



## **2010 South Wales Regional Conference Report**

### **“Y Corff Llywodraethu Effeithiol” “The Effective Governing Body”**

On Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2010, the third regional conference for governors in Central South Wales was held at at ESIS, Ty Dysgu, Nantgarw. The conference was organised in partnership by Governors Wales and Bridgend, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taff Local Authorities with the theme being ‘The Effective Governing Body’. Over 118 delegates attended the conference.

#### **Welcome**

The Conference was opened by Sandra Aspinall, Director of Education and Leisure, Caerphilly County Borough Council.

Sandra warmly welcomed delegates and referred to the features of effective governing bodies. In conclusion she read delegates a quote from Nelson Mandella

“Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become head of the mine, and that a child of farm workers can become president of a great nation.”

She stressed it was within the gift of governors to really influence the lives of children and young people as you and they and the headteacher of their school are the engine that drives the school improvement agenda.

On behalf of her fellow Directors she praised governors’ unquestionable commitment, stressed the value placed on their work and hoped that delegates would have a very productive day.

#### **Address by Jackie Gapper HMI, Estyn**

Jackie Gapper HMI addressed delegates on the theme of ‘Inspection and the Development of a Quality Culture in Welsh Education’. In summary her presentation addressed the following objectives:

- To analyse current strengths and shortcomings of the work of governors
- To inform governors about the next cycle of Estyn school inspections
- To raise awareness of the involvement of governors in the next cycle of inspections

## **Address by Mike Keating Director of Education and Lifelong Learning Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council.**

In the afternoon delegates enjoyed an informative presentation on 'The Local Authority Perspective on the Effective Schools' Agenda' by Mike Keating Director of Education and Lifelong Learning, Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council.

Mr Keating opened his address by noting that the effective schools agenda is clearly one which affects, interests and involves all governors. He stated that intended examine some of the complexities of this brief statement and to leave governors with some specific issues consider.

In summary he considered the following key issues:

- the nature of effective schools
- the current national position
- the local authority perspective including its practical application
- specific implications for governors.

***These presentations are available to download from the Governors Wales website.***  
***<http://www.governorswales.org.uk/publications/conference-reports/>***

### **Workshop Sessions**

Delegates were offered the opportunity to attend alternate workshop sessions following each presentation as follows:

#### **“The Estyn Inspection Process”**

Lead by Hugh Roberts, Headteacher Pontyclun Primary School and Lorraine Buck, Senior Adviser for Secondary Education, Caerphilly County Borough Council.

#### **“Safeguarding and the ISA”**

Lead by Paul Williams, Human Resources Business Partner, Bridgend County Borough Council.

***Copies of materials used in the workshops are available to download from the Governors Wales website [www.governorswales.org.uk/publications/conference-reports](http://www.governorswales.org.uk/publications/conference-reports)***

### **Evaluation**

Below are some of the comments received from the evaluation forms:

#### **Organisation of the day**

- Everything went like clockwork.
- Well organised.
- Extremely well organised with excellent facilities.
- Professional and slick, as always!
- The Estyn inspection process information was invaluable and made me evaluate my role as an effective parent governor.
- Good to be with other LEAs.

## **Speakers:**

- Clear, concise information given. Excellent variety of speakers on a range of topics.
- All first rate, well informed speakers.
- Knowledgeable. Presentations on the whole very enjoyable.
- Both gave informative and thought-provoking answers and presentations.
- Very good. Time given for everyone to ask questions.
- Very enjoyable. Good use of powerpoint and exercises.
- Overall standard of speakers was excellent and the best yet.
- I found I gained a lot of information that would help me fulfil my role as governor
- A good cross-section of education practitioners.

## **Workshops:**

### **The Estyn Inspection Process**

- Very informative!
- ... gave very realistic advice.
- I now have a greater understanding of the new inspection framework – very good.
- Very clear and very well put across. Interesting, informative, fun.

### **Safeguarding and the ISA**

- Many questions I had were discussed effectively in the workshop. It cleared up many grey areas.
- Interesting and informative.
- Speaker was very knowledgeable in this area.

### **General Comments**

- Excellent workshops keeping us in touch with current educational issues.
- Good handouts and very interesting areas for discussion.
- Very good. Good facilitators, Q&A sessions and audience participation.
- Well organised and opportunity to explore subjects in depth.
- A very good day. Lots of areas covered, quality handouts and plenty of opportunities to ask questions.
- Really good opportunity to network with other governors and share experiences. Well done to all officers involved in planning and organisation of the event. An excellent example of cross county collaboration.
- Excellent training – well organised and enjoyable.
- Very enjoyable day. Nice to have ample time in workshops etc. Much better suited to the day rather than half day.
- A good conference with opportunity for us to meet friends and other governors from different areas and schools. Thank you.
- Welcome help in these times of change. Valuable information clearly presented. Most reassuring and encouraging.
- Very informative and helpful, enabling me to face new ways of inspection.
- Thank you for a well planned, informative and enjoyable day. I will certainly share my positive comments with members of our governing body.

### **Conclusion**

The conference achieved its aim to enable conference participants to explore a number of issues relating to effective school governance.

We intend to build on this successful conference and in addition intend to organise further regional events during 2010/2011.