



The ER Governor

A Publication of the
East Riding Association of Governing Bodies

Issue No. 13 – Spring 2010



CHANGES AT THE TOP

Vince Barrett is the new Chair of ERAGB. He is the chair of the Driffild Junior School Governing Body and was elected at the AGM of the Association on 11 November. He takes over from Stuart Dransfield of Rawcliffe Primary who steps down as is required by our Constitution. Fellow councillors wish to thank Stuart for all that he has done since 2006.

Sue Gollop of Bridlington New Pasture Lane Primary and Bridlington School Sport College has been elected as our Vice Chair.

During the past 3 years ERAGB has flourished with the publication of three major working documents for governors:

- The checklist 'Are We Doing What We Are Supposed to be Doing?'
- Our 'Introduction and Guide for New Governors of Schools' and, most recently
- The 'Every Child Matters' pack.

All these are aimed at helping East Riding governors to do their job thoroughly. The reputation of the Association has also grown regionally and nationally as a result of the work of the Council.

Our change of leadership marks the start of a further period of development of the Association. Our efforts will continue to concentrate on providing ER governors with what they tell us they need to do their job. You can look forward to more ERAGB guides and publications. The next one will deal with the new Ofsted Framework for the Inspection of Schools.

Vince Barrett told the ER Governor, *"Governors play a vital role in all our nurseries, schools and college and we all have a responsibility for helping and supporting managers and staff in making all East Riding educational institutions the best that they can be. ERAGB will continue to be the independent voice of governors and will offer help and advice in all matters of governance."*



East Riding / ERAGB



EAST RIDING
OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

Joint GOVERNORS CONFERENCE 2010
Saturday 27th February

Towards more effective governance
(Becoming a better Governing Body)

Lead speaker HIM Bradley Simmons

All governors have received their invitation to attend this joint ERAGB/ERYC event on Sat 27 February at Bishop Burton.

Bradley Simmons was at the heart of the work done by OFSTED on its new inspection framework. This promises to be a lively session when Bradley will seek not only to give the OFSTED view but also to engage in constructive debate with governors about how they can move towards meeting the current inspection requirements. It will be followed by workshops when you can explore in more depth some of the issues raised including: safeguarding; effective monitoring and holding to account; governors contribution to school development planning; understanding data and others.

Make sure you book your place now by returning the proforma you received with your invitation (additional copies available from any member of the ERAGB Council or from 'june.whalley@eastriding.gov.uk')

SERVING THE EAST RIDING'S 2500 GOVERNORS

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN - ARE YOU PREPARED?

Under the new Framework for the Inspection of Schools, the safeguarding of children is of major importance. Inspectors are required to give prominence to how well schools are fulfilling their responsibilities for child protection and Safeguarding is a 'limiting judgement'. Hence the grades given for safeguarding will contribute to, and may limit, the grade for overall effectiveness.

Thus, where a school is judged to be inadequate in relation to the quality of the school's procedures for safeguarding and/or the extent to which the school promotes equality and tackles discrimination, inspectors treat these as 'limiting' judgements and the school's overall effectiveness is also likely to be judged inadequate.

Moreover if the quality of the school's procedures for safeguarding were graded as satisfactory but all other grades were outstanding, it would be highly unlikely that the school would be able to achieve an outstanding grade.

What is your school doing to ensure that all children and young people are safe and feel safe?

To answer that question an important first step for any governing body must be to find out what current practice is, assess the adequacy of current arrangements and then decide what action(s) need to be taken to meet the requirement that the school is meeting its responsibility to ensure the safety of pupils.

'Safety' is used here in the broadest sense as defined by the ECM agenda i.e. children are:

- (1) safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation;
- (2) safe from accidental injury and death;
- (3) safe from bullying and discrimination;
- (4) safe from crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school;
- (5) have security and stability and are cared for.

Clearly the responsibility for all 5 aspects does not rest solely with the school. However, the school has a responsibility (shared with others) for the safety of children and young people and must have arrangements in place to respond to circumstances beyond its direct control which put that safety at risk.

- Do you have policies which cover all these aspects?
- When were they last revised?
- Do you have a Child Protection policy?
- Does it recognise the importance of working collaboratively and closely with other key agencies?
- How well does the school respond to child welfare concerns?

- Are there arrangements in place to ensure that collaborative working?
- Are your pupils safe at all times when they are in the care of the school?
- How adequate and how accurate are your schools records on children in respect of safety issues?
- Is your CRB register up-to-date?
- How well is safeguarding prioritised?

Inspectors will evaluate each of these aspects of your school safeguarding arrangements

A good starting place for your governing body is the ERAGB guide for governors '**Every Child Matters – Change for Children**' (received in all schools in October/November). Part 2 of that guide is entitled '**Stay Safe**' will be particularly helpful. Subsequently the 'Briefing guide for Section 5 inspectors' (see below) will provide the details you may need.

Further reading:

1. 'Framework for the inspection of maintained schools' – Ofsted, July 2009, reference number 090019
2. Briefing guide for section 5 inspectors on safeguarding children – Ofsted, September 2009, reference number 090205 – available online at 'www.ofsted.gov.uk'
3. 'Every Child Matters – Change for children' ERAGB September 2009 available online at 'www.eragb.net'

FROM THE HORSES MOUTH

In response to a recent enquiry from ERAGB seeking clarification on limiting judgements OFSTED recently advised...

"Where a school is judged to be inadequate in relation to the quality of the school's procedures for safeguarding and/or the extent to which the school promotes equality and tackles discrimination, inspectors treat these as 'limiting' judgements and the school's overall effectiveness is also likely to be judged inadequate.

Any limiting judgements are considered before the overall effectiveness judgement is made. These relate to the quality of the school's procedures for safeguarding, the extent to which the school promotes equality and tackles discrimination, and pupils' achievement.

For example if the quality of the school's procedures for safeguarding are graded as satisfactory but all other grades were outstanding. It would be highly unlikely that the school would be able to achieve an outstanding grade.

*You can find more information in sections 37 and 44 of: **Framework for the inspection of maintained schools in England from September 2009**"*

email from OFSTED - 30 November 2009

By East Riding Governors - For East Riding Governors

East Riding Leadership Conference Spa Royal Hall Bridlington 24th November 2009

HOW SHOULD OUR SCHOOLS RESPOND TO OUR CHANGING WORLD?

This Conference is now an established annual event for Headteachers and Chairs of governing bodies. This year the theme was Community Cohesion - helping schools to link and work with the local, national, and global communities.

Professor Ted Cante, Executive Chair of the Institute of Community Cohesion (iCoCo) presented some startling facts about the challenges presented to us all in the 21st Century. Population migration has risen massively over the last 30 years resulting in a broad spectrum of diversity at local level with over 300 languages spoken in some London schools. The economy has changed dramatically and the qualifications and skills required in the workplace have changed.

Society has become fragmented as people move to jobs anywhere in UK, Europe or the World. Long-established social networks are being eroded – working men's clubs, post offices and pubs are disappearing. Electronic communication has increased massively over the past decade. All these changes provoke questions for schools, such as:

- *Are we equipping our young people with the right skills and attitudes to take their place in the global society of the 21st Century?*
- *Are principally white communities (like the East Riding) the ones which find it hardest challenge to accept the challenges of these changes?*

How can we help our children not to be afraid of difference, particularly those who live in monocultural communities?

- 0 -

The second speaker, **Dr Nicholas Evans, Lecturer in Diaspora History at Wilberforce Institute for the Study of Slavery and Emancipation, University of Hull**, focused on the demography of the East Riding.

Dr Evans was born and bred in the East Riding and his presentation centred on the ways in which life in the East Riding has been shaped by influences from many immigrant cultures. Surprisingly, we heard, those things we take to be archetypically 'English', such as fish and chips, ice cream, farming and fishing have their roots in European and Scandinavian cultures.

Although the population is 95.1% White British (national average 83.6%) and the density is low, the incoming population is growing faster than national average and the number of Minority Ethnic groups is increasing. Questions arising are

Is sufficient emphasis placed upon the inherent diversity (cultural, genetic, etc.) in the East Riding?

- Do we ask pupils to look twice at what is around them thus revealing a more divergent society and thereby bringing white pupils living in rural areas into national education guidelines and frameworks on multiculturalism, citizenship and identity?

- 0 -

The third speaker was **Ceri Morgan, HMI**, who explained how Ofsted has built community cohesion into the new inspection framework. Statistically, the UK has a very diverse population and Ofsted has found that schools generally address those issues of community cohesion which they believe affect them.

Inspection grades show that a large majority of schools fulfil this new duty well, with good or outstanding grades and very few rated as inadequate.

In order to meet the new requirements however, there are still issues that need to be addressed. Research has shown that there is some confusion about what the term community cohesion covers; evaluation of impact is generally weak and improving understanding of all faiths is the weakest element. Community Cohesion is not a range of activities; it is about changing attitudes

Questions for schools include:

- Does your school help to build community cohesion by promoting equality of opportunity and inclusion for all pupils, irrespective of background in terms of gender, ability, culture, ethnicity, religious belief, or socio-economic circumstances?
- Does your school encourage all pupils to engage with the whole school community and the wider community to understand what they all hold in common?
- What evidence do you have which shows this?

- 0 -

The final speaker was **Adam Newman Turner, Principal Associate at the Institute of Community Cohesion** who took as his theme the evaluation of Community Cohesion in and around schools. Some schools unwittingly undermine the development of a cohesive school ethos by not addressing issues which can leave pupils: feeling unable to influence decisions; ignorant of rights and responsibilities; having few places for social mixing; having few opportunities for volunteering; perceiving inequality and disadvantage; distrusting the fairness of authority or rules; dissatisfied with the school environment ;in fear of crime

- How do your pupils encounter other faiths and cultures?
- Via linking with schools in other parts of the UK?
- Twinning with schools from other countries?
- How does your school challenge prejudice?

It is not always easy to demonstrate evidence of the impact of policies. Look for 'proxy indicators' in terms of what pupils have learned (cognitive) and what pupils do (behavioural).

In addition to these addresses, there was a full range of excellent workshops to explore the issues raised and showcasing the splendid work already taking place in East Riding schools to address all the issues raised.

Copies of the speakers' Powerpoint presentations are available to download from our website www.eragb.net

ERAGB PUBLICATIONS RECOGNISED NATION WIDE

EVERY CHILD MATTERS (ECM) - WHAT NEXT?

'...an outstanding piece of work. I have immediately forwarded them to the Chair of our Lincolnshire Governors and Chair of Lincolnshire Schools Forum.'

'...Thank you for all the hard work that has gone into them. MOST grateful that you are allowing them to be shared. I shall draw Devon Governors' attention to their existence.'

'...these documents look very useful. I'm shortly doing the half-termly bulletin for Clerkwise. Is it OK if I mention these guides and give the website details for reference?' a member of the NGA exec

ERAGB is proud of the toolkit it has produced to help governors check how well they are meeting their statutory duty to promote the well-being of children and young people as required by the Every Child Matters legislation.

It has been made freely available through our website (www.eragb.net) and is receiving a very favourable reception from our colleagues around the country. Above are a few of the many compliments we have received.

Your chair has received and will have shared the ECM toolkit with you. So now the big question is-how are we going to use it.

Obviously each governing body will have different priorities for their school. All the guides together will provide an overview of the ECM content and outcomes. However, given the importance of the ECM agenda and the demands placed on governors, ERAGB recommends that individual governors or a small group of governors take on one of the five aims as a special responsibility and use the guides to prompt discussion with individual members of staff, or in particular committees or in the full governing body meeting.

Then at the end of the year, the summary sheet can be used to collate your findings to assess how well you are meeting your duty in promoting the well-being of the pupils and what steps you need to take next.

The guides can also help inform your various monitoring activities, such as your analysis of data, your health and safety checks, your examination of policies and information gleaned from school visits.

We hope that the guides will enable effective challenge based on sound knowledge of the ECM agenda and help you to analyse and better understand your school's strengths and weaknesses.

You can also use the guides to support your contributions to and scrutiny of the SEF and the school improvement plan.

In summary, we believe that these guides will help governors to:

- Provide an overview of the whole ECM agenda
- Support monitoring
- Understand how outcomes might be achieved
- Fulfil statutory duties
- Inform judgements about strengths and weaknesses
- Prompt questioning and discussion
- Promote the well-being of children and young people
- Achieve equity and challenge shortfall
- Enable further improvement.
- Ensure compliance with legislation, DCSF and local guidance

We know that where governors make effective use of these guides, they are well equipped to demonstrate to OFSTED that this aspect of governance is in good hands.

ERAGB and NGA

As a benefit of membership of ERAGB each governor in the East Riding can receive the weekly NGA News Briefing via email.

This is an essential document for any governor, which makes sure that you are kept up-to-date with developments in the world of education.

The briefing gives details of new research, government consultation papers, policy announcements and legislation, together with a summary of recent education stories in the media.

If you are not receiving your copy you should speak to your ERAGB representative and check that he/she has informed our Secretary Janet Slater of their email address so that the necessary arrangements can be made.