

Grammar School Heads' Association

Newsletter - Edition 9
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Positive Meeting with the Schools' Minister

Just before the start of this term GSHA officers met with Nick Gibb. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss a range of issues.

It was a timely opportunity to discuss the consultation document on funding. We raised concerns that any proposal that sustained the power of Local Authorities to make significant changes to a national formula would only serve to replicate the flaws of the current system. The minister acknowledged the validity of our claim that attempting to deal with negotiations over formula through a Local Forum made it likely that minority groups such as grammar schools could have their needs overlooked. Nick Gibb readily grasped that the proposals ran contrary to the promise to academies of earned autonomy. A paper on the issue was presented to the minister and we were left with a very strong impression that the minister would act on the suggestions. That impression has been strengthened as Lord Hill has since given a similar response to the concerns raised.

In discussions on funding we explained to the minister why grammar schools usually have a lower level of 11-16 per capita funding compared with other schools. We pressed the point that to make changes to 11-16 funding and post 16 funding without looking at the total impact on 11-18 schools would pose a significant threat to standards. The minister promised that any proposals would first be modelled against real schools including grammar schools.

In view of the national curriculum reform, discussions also extended to curriculum. It is clear that there are no plans to make changes to E.Bacc but the door is not closed to some movement. It was interesting to see that the all party Education Select Committee report published in August called for a degree of flexibility. The minister is particularly interested in the impact of E.Bacc on second MFL take up at KS4 and KS5 and upon Music. The GSHA survey, which can be accessed on survey monkey, is aimed at collecting this information.



There are no major changes planned in the immediate future to post 16 academic qualifications but the minister is keen to gather thoughts on the principles that should underpin academic qualification and he invited GSHA to join with university representatives in round table discussions.

The minister is keen to have more grammar school representation on a range of national bodies and will continue the dialogue to firm this up.

Ministers and officials now want to meet with GSHA every six months and this is a positive sign that there is a growing recognition of the contribution that grammar schools can make.

Nick Gibb MP
Minister of State for Schools



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Academy Sponsorship

For some years teachers at Torquay Boys' Grammar School and Torquay Community College have been collaborating with a view to giving support and helping to raise standards even further in our neighbouring non-selective. As a consequence of this, the Department for Education has asked us to sponsor Torquay Community College as an Academy to liberate the school to develop its leadership and teaching and learning even more effectively. The Trustees at Torquay Boys' Grammar School have considered this request and are minded to sponsor Torquay Community College – they have had detailed discussions about how the schools might collaborate further and have visited Torquay Community College to meet the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Governors and the Head and senior team.

It is a huge responsibility for our Trustees – they will take charge of Torquay Community College's budget and deploy it accordingly. As a result, a very close analysis of the school - looking at admission numbers, results, attendance, exclusions, absence, site and buildings, funding, the local authority position, staffing and the governing body – has been made and all have been subject to very close scrutiny.

From my perspective as Head of a selective school, the issues that face TCC are revealing and challenging. The newly-built school has a capacity of 1200, currently the number on roll is just over 800; the impact on the budget and consequently staffing is inescapable. Further, the local authority sees fit, because of a shortage of numbers, to put a disproportionate number of transient pupils into the school – some 20 since the beginning of term are being processed. With behaviour management an issue, staff are deployed to small groups of challenging pupils – thereby causing classes to be overly large elsewhere in the school.

Miss Gill Battye, the current Headteacher, took up her post in 2001 when the school had just been put into special measures. She has led the school out of special measures to a Good and Improving Ofsted. When Inspectors visited, they found that the collaborative work with Torquay Boys' Grammar School was Outstanding.

Now housed in magnificent new buildings with significant changes in the curriculum, we are reviewing our contribution and how together we might further improve teaching and learning and raise attitudes to learning and overall standards even further.

Our focus will be on all students achieving their highest potential, seeking to create smaller classes with a rigorous approach to study from Day 1. To change the culture further we are reviewing the school uniform, the levels of literacy on entry, developing personal, social and employability skills and identifying sixth form courses where students can progress to higher level qualifications to find jobs that meet local and national needs.

Large numbers of pupils joining in Year 7 do not even register on the literacy and numeracy Key Stage scores. Not surprisingly, with low levels of literacy, low Key Stage 2 points on entry and disproportionate transients, the recruitment of quality teachers is a struggle. This year, with collaboration from our staff, especially in Mathematics, the school achieved 31% A* - C in 5 GCSEs, including English and Maths. In 5 A* - Cs TCC achieved 60% - and where the national average is 75% we believe, for a non-selective school, that we are going in the right direction. Working with DfE officials we have come up with a series of priorities to raise the school performance under Academy status even further.

It is our firm intention that Torquay Community College will be a high-performing secondary school characterised by a personalised approach to learning which maximises the potential of every individual, regardless of their background or circumstance. As heads of grammar schools we must recognise that all young people deserve to be given the best possible start in life and by breaking down barriers to learning we will improve the life chances of all those students, from the most vulnerable to the most able. The key to our success lies in establishing high standards and expectations in all aspects of both schools, based on mutual respect for all members of the learning community.

So our target is to provide outstanding learning opportunities in a top quality 21st century learning environment. This aspiration must percolate through the whole school improvement process and of course the success of TCC will hinge upon our ability to focus on students as individuals and inspire and ignite them with a passion for learning and making the most of their talents, whatever these might be. With immediate effect we intend to re-brand the school and introduce school uniform – the smartest in town! We also intend to invest in the feeder primary schools in order to raise the performance of Year 6 pupils before they join in Year 7, whilst we also hope to create sixth form courses in the school in order to raise the quality of staff seeking to join TCC; and as Open Days approach I, as Head of the selective school, will be alongside my fellow Head of the non-selective talking about the collaboration and the successes of both schools. We are determined to break down the impression that to attend the non-selective school is perceived as failure.

Academy Sponsorship (Cont.)

So, TCC, will be a learning community where all the students have high aspirations for themselves and achieve their potential with staff who have similar aspirations for themselves and their students. Teachers must have confidence in seeking out opportunities to develop their own practice alongside staff in our selective school. We are determined to generate more sharing of ideas and expertise with colleagues across the two schools, creating a curriculum in the school that matches the needs of the individual student. We need consistent high quality teaching and learning across both schools so that all students have true equality of opportunity, consistency in terms of behaviour for learning, uniform, standards of work and at the same time empowering parents to better help and support their child in his/her learning.

So ultimately our priorities for 2011/12 are to transform the quality of teaching and learning to a pedagogy capable of delivering personalised learning within a 21st century school. We must raise attainment, ensuring systems effectively identify potential, monitor progress, set targets and focus on improving student performance. We are challenging students to be aspiring and motivated, we are intensifying the focus of ICT to ensure that all the students are equipped to go out into the global economy and we are developing a systematic and rigorous approach to self-evaluation so that we can actively pursue continuous improvement.

From Torquay Boys' Grammar School's perspective, we believe that it is right that we should seek to enable all young people in our local community to flourish thanks to the highest quality of educational experience. Thus we hope to help in transforming the quality of teaching and learning, to achieve outstanding progress with a much sharper focus on literacy, numeracy and independent learning and ultimately we seek to raise attainment, improving learning opportunities and life chances for all students in the region.



Roy Pike

Snippets

- A submission has been made to the Ofqual inquiry into errors in examination papers. GSHA has been included in an 'invitation only' event on 13th October involving Michael Gove and Ofsted. There will be a report back at the GSHA seminar that is being held that day.
- Any school that is interested in hosting a regional 'Application to Harvard' event should contact Shaun Fenton at Pate's.
- The new SIA website makes it far easier to use the data on A level performance and provides information about whole school and subject trends. Fuller details and order forms have been sent to schools
- Consultation on School Funding closes on 11th October. Heads are encouraged to respond. Papers on the consultation have been circulated to schools.

Improving Teaching and Learning

Improving Teaching and Learning

- What can we learn from educational research?

Colleagues may have seen the recent research published by the Sutton Trust, regarding the elements of effective teaching. However, it follows an earlier piece of educational research which, although less well-known, is broader and more powerful. John Hattie, in *Visible Learning* (2009) conducted a study of a huge volume of educational research. His goal was to determine if, from the mass of data, certain messages about good teaching and learning emerged. His study was of more than 800 meta-analyses, each of which covered many hundreds of individual pieces of research. From this vast amount of data, Hattie set about measuring how educational performance is affected by different influences. He then compared the impact of the various different factors. Hattie used effect sizes to provide a common expression of the magnitude of study outcomes for many types of outcome variables. An effect size of $d = 1.0$ indicates one standard deviation on the outcome – which is improving school achievement. A one standard deviation increase is typically associated with advancing a child's achievement by two to three years or by improving the rate of learning by 50%.

In considering the impact of influences upon educational performance, it is important to remember that children will improve all by themselves each year – this effect is measurable at $d = 0.15$. Furthermore, the typical effects from teachers are between $d = 0.15$ and $d = 0.4$. Thus, any effect which is less than $d = 0.15$ is positively harmful to children's progress; only effects greater than $d = 0.40$ should be considered to be a clear advantage to children's learning.

The influences cited below are not the complete range considered in Hattie's book. They are selected for relevance to grammar schools. Where an influence is more relevant to primary schools, teacher training colleges or higher education, it is not included. Some of the findings are counter-intuitive and quite surprising.

School Context

There are many factors that work in our favour at selective schools. The context in which we operate is conducive to good learning and progress.

Prior achievement – $d = 0.67$ (14th most important positive influence on learning). Clearly, a history of doing well makes it likely that the student will succeed in the future. Our pupils generally have a very strong academic record, or they wouldn't be with us.

Self-reported grades – $d = 1.44$ (1st most important positive influence on learning). Another form of prior achievement is students' estimates of their own performance. These are generally very accurate. Getting students to predict what grade they will get is self-fulfilling. If on the basis of past achievement they expect to do well, they are more likely to do so.

Socio-economic status – $d = 0.57$ (32nd most important positive influence on learning). We have a range of social groups at our grammar schools, but the dominant group are well-off and engaged with their child's learning.

Classroom cohesion – $d = 0.53$ (39th most important positive influence on learning). Peer learning, tolerance, discussion of goals, success criteria and positive teacher-student and student-student relationships have an excellent effect upon pupil achievement. All of these are part of the grammar school culture.

Peer influences – $d = 0.53$ (41st most important positive influence on learning). Friendships are crucial in creating the kind of school where children feel safe and want to come to learn.

Influences that are less important or hold back learning

Mobility – $d = -0.34$ (138th most important positive influence on learning). A clear message that relationships and security are vital to pupil learning and achievement.

Student control over learning – $d = 0.04$ (132nd most important positive influence on learning). Teachers do it better.

Teacher education – $d = 0.11$ (124th most important positive influence on learning). This isn't about subject knowledge, but training to teach. It seems that what is learned by the teacher as part of their training has very little impact on their effectiveness as an educator.

Gender $d = 0.12$ (122nd most important positive influence on learning). Boys and girls are more alike than they are different. The differences between boys and girls should not be our concern and we needn't worry about teaching boys in a different way.

Class size – $d = 0.21$ (106th most important positive influence on learning). Policies of reducing class sizes have had little effect upon pupil performance. Clearly, a smaller class could allow the kinds of things that *do* work to work better but in itself, it does little.

Improving Teaching and Learning (Cont.)

Teaching test taking and coaching – $d = 0.22$ (103rd most important positive influence on learning). It suggests that coaching children to pass entrance exams isn't as effective as parents think.

School finances – $d = 0.23$ (99th most important positive influence on learning). In itself, it doesn't make a difference, except where it helps to provide things that do add value – such as keeping good teachers in schools.

Attitude to Maths/Science – $d = 0.36$ (75th most important positive influence on learning). Clearly it is preferable for a pupil to have a positive attitude to Maths or Science, but that does not correlate with actual learning.

Principals/School leaders – $d = 0.36$ (74th most important positive influence on learning). Ouch. It turns out that school leadership is not that important in driving forward the learning of individual pupils. Having said that, the research states that it is better to be an instructional leader than a transformational leader. Instructional leaders have their focus upon creating a learning environment that is free from disruption, a system of clear teaching objectives and high expectations for teachers and students. Transformational leaders try to inspire their staff. In other words the research argues that the best a leader can do is to create an environment where the teaching staff - the really effective element of the school - can work best.

Computer assisted instruction – $d = 0.37$ (71st most important positive influence on learning). Computers can sometimes allow other useful influences to assist learning; in themselves they seem to add little to the mix.

Matching style of learning – $d = 0.41$ (62nd most important positive influence on learning). Whilst matching visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning with learners who prefer that style may have a minor effect, it is trivial compared with other more effective methods.

Concentration/engagement – $d = 0.48$ (49th most important positive influence on learning). On its own, it isn't enough. It may be the start of something, for achievement + effort + engagement = success. However, because a pupil looks engaged and appears to be trying it doesn't mean that the pupil is learning.

Influences that are important

Worked examples – $d = 0.57$ (30th most important positive influence on learning). It is an effective technique for teachers to demonstrate to students what success looks like and thus what the goal for their own learning is.

Problem-solving teaching – $d = 0.61$ (20th most important positive influence on learning). Problem-solving teaching involves the teacher getting the pupils to define or determine the cause of the problem, identify, prioritise and select alternatives for a solution, or use multiple perspectives to uncover the issues related to a particular problem.

Professional development – $d = 0.62$ (19th most important positive influence on learning). Teachers that are themselves learners are much more effective teachers.

Self-verbalisation and self-questioning – $d = 0.64$ (18th most important positive influence on learning). Like the use of meta-cognition, this is another method of getting the pupil to internalise the learning, making it personal to them.

Meta-cognitive strategies – $d = 0.69$ (13th most important positive influence on learning). 'Learning to learn' and 'thinking about thinking' involve the pupil in the process of learning rather than allowing them a passive role.

Teacher-student relationships – $d = 0.72$ (11th most important positive influence on learning). The teacher's exercise of such skills as listening, empathy, caring and having positive regard for others pays off in terms of pupil learning.

Feedback – $d = 0.73$ (10th most important positive influence on learning). When teachers seek - or at least are open to - feedback from the students as to what the students know, what they understand, where they make errors, when they have misconceptions, when they are not engaged – then teaching and learning can be powerful. Effective feedback answers three pupil questions – "Where am I going?", "How am I going?" and "Where to next?"

Reciprocal teaching – $d = 0.74$ (9th most important positive influence on learning). Teachers who enable their students to learn and use cognitive strategies such as summarising, questioning, clarifying and predicting are effective. Getting the pupil to act as 'teacher' forces them to have ownership of the learning.

Teacher clarity – $d = 0.75$ (8th most important positive influence on learning). Unsurprisingly, teacher organisation, explanation, examples, guided practice and assessment of student learning has a very positive effect upon pupil learning.

Acceleration – $d = 0.88$ (5th most important positive influence on learning). Creating challenge through quick progression through the stages of the curriculum is a very effective way of raising the achievement of able children.

Providing formative evaluation – $d = 0.90$ (3rd most important positive influence on learning). Written and oral guidance in response to pupil work, intended to improve the next outcome is a form of feedback. It is a crucial element of successful teaching.

A Research-based Strategy for Teaching and Learning

The message is clear – teachers are the most powerful influence upon the learning of the pupils. What happens in the classroom is by far the most significant influence upon how a pupil does.

Certain elements emerge from the data to guide how a research-based strategy for teaching and learning might look. Initially, it is important to establish what we can say we know as a result of the analysis undertaken by Hattie:

Some shared beliefs:

- Teachers make the difference.
- Teachers need to be directive, influential and caring. They should actively foster empathetic relationships in delivering teaching and learning.
- Children learn best when they and their teacher have a good sense of what they can do, how they are progressing and what should come next in the learning.
- Teachers teach best when they know what their lesson should achieve and what would make it a successful lesson for the pupils in the room.
- Pupils learn best when they take ownership of knowledge, skills and ideas and construct their own understanding of the material.
- The school needs to support its teachers to have confidence, take risks and constantly check whether what we are doing is working – if it isn't we need to have the shared courage to change it.

Taking the Lead

Teachers need to take the lead in the classroom – consider the contrast in the table below:

Teacher as activator	<i>d</i>	Teacher as facilitator	<i>d</i>
Reciprocal teaching	0.74	Simulations and gaming	0.32
Feedback	0.72	Inquiry-based learning	0.31
Meta-cognition strategies	0.69	Smaller class sizes	0.21
Teaching students self-verbalisation	0.64	Individualised instruction	0.20
Direct Instruction	0.59	Problem-based learning	0.15
Mastery Learning	0.57	Different teaching for boys and girls	0.12
Challenging goals	0.56	Web-based learning	0.09
Frequent testing	0.46	Whole language - reading	0.06
Behavioural organisers	0.41	Inductive teaching	0.06
<i>Average activator</i>	<i>0.60</i>	<i>Average facilitator</i>	<i>0.17</i>

Improving Teaching and Learning (Cont.)

We are more effective taking a lead as educators, rather than allowing the pupils to direct their own learning.

The focus for educational reform has been upon the working conditions of teachers. Obviously it is more pleasant to work in good conditions, but does it have an impact upon the learning of the pupils? Consider the table below:

Teaching	<i>d</i>	Working conditions	<i>d</i>
Quality of teaching	0.77	Within-class grouping	0.28
Reciprocal teaching	0.74	Adding more finances	0.23
Teacher-student relationships	0.72	Reducing class size	0.21
Providing feedback	0.72	Ability grouping	0.11
Teaching student self-verbalisation	0.67	Multi-grade/age classes	0.04
Meta-cognition strategies	0.69	Open vs. traditional classes	0.01
Direct Instruction	0.59	Summer vacation classes	-0.09
Mastery Learning	0.57	Retention	-0.16
<i>Average</i>	<i>0.68</i>		<i>0.08</i>

This is not an argument for us to ignore our working conditions, but it reminds us that the most important thing in the classroom is the teacher and what the teacher does; it is not the equipment or the room that makes the difference.

The typical teacher's effect upon a pupil's learning is between $d = 0.15$ and $d = 0.40$. It is only when the strategies suggested by the research are used that the influence can increase beyond that limit. It is perfectly possible for an already excellent teacher to do *even better* with their classes. There is no validity in the argument "I'm very experienced and effective as a teacher – I don't need to use these techniques."

A research based strategy for teaching and learning would need to find a way to deliver the following four things:

- Internalisation of learning – getting the student to think about the material and how they know what they know.
- Organised teachers, who are learners themselves, delivering organised schemes of work.
- Shared strategies – a determination to provide worked examples; to focus upon problem-solving teaching; to providing formative evaluation; to accelerate pupils where we can to more challenging material.
- Positive relationships - teacher-student relationships and feedback are central to the work of teaching.

Now what?



Simon Everson

23rd September 2011

Academies and SEN Applications

(The article below will be of particular interest to heads of academies)

SEN Tier 1 Tribunal case Grammar School Academy status and SEN statemented pupils

Experience of an SEN Tier 1 tribunal leads me to believe that as an Academy a school is less able to defend its position than when it was a maintained school. The bare bones of the case centred on a pupil who had a behaviour based full statement (25 hours) for LSA support. He was given 25% extra time for testing and subsequently failed and hence was not of the required standard. The LA took note of this and nominated another school. The parents then expressed their wish to have the Grammar School as the nominated school. (Parents with pupils with a statement cannot appeal using the normal appeals procedure). The LA after consultation with the school stuck to their guns. The parents persevered and took their case to a level 1 SEN tribunal. This was the first case of this nature that the judge had encountered with a selective academy and as a result he had to take advice. The parent's case was rejected and the LA's decision to nominate another school was vindicated.

However the crux of law which as selective academies we are subject to can be summed up below when the LA consults with you. This is the law we have all worked to, to date. There is as you will appreciate a different emphasis in Section 9 as opposed to Schedule 27 of the Education Act.

Maintained Schools (Non Academies):

The Local Authority does have a duty to name the parent's preferred maintained school, as long as the provisions of Schedule 27, paragraph 3 of the Education Act 1996 apply. These are set out in para.8:62 of the Code of Practice quoted below.

- the school is unsuitable for the child's age, ability or aptitude or to his/her special educational needs, or
- the attendance of the child at your school would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for the children with whom he/she would be educated, or
- the placement would be incompatible with the efficient use of resources.

Academies:

Schools which have Academy status are not maintained schools and so do not fall under the provisions quoted above. For Academies, Section 9 of the Education Act 1996 applies:

- In exercising or performing all their respective powers and duties under the Education Acts, the Secretary of State and local education authorities shall have regard to the general principle that pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents, so far as that is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure.

Any reason for not admitting the pupil must be detailed and fall into the above criteria. It may be that Academies have included the provisions of Schedule 27 Paragraph 3 in their Funding Agreements in which case, consideration might also be given to those provisions in your response.

I wish anyone luck who has to go through the process which was two days of my life wasted but did underline a good relationship with the LA and most importantly the right decision was made for the pupil concerned. I have sent a copy of the judgement to the DfE admissions team for consideration and hopefully an amendment to the code to give clarity and perhaps make the point that a statemented pupil who has not reached the required standard should not have any possibility of having a selective school named as his/her school just because the parents would like it. If colleagues want a redacted version of the judgement please just email me headmaster@poolegrammar.com.

Ian Carter



New Research Compares the Performance of Grammar Schools and Comprehensives

David Jesson has recently published a research paper, 'Excellence in Schools' which compares the GCSE performance of students in comprehensives and grammar schools. It is possible that the media may soon publish some of the findings for David Jesson is presenting the findings at the annual Leading Edge conference.

The aim of the paper is to provide evidence that will first identify where achievement is high in order that further research can be undertaken to find out why such schools do better.

The aim is laudable and has the merit of being prepared to focus on the able. David sent a copy of the findings to GSHA for comment. The paper acknowledges that many grammar schools work positively with comprehensives and it also recognises how GSHA is making a major contribution to developing provision for the able.

The research defines the able as those with an average KS 2 points score of 30.5+ points and sets a GCSE threshold of 5+ A*/A. Unfortunately, from the grammar school perspective over half of all grammar schools have been excluded from the findings. Those excluded are all schools with an average KS 2 entry level of 32.35 +points as no comprehensives match that profile. Similarly about 35% of comprehensives were excluded as they had fewer than 30 students in a year group that met the KS 2 criteria.

The research found that the 82 grammar schools in the study generally performed more consistently than comprehensives but that the best comprehensives did better than the best of these grammar schools. The latter conclusion is not that surprising and cannot be a judgement on either sector. The Sutton Trust research showed that a significant number of comprehensives were more selective than the 50 least selective grammar schools. It is reasonable to suppose that the half of grammars excluded represent the most selective grammars so one would expect the Jesson outcome.

Looking at the KS 2 figures for all grammar schools shows that in those areas where there are many selective schools some have an average KS 2 score that is close to the bottom end of the range defined as able. In contrast that cohort in a popular comprehensive will include a fuller profile of able including many more above 32.5 points.

One of the problems with a threshold measure is that it can mask as much as it shows. We have suggested to David that the measure is not sufficiently robust if the aim is to lead researchers to best practice. Almost all schools would expect their most able to do at least 8 subjects and this may be a better measure. The research looks at value added and the effect of using A*/A together means that an A is treated the same as an A*. Two schools with the same entry profile could result in one where 100% achieved just 5A grades and in the other 100% gained 8A* yet each would have the same V.A score. It has been suggested that if there was a separate measure for A* grades this may throw up interesting differences. There may also be a case for using average points scores. The single measure model is certainly far too crude to use it to make comparative judgements

Data that helps schools to improve learning is of greater value than data that compares schools and the model would need to be developed to include all grammar schools. David Jesson has acknowledged many of the above points and has written to say that he has now extended the model to 8 subjects but he feels that adding a separate A* measure would produce a derisory measure for some schools. He is, however, exploring ways of using average points score.



Barry Sindall

Progress on Ballot Regulations and Annexe E

At the end of August GSHA met with DfE officers to discuss concerns about Annexe E. The concerns are sharpened by the prospect of a ballot being raised in Reading but the issues are also relevant to all grammar schools.

Part of the problem is that the 1998 regulations are now more difficult to operate because of other legislation, particularly the Data Protection Act.

In the short term DfE officers are seeking to rewrite the current regulations to provide greater clarity. Beyond that, consideration is being given to changing the regulations.

The meeting was positive and it was clear that there was a will to consider proposals that would overcome some of the current issues. GSHA pointed out that there was the potential for the current regulations to be exploited by those opposed to academies for no other motive than to de-stabilise a school.

The proposals made by GSHA aim at providing greater clarity about the current regulation together with changes in any new regulations that would reduce the potential for malicious campaigns that are aimed only at creating instability.

The proposals made included

- Clarifying the current regulations to make clear that the threshold figure for a ballot is 20% of all eligible parents, including those who do not wish their names to be made available to petitioners.
- Primary heads can provide this figure for their school without breaking data protection. Future changes in regulations may have to make this mandatory.
- Amend the current regulations to allow parents in the grammar school to vote as their children would be affected by any decision. This population would also then be part of the threshold calculation.
- Extend the 5 year moratorium that applies after an unsuccessful vote to also prohibit a further petition if a registered petition fails to attract sufficient support. The proposal would prevent petitions being used merely to de-stabilise.

At a subsequent meeting with the Secretary of State for Schools there was a hint that even abolishing the legislation is not ruled out.

• Dates for the Diary / Events •

- **4th October Admission to U.S.A Universities. Pate's Grammar School Cheltenham**
- **(The programme includes a 4.00pm -5.30 session for teachers and from 6.30- a session for staff students and parents. The event will be repeated in other regional locations)**
- **13th October RAF Club London. - Seminar for Headteachers**
- **The programme embraces a workshop by Comptons on fund raising and an evening seminar and discussion on examinations with Andrew Hall Chief Executive, AQA**
- **13th October 12.00am Executive Committee Meeting (precedes the seminar programme above)**
- **17th November. London Maximising KS 4.- A conference for KS 4 leaders in grammar schools**
- **13th January Steering Committee. King Edward V1 Five Ways Birmingham**
- **February (date to be confirmed) Executive Committee followed by executive officers meeting with the Minister for Schools**
- **20th April Executive Committee. Lansdowne Club**
- **4th May Steering Committee King Edward V1 Five Ways Birmingham**
- **Early summer (date to be confirmed) House of Commons reception**
- **20/21 June Annual Conference Lansdowne Club London**
- **3rd July Sixth Form leaders' Conference London**

Other seminars and conferences are being planned and details will be sent to schools.

Dylan Wiliam

Assessment for Learning
Friday, 6th January 2012
9.00am - 3.30pm
at Ripon Grammar School

Ripon Grammar School is pleased to offer an opportunity to secondary colleagues to attend a day's training with a top academic and government adviser.

Dylan Wiliam



Author of *Inside the Black Box* and *Assessment for Learning in the Classroom*,
Emeritus Professor at the Institute of Education, London.

- A fascinating insight into assessment from one of education's most lively and influential leaders
- Open to all secondary schools
- £120 per person (£200 for two bookings from the same institution)
Lunch included

Executive Committee



Chairman:

Roy Pike - Torquay Boys' Grammar

Vice Chairman (Chairman Designate for 2012/13):

Mark Fenton - Dr Challoner's Grammar School

Vice Chairman:

Simon Everson - Skinners' School Tunbridge Wells

Treasurer:

David Wheeldon - King Edward V1 Five Ways School. Birmingham

Regional Representatives

Kent	Simon Everson, (2 vacancies TBA),
Bucks	Stephen Nokes, Phillip Wayne
London	James Skinner, Liz Allen
Lincolnshire	Tim Clark
South West	Ian Carter, Stuart Smallwood
Gloucestershire	Jon Standen, Ewa Sawicka
Birmingham	Colin Parker
Reading/Slough	Marsha Elms, John Weeds
Lancashire/Cumbria	Andrew Jarman
Essex	Nicole Chapman
Midlands	Tim Swain, Julie Lawton
Trafford	Tim Gartside, Mike Thompson
Merseyside	Elaine Cogan
Warwickshire	Ian Blackie, Charlotte Marten
Yorkshire	Martin Pearman



New Vice Chairman Mark Fenton has been Headmaster of Dr Challoner's Grammar School since 2001. He is a National Leader of Education and an 'additional member' of HMC. Before moving to Buckinghamshire, Mark held senior leadership positions in grammar schools in Essex and Medway.