it contains that does not sit very easily with this new agenda of 'joining up' and partnership working is the DfES Five Year Strategy. It offers, for secondary schools at least, separation from local education authorities, independence, including ownership of their assets, power over their admissions and the freedom to grow in different ways. Whilst the Strategy does talk about the need for partnership, its suggestion of separation does seem to be somewhat at odds with the otherwise universal mantra of joining up and working together for the benefit of young people, families and communities.

Jim Fitzgibbon
is a member of the Children Act Project Team in Warwickshire.

The plain guide to the Children Act by Chris Waterman, published by NFER in December 2004, is available from: NFER Publications Unit, The Mere, Upton Park, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 2DQ, Tel: 01753 637002, Email: book.sales@nfer.ac.uk, price £20 (ISBN: 1 903880 76 9).

A safe workforce

Jenny Simpson draws attention to the responsibility of governors to ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all new staff and volunteers, and offers some advice on developing a safe recruitment process.

The conviction of Ian Huntley for the murder of Jessica Chapman and Holly Wells in 2003, and the subsequent public inquiry by Sir Michael Bichard into how Ian Huntley was employed at Soham Village College brought into sharp focus the way in which schools recruit staff.

The recently published Department for Education and Skills (DfES) guidance, *Safeguarding children in education* (DfES/0027/2004, September 2004) has further sharpened the focus, not only for headteachers but also for governors. The new guidance points out that governors should ensure that the school 'operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children, including Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and List 99 checks'. This expectation by the DfES places a further responsibility upon governors, who are currently seeking to grasp the intricacies of such matters as workforce remodelling and extended schools.

However, governors should not lose heart, because safe recruitment procedures are part of the wider agenda for safeguarding children. Put simply, this is about governors actively promoting the welfare of all their pupils from the moment they start their school day. Keeping children and young people safe means ensuring that the adults that work with them have not previously harmed children in some way.

How then can governors ensure the safety of their pupils through the school's recruitment procedure? Firstly, it is important to recognise that not every adult who comes into contact with children and young people has their best interests at heart. The ability of other adults to recognise such people is difficult, if not impossible. Consequently, schools need to have in place a robust recruitment procedure.

A good recruitment procedure should comply with local and national guidance, and should link with the school's child protection policy and procedures. The recruitment procedure should also be reviewed regularly and updated to take account of changes in legislation and guidance.

The process of safe recruitment

Governors can develop the process of safe recruitment in their school by ensuring that their recruitment procedure requires the school:

- to include in all advertisements a statement that CRB (at the appropriate level) and List 99 checks will be carried out

- to include in all advertisements a declaration regarding the school's commitment to safeguarding children
- to use a standardised application form for all volunteers and applicants. Volunteers who are applying for paid vacancies within the school should fill in an application form.
- to take up at least two references – one of which **must** be from the current, or last, employer. The reference should request information on the suitability of the volunteer or applicant to work with children, their conduct and their relationship with their peers, as well as 'reasons for leaving' and any compromise agreement details.
- not to allow the individual to begin voluntary work or take up employment in the school until satisfactory references are received and the CRB and List 99 checks have been carried out.

It would be naive to think that the recruitment procedure ends at this point. Rather, the recruitment procedure should blend seamlessly with the induction process. The volunteer or newly appointed member of staff should undergo an induction process that includes:

- knowledge of the school's main policies and procedures, such as child protection, health and safety, physical intervention and whistle-blowing
- support, training, monitoring and advice with regard to acceptable and unacceptable behaviour – that is, a code of conduct.

If governors and senior members of staff are to implement a robust and vigorous recruitment procedure, training will be required. To this end the DfES is currently working with other agencies to review the recommendations by Bichard with a view to producing a national training tool for headteachers, governors and local education authorities (LEAs).

In the meantime governors should be encouraged to check that their school is operating a safe recruitment procedure by being a 'critical friend', and ensuring that the headteacher obtains practical support and help from the LEA.

Jenny Simpson
is the Child Protection Development Officer for
Leicestershire County Council.

Governing passions

In the latest episode of the 'fly on the wall' documentary series about governance at Sadtidings Primary School, individuals share their thoughts about the recent meeting of the governing body, and the aftermath.

Episode 3: Breaking in new governors

Jane Hobbs: The Monday after the governors' meeting I came into school to help out in Class 3 and the first thing Sally Pickles said was, 'And I thought you were on our side' and I said 'What?' and she said 'All you governors are the same' and I said 'What?' and she said, 'Sick-note culture. How dare you?' and I said, 'What?' And then she showed me a copy of the minutes. I felt like resigning there and then.

Ron Mutton: Best advice to a new governor is listen to the experts and speak when you're spoken to. Take Harry Fanshaw. Been attending governors' meetings for the best part of twenty years and has never said a word. Naming no names, but there's some on this governing body who would do well to learn from old Harry.

Sarwar Aziz: I rang the clerk and said that whilst I was sure that it was unintentional, I believed she had misrepresented the views of Mrs Hobbs and myself. She did become rather angry and put the phone down. So I wrote to her.

Dolores Spink: How dare he. To suggest that the minutes were inaccurate is one thing, but to address me as 'The clerk to the governors'. Me, a mere clerk... I've held very high office, I'll have you know. You do these people a favour and before you know it they treat you like dirt.

Dougie Antrobus: I've never known Dolores to be so upset. I said to her, 'Calls himself Doctor Aziz. Bet he's not a real doctor, more likely some quack.' Then next thing I know, he's on the phone to me. 'Mr Antrobus,' he says, 'about the Premises Committee...', he says, some crackpot idea about using surplus capacity as a base for community nurses. Man's gone mad. 'This is a school,' I said, 'not a hospital!'

Sally Pickles: I should have known that Jane and Sarwar would never have said anything like that. When I heard that Dolores Spink had written the minutes, it was obvious what had happened. The staff were all really angry but Jane had a point when she said that if no one on the staff was willing to be a governor, then they could hardly be surprised if the governors were misinformed.

RM: Frankly, I'm appalled. That Sally Pickles is a troublemaker, mark my words, and now she's gone

and got herself voted in as a governor. And that's not all. One of her stooges is going to be a governor too, the loud-mouthed woman in special needs who spends all her time with the delinquents. If you ask me, she's a delinquent herself, all tattoos and nose studs.

JH: The more I think about it, the angrier I get. I think we were set up. I know I didn't say much when I first became a governor. Mr Mutton and some of the others seemed so knowledgeable and sure of themselves. I suppose I was nervous and a bit in awe of them, you know, they seemed so important. But now I'm thinking I was a pupil at this school, and now my daughter's here. This is our school in our community and I'm not happy with the way things are going.

SA: I have not been a school governor before and I am surprised that there has not been an induction process. I have been talking to Jane and we both think that all the governors need some training. I will suggest that to Mr Mutton.

RM: Training? Me, a man of business, a man of the real world? Training? Me? Who does he think he is? Me? Training?

DS: I said to Ron Mutton, 'If you don't sort things out I may have to consider my position. And you know what that would mean.'

DA: I said to Ron Mutton, 'This is what you get when those sort of people get above themselves. Nip it in the bud,' I said, 'nip it in the bud.'

RM: I said to Dougie and Dolores, 'It's not like this in the real world.' Oh no. You don't get their sort in the private sector. Can you imagine the likes of Hobbs and Aziz running a cutting-edge news media and retail empire? Dream on, I say, dream on. I put it all down to the nanny state, giving people ideas above their station. Just as well there's still people like me willing to give up their valuable time – not as though I get much appreciation. You'd think I didn't have enough on my plate without having to break in new governors.

'Governing passions' is being written for *Governors' Agenda* by **Phil Dickinson**. The title of the next episode is 'Dealing with parents'.

Phil Dickinson
is Development Officer (South East) for the Extended Schools Support Service (TESSS) on behalf of ContinYOU.

ContinYou conferences

Services to children – the impact of parental involvement

A Share conference

9 March 2005 – Birmingham

Re-imagining out-of-school-hours learning and study support

An Extra Time conference

10 March 2005 – London

Young people – a community dilemma? Seeing beyond anti-social behaviour

15 March 2005 – London

Extended and full-service extended schools

Schools and Children's Trusts

17 March 2005 – London

For further information about any of these conferences, contact Bipun Lord at bipun.lord@continyou.org.uk or on 024 7658 8470.

Governors' Agenda briefings

Extended schools – what role for governors?

Toolkit for governor trainers

Wednesday, 2 March 2005 – Birmingham

Thursday, 10 March 2005 – London

An opportunity for COGS to review and contribute to ContinYou's toolkit for governor trainers at draft stage.

The toolkit will support trainers in helping governing bodies and senior leadership teams to make informed decisions about extending their school's provision.

The emphasis is on using the National Strategy for Children and Learners to achieve the best possible outcomes for pupils.

To be led by: **Michele Robbins,**
Education Consultant

For full details of the Briefings, contact Liza Griffiths at liza.griffiths@continyou.org.uk or on 024 7658 8440.

The aims of *Governors' Agenda*

Governors' Agenda seeks to support those who work in school governance, through providing information, comment and training ideas. It aims to be alert to future developments as well as being a focus for disseminating current good practice.

ContinYou produces *Governors' Agenda* as part of the services it offers to those who work in school governance. These include:

- briefings for Co-ordinators of Governor Services
- evaluation of governor support and development programmes.

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