

BULLETIN

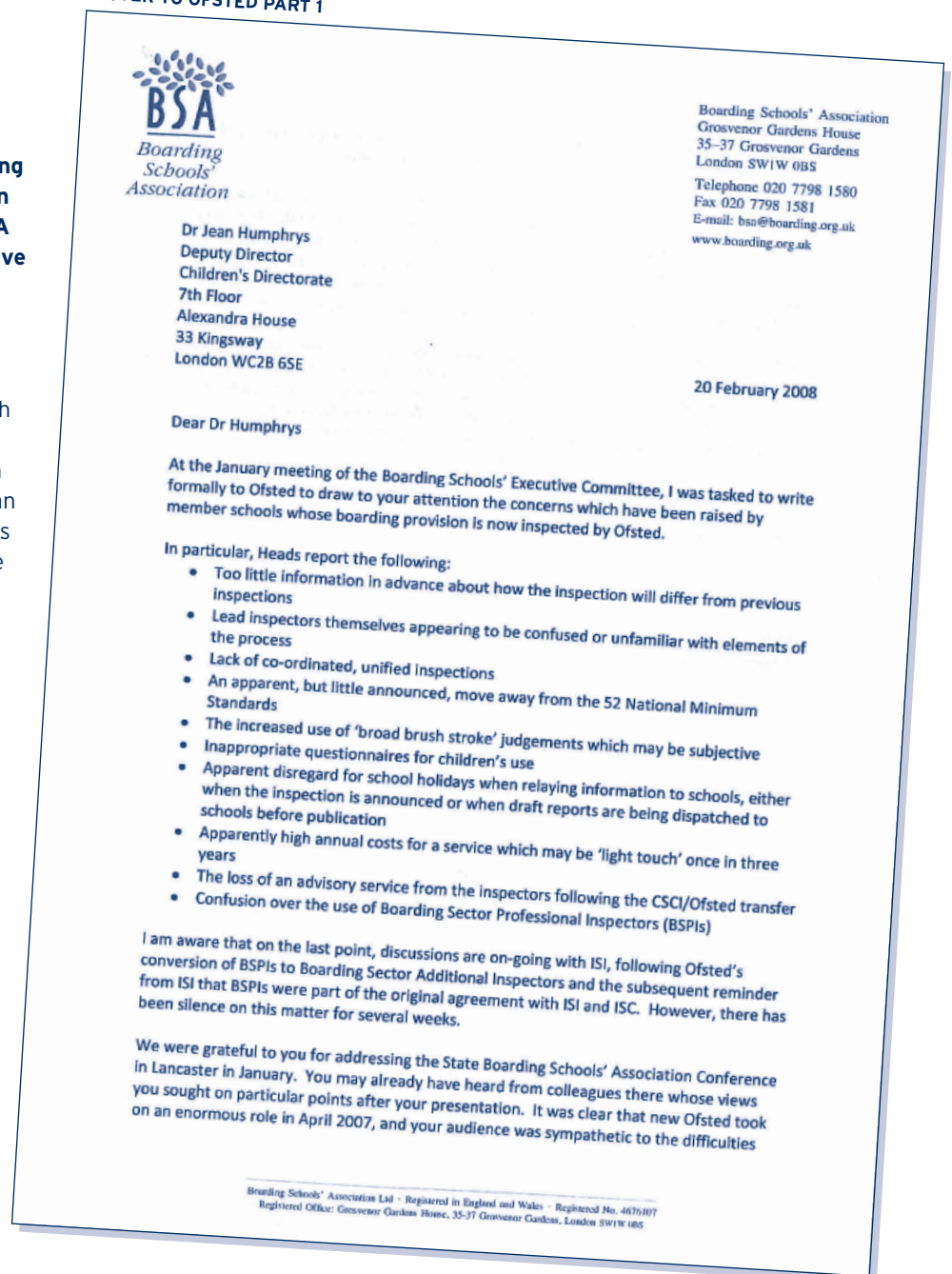
BOARDING SCHOOLS' ASSOCIATION

OFSTED

Many schools having their first Ofsted welfare inspection of boarding since CSCI handed over to Ofsted in April 2007 have contacted the BSA office. There have been some positive comments, but the majority have raised school concerns.

BSA has tried very hard to keep the channels of communication open with Ofsted. Relationships are cordial and senior staff have been very helpful in individual cases. BSA wrote to Dr Jean Humphrys, Deputy Director, Children's Directorate, to give a concerted voice to those concerns.

LETTER TO OFSTED PART 1



Letter continues overleaf.



THE BOARDING SCHOOLS' ASSOCIATION

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LETTER TO OFSTED PART 2

this must have caused. Nevertheless, Heads are still anxious on the above points, and possibly others, about which little if any news seems to be available.

I have been pleased at the responses I have received both from you and from Susan Evans when I have raised specific queries – thank you for that. The fact remains that in general the Executive Committee believes there is widespread anxiety in boarding schools about the Ofsted inspections during this transitional phase. Inspection reports produced during this time will have currency for three years. It is important for schools and parents that there should be complete confidence in the inspection process and the report it produces.

The Executive Committee has requested that I canvass members in a more structured way, so that we can offer a more scientific view of the schools' experience of the new Ofsted inspections. I will contact you as soon as this is available. Meanwhile, I report here the considerable unease, which was clearly expressed at the Executive Meeting by representatives of the member associations, HMC, GSA, SHMIS, ISA and SBSA.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



Hilary Moriarty
National Director

Because Ofsted values evidenced statements, BSA canvassed all member schools at the end of March with a brief questionnaire about the experience of boarding inspection.

We will submit the findings to Ofsted at the first opportunity and report on the findings in the next Bulletin.

BSPI/BSAI issues have included:

- BSPIs were at first not recognised
- Then BSPIs were invited to become BSAs
- This was contrary to a previous agreement between CSCI/ISI/ISC
- ISC suggested schools did not release BSPIs to become BSAs
- Some BSPIs became BSAs
- Some schools have had a BSAI on their inspection team
- If so, Heads will have been asked to evaluate them
- It is vital those evaluations are returned, because –
 - Ofsted will evaluate the use of BSAs at the end of the academic year
 - They may have little 'hard' evidence to consider
 - The transfer from BSPI to BSAI made them more expensive
 - Ofsted is sure to consider cost/benefit in its evaluation of BSAs

LETTER FROM OFSTED PART 1

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raising standards
improving lives

06 MAR 2008

04 March 2008

Hilary Moriarty
National Director
Boarding Schools' Association
Grosvenor Gardens House
35-37 Grosvenor Gardens
London SW1W 0BS

Dear Hilary

Thank you for your letter dated 20 February regarding the inspection of boarding schools.

I am puzzled that Headteachers feel that the inspection process has altered since April 2007. When we took over this work from the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) in April 2007 we agreed not to make changes until we had evaluated the effectiveness of the current practice. Many of the inspectors who worked for CSCI are carrying out these inspections. As I mentioned at my talk in January, we are now undertaking a pilot to streamline how we inspect care and education. Several Boarding Schools have agreed to help us with this and have welcomed the opportunity to participate in the pilot programme. Once we complete the pilot inspections, we will consult on our proposed changes. I hope schools and your association will respond to the consultation; your views are important to us.

It would be helpful to have specific details from your members about ways in which inspectors were not well prepared, or indeed about any problems with inspection. You will recall that I left my address with colleagues in January and invited them to contact me directly if they felt their inspection experience was not as good as it should be, or if it was better than expected. To date, no one has taken up that offer.

The inspection process still focuses on the 52 National Minimum Standards, but these are grouped to fit with the Every Child Matters agenda. This is primarily to simplify the reporting process. The Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) are reviewing the current standards and hope to have revised standards in place in 2009.

Inspectors' judgements are based on first hand evidence collected at the time of the inspection. The standards dictate the nature of the evidence inspectors collect. I expect their judgements to be objective and well substantiated. If there are specific examples where this is not the case, please let me know and we will investigate. All reports are checked for quality and accuracy before they are issued to the provider. This is to ensure that the evidence is sound and that the judgements are well supported.

Dr Jean Humphrys addressed the SBSA conference in Lancaster and admitted that the first year of the new Ofsted, with its hugely increased responsibilities, had not been easy. Mistakes, such as not knowing in advance about the importance attached to BSPIs and their status in the original agreement, had been made.

Meanwhile, the regional nature of boarding inspection, the segue from 52 established NMS to 5 ill-defined Outcomes of Every Child Matters, the cost of inspections which may now be very light indeed and conducted by 1 person, the precarious position of BSPIs, the language and design of questionnaires, the apparently haphazard timetables which land draft

Dr Humphrys ended her presentation asking for responses to four questions. We reproduce them here for all Heads who may wish to respond.

Points to consider



- Whether the alignment of inspections of care and education is welcome?
- How reduced tariff inspections should operate in boarding schools?
- How schools would manage a shorter notice period for the inspection of social care?
- How best to ascertain pupils' views?

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

LETTER FROM OFSTED PART 2



We are very conscious of the fact that the questionnaires we are using are not fit for purpose. We are in the process of reviewing these and I am delighted to say that several head teachers have agreed to comment on drafts.

I understand that one inspection was inadvertently scheduled during a school holiday and I am conscious of a draft report being sent to a school close to the holiday period. I apologise for that. We are taking particular care to make sure these mistakes are not repeated.

Ofsted is not able to set the level of fees, but your comments, which were also raised at the conference in January, have been raised with the DCSF. I am sure they will respond to you directly on this matter.

I fully understand your members concerns about the advisory role CSCI provided. Again, we have raised this with the DCSF and I know they are keen to find ways to address this issue.

We use Boarding School Professional Inspectors (BSPIs), based on advice from CSCI and have agreed to review their longer-term use before the end of this academic year. The terms and conditions of individual inspectors were changed to comply with Ofsted employment requirements. We have continued to use those BSPIs who are available for work, (all but four of those who were nominated by CSCI). This has not met with universal agreement, but we are fulfilling our commitment to use BSPIs on particular inspections. We continue to work with ISI to overcome any reservations about the approach we have adopted to engaging BSPIs.

As I said at the conference in January, I warmly welcome the views of headteachers and we will respond to constructive criticism. We are keen to contribute to improving services for children and value the views and support of those who take time to help us to improve our inspection.

Yours sincerely

J. Humphrys

JEAN HUMPHRYS HMI
Deputy Director, Children

If you have a view about boarding inspections by Ofsted... please complete the Consultation document detailed below, to be found on the Ofsted website (www.ofsted.gov.uk/portal/site/Internet/menuitem and click on 'consultation document link').

'Consultation on the integration of the inspections of welfare and education from September 2008'.

The closing date is 12th June.

One word of caution - the questions don't include anything about sector professionals or the national minimum standards - possibly telling omissions.

The more comment Ofsted receives from boarding schools, the more attention it is likely to pay.

BSA will also complete it, reflecting the range of responses we have recently received.

If you are a Head of School which received an Ofsted boarding inspection since April 2007

Please complete and return the form which was sent to Heads separately on March 14

DO IT NOW!

reports on the Head's desk when he/she is on holiday, loss of the advisory function, and the difficulty of making effective challenges to questionable judgements, all these continue to exercise headteachers and BSA.

So, if you have any concerns, please let us know - email, phone, write to Hilary Moriarty.

More important - let Ofsted know. The more aware they are of the sector's anxieties (detailed with

chapter and verse), the more able they will be to improve their own performance.

And on a positive note, we have heard from two schools declaring emphatically how good the inspection experience was.

And we do believe Ofsted itself would like boarding inspection to be uniformly good, producing reliable, recognisable reports efficiently and effectively.



Pathfinder

Progress on moving vulnerable children into boarding schools has been depressingly slow. Most boarding schools which volunteered with enthusiasm for the project in time for its launch in November 2006, have not even had contact from any of the Local Authorities involved, let alone seen a boarder cross their threshold.

What is going on?

Visibly, not a lot. Invisibly, probably quite a lot, at deep levels of the local authorities. That's where obstacles, if such they are, have lain. Local Authorities have been concerned about lack of cash, lack of time, and perhaps a lack of awareness of how a boarding pathfinder place really could help a child in difficult circumstances.

Three LAs have made contact with boarding schools local to them. A small number of children have actually been placed and a small number of these placements have 'failed' for various reasons.

These early placements are like delicate plants: it's important that they are not subject to blasts of publicity. We very much hope that by the Autumn, we will have more positive stories to tell than are available now.

DCSF has been hugely supportive, particularly in providing backup information for LAs - about the merits of the project, about identifying suitable children, about what boarding is like for children and for their parents - and in masterminding events at which putting plans into practice can be considered, discussed, aired.

Arguably, the most important thing to emerge recently has been the publication of 'Breaking Through', a collection of case studies about young people helped by the Royal Wanstead charity into boarding schools, and happy now to stand up and talk about the positive difference the experience made to their lives.

These case studies, and others from the Frank Buttle Trust and JET, prove the point that vulnerable children can do extremely well in boarding schools. The educational charities have been making this happen for years.

Local Authorities could be just as powerful if they chose. It would only be a return to former practice. The ISC Census figures for 1998 show that 3,135 children received contributions to independent school fees from Local Education Authorities (in addition to more than 40,000 children benefitting from the Government Assisted Places Scheme). By 2007, LAs contributed to the fees of only 1,403 children. Separate statistics for boarding are not available, but if LAs could make so many contributions then, why not now?

I just hope they realise it before September.

New Schools joining the Boarding Pathfinder

Bramcote Lorne School
St Mary's Hall
Tettenhall College

New LAs since September 2007

Waltham Forest
West Sussex

***The BSA gratefully acknowledges the support of the**

Department for Children, Schools and Families

Thanks to the Department's support of our programmes of training and professional development, we have been able to peg course prices at highly competitive rates for the last three years.

Use the internet? Then this is for you...

BSA is grateful to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre for the following article on a topic of vital interest to boarding Schools.

The internet and other online environments have now become integral to the lives of many people all over the world but none so more than for children and young people.

It is a fantastic tool especially for children and young people at boarding schools as it can be an easy and convenient way to communicate with family and friends.

Chatting online, sharing pictures and video and using search engines to help with home work are just some of the applications available - in fact the internet has created a whole range of opportunities that have never been available before.

But, there can be risks in the virtual world, just as there are risks in the real world. For example, if you are a young person reading this: Do you have online buddies on email, on your profile page or on your IM list? Do you really know who they are?

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre was set up in April 2006 as a national law enforcement agency focused on tackling the sexual abuse of children especially in relation to online environments where paedophiles can use new technologies to build 'relationships' and groom unsuspecting young people.

But CEOP is about more than just bringing child sex offenders to account. Everyday within the Centre, police officers work alongside industry, government and child protection specialists on a wide range of ideas and initiatives, all aimed at limiting offender opportunity and safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children.

A vital area of the work carried out by the CEOP Centre is the education of children and young people, parents and teachers in the risks potentially faced whilst using online environments and what they can put in place to protect themselves.

CEOP's education programme, ThinkUKnow, has so far been delivered to over 1.1 million 11-16 year olds and over 4,000 educational professionals, who have been trained in the key messages enabling them to deliver the programme directly into their school or region.

The programme has three key messages:

- How to have fun
- How to stay in control
- How to report

The 'how to have fun' section encourages children to know about all the fun things the internet can bring - for example playing games, communicating with friends and downloading music. After all, the

internet is a fantastic tool and children should be able to access it without fear.

'How to stay in control' covers the risks associated with the use of online environments and what steps should be put in place to minimise them. Are people who children communicate with online really who they say they are? What is personal information and how much information should children give away about themselves?

Finally, the 'how to report' section explains how any suspicious behaviour that may have been encountered in online environments can be reported. Children and young people are encouraged to tell a trusted adult if they have any concerns, but they can also report directly to specialist police officers using the 'Report Abuse' button on the www.ceop.gov.uk or www.thinkuknow.co.uk websites.

CEOP's Head of Education Helen Penn explains further:

"More and more children are now using the internet to communicate and explore online environments. But with the fantastic opportunities the internet provides there are also risks that we need to be aware of so we can ensure our children and young people can make the right choices.

"Through our ThinkUKnow programme, children and young people, parents and teachers can understand these risks and put measures in place to ensure their own safety. The thinkuknow.co.uk website provides practical advice and top tips on internet safety and we encourage parents of children at

boarding schools to visit the site and register for regular updates from CEOP to enable them to keep their children safe online.

"Children and adults are also encouraged to report any suspicious behaviour shown whilst in online environments directly to specialist police officers using the special Report Abuse button on the ceop.gov.uk website".

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So what can boarding schools do to ensure the safety of their children?

CEOP encourages all teachers to visit www.thinkuknow.co.uk/teachers. Here they can access advice and guidance on all aspects of internet safety and can also register to receive the ThinkUKnow training, enabling them to deliver the key messages to their children. Once trained, resources to support the programme can be downloaded and these include films, lesson plans and all supporting documents required - and all for free!

There are also sections on the website for children aged 8-10 and 11-16. Here they can explore in their own time the advice given on staying safe online using fun, interactive visuals and activities. Teachers can also use these sections in the classrooms for group learning.

Students should be encouraged to think about their own behaviour whilst using online environments. Many of them will be using social networking sites such as Myspace or Bebo to communicate with friends or will be chatting with people in online forums or within online gaming sites. But do they always know who they are talking to? Some simple steps that students can take are:

- Not to give out personal information to online friends. Personal information includes an instant messenger id, email address, mobile telephone number, school name and any pictures of themselves, their family or friends. If something is published online - maybe a picture or video, anyone can access it, change it or share it.
- To use webcams with caution and only with family and friends who are already known in the real world. Webcam images can be copied and changed so it's also important to use webcams appropriately.
- To remember that online friends are just that - and if they are not known to the student in the real world they may be lying about who they actually are. Students should not meet up with a stranger they have met online unless they take a trusted adult with them.

- To think before opening files from people they do not know in the real world. These files may contain anything from a virus to an inappropriate image or film and should be deleted straight away.
- To save the www.thinkuknow.co.uk website to their favourites so that if they need to report suspicious behaviour they can do it straight away.

For further information on CEOP please visit www.ceop.gov.uk.

How Green?

With their 24/7 all year round operation, boarding schools are particularly sensitive to both energy costs and the need to become greener.

Schools may not be aware that there is up to £1m available from the government to install technologies that will reduce energy bills, will provide income (the electricity generating ones will) and most importantly provide equipment and information that will enable staff and pupils to become engaged with climate change and energy efficiency and energy generation.

Check out www.lowcarbonbuildingsphase2.org.uk for all the details.

Alex Thomson

We are delighted to introduce Alex Thomson, BSA's new Director of Training, taking over from Tim Holgate in September 2008.



Alex Thomson read Geography at the University of Edinburgh before completing his PGCE at the University of Leeds. After five years teaching Geography and Mathematics in schools in Wiltshire, he joined the Educational & Training Branch of the Army. His twenty six years of service included roles as Director of Adult Education for the Army in Northern Ireland, Chief Examinations Officer for the Army's Junior Officer Education and Training Scheme, Senior Educational Adviser to the Officer Selection Board in Westbury, and most recently, he was the Children's Services Director for British Forces in Germany.

He is a traditional Army 'schoolie' having maintained his links with children's education throughout his military career. He served as the single military officer in the HQ of Service Children Education in Germany, where he was responsible for coordinating inspections, resourcing and SEN support, worked on the closure of Service schools in Berlin, and has acted as the Chair of a number of School Advisory Committees. In his most recent appointment, he continued to develop his knowledge of children's and adult education, and has represented the military on joint DCSF/OfSTED/LA/MOD committees concerned with the ECM agenda.

He has directed a number of key projects during the last five years, including: the first Children & Young People's Plan within the MOD, a Child Index for MOD families overseas, implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and development of new opportunities for 14-19 year olds in WBL and vocational training. Another enduring responsibility of recent years has been the commissioning of accredited training and qualifications for both military and civilian members of the workforce.

In addition to promoting education and training within the MOD, he has also practised what he preached as he has completed a Diploma in Education at the University of Wales, Cardiff and is a Chartered Fellow of the CIPD.

Alex is married to Jayne, has two daughters, who collectively enjoyed 16 years of boarding school while the family was posted around Europe, and is now settled in the Salisbury area. He continues to have an active involvement in orienteering and plans to complete one long distance footpath for charity each year.

"I am delighted to be taking up the appointment of Director of Training in August although Tim will undoubtedly be a hard act to follow! I trust that my long standing and quite varied involvement in children's education together with an enduring role in championing professional and personal development opportunities for staff will mean that I have plenty to offer in what I expect to be a challenging and highly rewarding appointment. Both of my daughters enjoyed and, most importantly from a parent's point of view, benefited from their time as boarders at their Prep and Senior schools. I am therefore fully aware of the 'added value' which boarding schools provide and look forward to supporting our member schools and their staff in their endeavours."

Boarding Schools - Admission Code

We are grateful to 11KBW for submitting the following explanation of the changed admissions procedures, which will be of particular interest to colleagues in state boarding schools.

It's that time of year again when parents learn the identity of the school that will offer a place to their child. Behind each of the decisions is a complicated web of laws. This year we will see what, if any, difference in selection outcomes is made by new legislation, including the much-vaunted Schools Admission Code.

The Code was designed to secure 'fair access for all pupils'. It outlawed certain practices and processes that had skewed admission decisions and entrenched social disadvantage. Thus the Code makes it unlawful for an admissions authority to give priority to children according to their parents' willingness to support the school; to take account of reports about children's past behaviour, attendance, attitude or achievement; to allocate places on the basis that a sibling or other relative is a former pupil; to take account of the past behaviour of a child or family members. On the other hand, lottery systems and catchment areas to allocate places for popular schools are expressly permitted.

Admissions authorities are also restricted as to the information that they can ask parents for in supplementary forms for admission. These forms have, in the past, provided a wealth of information about a prospective pupil and his/her parents.

However useful this information may have been, it also led to the perception

(if not the reality) of covert discrimination against the 'wrong' sort of pupil. It is no longer permissible to ask for information about parents' personal details, such as criminal convictions or marital, occupational or financial status; for details about parents' achievements, educational background; for details about parents' or children's disabilities, special educational needs or medical conditions, unless this is in support of positive action; and about parents' or children's interests, hobbies or membership of societies.

Objections to selection criteria and arrangements can be referred to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by a relevant local authority, a neighbouring school, or a disgruntled parent. The Schools Adjudicator has power to strike down a school's procedures. In recent months, he has flexed his muscles, and shows every intention of continuing to do so. The Secretary of State has also initiated an investigation into admissions practices in a number of local authority areas, and some schools have received threatening letters, in an effort to stamp out unfairness. Whether all of this has actually produced the outcome of 'fair access for all pupils' for this year's admissions decisions remains to be seen.

**Clive Sheldon and Kathryn White,
barristers at 11KBW.**

ATTENTION SENIOR SCHOOL HEADS

Is your PA wonderful?

Is your PA a person whom you treasure, depend upon, would trust with your life?

Then why not recommend this person for the SecEd PA of the Year Award, sponsored by International School Award and NAHT?

30 finalists and their Headteachers are invited to the Award Lunch in the Savoy Hotel, London in November - a treat in itself.

All entrants receive a certificate from SecEd telling the world that their Head thought enough of them to recommend them for the award.

And you probably believe you really do have the PA of the Year. How wonderful if the judges agreed with you.

All you have to do is tell SecEd, in not more than 600 words, by 2 October. Email pete.h@markallengroup.com

Olivia Denson, Head of Service at CEAS and a member of the BSA Advisory Committee, offers advice about occasional difficulties with fees.

1. Between 1 Oct 2007 and 31 Dec 2007 CEAS issued a total of 129 Boarding School Certificates. This figure covers both initial boarding claims and changes of school.
2. Between the same dates 275 enquiries were received about Boarding for new claimants.
3. School Bursars should be aware the MoD CEA Regulations state that the Allowance should be paid to the school within 30 days of receipt from the MoD. Receipts should only be issued for accounts that are settled in full.
4. If a parent continually claim they are unable to pay because the allowance has not been received due to 'problems with the pay system and new computer system', then the school can ask the person's Unit Admin Branch to confirm in writing there are problems and when a resolution of the problem can be expected.
5. The advice from MoD Policy Branch is that if a school has not received a payment from a Service person, then they should be treated in the same way as any other parent. If no payment has been received after taking the usual steps to contact the non-payer then appropriate steps should be taken to recover the money, including, if necessary, legal actions. When accepting a child of a Service parent the school should ask the Unit address of that parent. When writing to a non-payer an information copy of the letter should be addressed to that relevant unit's Commanding Officer.

Mrs Olivia Denson
Head of Service

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Jet Propelled



BSA is aware that many boarding schools will have staff competing in marathons and raising funds for different charities. When

Julie Lodrick, Deputy at Farlington, contacted us to seek a little publicity for her marathon fundraising efforts for JET, we hoped it would strike a chord with readers.

In September 2007 Farlington identified the Joint Educational Trust as one of our main charities to support during the forthcoming year. The Joint Educational Trust (JET) helps children who have suffered seriously at home or are at risk in some way. JET enables

these children to attend independent day and boarding schools, or state boarding schools, where they have a real chance of making a new start. JET helps by working towards a free or reduced-fees place. JET may also provide grants if there is a shortfall in funding, and often works in conjunction with other charities. I know that all of us who work in boarding schools believe passionately in the added value that boarding schools contribute to the education of the children in our care.

For about eight years now, running has been a form of relaxation for me, as well as valuable thinking time. Taking part in the London Marathon was something I thought would always be a dream I hoped to achieve "sometime in the future". In 2006 I got as far as registering my interest with JET and last October I was fortunate enough to receive an email from the Trust to say that this year I qualified for a place in

the Marathon to help raise funds for the charity.

At the time of writing I am still in training, running anywhere between 30 to 40 miles a week and I have already competed in the Glasgow and Edinburgh Half-Marathons. Finding time to think and plan is so difficult, especially in busy boarding schools, I highly recommend making time to pursue a project with a goal at the end.

If you or your school would like to help JET, then follow the link below to donate to this worthwhile cause. Thank you in anticipation of your support.

www.justgiving.com/julielodrick

JET
Joint Educational Trust

Conference Snapshots

Annual Conference for Housemasters and Housemistresses

January 3 - 5 2008
Nottingham

Speakers



George Robinson
Lucky Duck Training
'Developing Confident Boarders'

George had the audience riveted with his research about the effect of (unobtrusive) touch and the importance of raising self-esteem in troubled teenagers. The books went like hot cakes.



Emma McKendrick
Headmistress of Downe House
'Developing Good Relationships with Parents'

Wise words about the intricacies - and pitfalls - of one of the most important elements in a Houseparent's job. Great case studies.

Peter Kino - *Head of Sixth Form at Sevenoaks School, and*
Syd Hill - *Headmaster of Elstree School*

'Developing Initiative and Responsibility in Boarders'

Two very different perspectives, for senior and prep schools respectively, providing many practical ideas and solutions to the perennial problem of motivation and inspiration.

Delyth Draper - *Senior Mistress at Wellington College, and*
Clive Thorpe - *Housemaster at Framlingham College*

'Peer Support and Mentoring'

Peer mentoring is not just a buzz expression - it really works. Delyth and Clive offered firsthand experience of making the philosophy practical and effective.

State Boarding Schools' Association Annual Conference

January 20 - 21 2008
Lancaster

Speakers



Kevin Roberts
CEO Worldwide Saatchi & Saatchi
'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds'

You had to be there, but those who were will never forget the power of a deeply personal but wholly inspirational talk, enlivened with some of the best advertisements of recent times. Kevin Roberts is also a walking example of how a student can fall foul of a school's disciplinary code and still rise to positions of power and influence.

Joanne Harker
Team Leader, Children's Safeguards Policy Unit, DCSF

'Safer Recruitment'

Neil Remsbery
Team Leader, Pupil Well-being, Health and Safety Unit, DCSF

'Dealing with Pandemic/Contagion'

Olivia Denson
Head of the Children's Education Advisory Service

'Gurkhas - a new boarding opportunity'

Melvyn Roffe
Principal of Wymondham College

'Bidding for Capital Funds for Boarding'

Jenny Cornell
Development Officer, Lancaster Royal Grammar School

'The Work of the Development Office'

Kevin Maloney
Senior Partner, The Litmus Partnership

'Food Nutrition - In-house vs Contractor'



Dr Bob Guthrie
Principal of Hockerill Anglo-European College
'Changing from A-level to IB'

Hockerill Anglo-European College came second only to Sevenoaks in the Sunday Times league table of A level/IB results, 2007, so Bob had a lot of expertise to share.



Professor Paul Wellings
Vice-Chancellor of Lancaster University
'The Future of University Education'

Like Kevin Roberts, a Lancaster Royal Grammar School old boy, offering a very clear view of the changing face of British universities and new demands made upon higher education.



Bobby Skinstad
former captain of the Springboks
After-dinner speech - Sport and Boarding

A South African reflection of the importance of boarding in building an outstanding sporting career.



Professor Bart McGettrick
Emeritus Professor of Education at Glasgow University

'Is boarding school the battleground for the values of our children?'

A real return to values, a presentation which sent deputies back to school to reaffirm their belief in all that they ever set out to do, and book Bart for a staff Inset session. The Chairman booked him immediately for York.



Tim Holgate
BSA Director of Training
Hilary Moriarty
BSA National Director and
'Current Boarding Issues'



Hilary Birch
Safety Project Manager for Bebo
'Online Safety'

Opened an area upon which Deputies were keen to hear more - how do we keep children as safe on the internet as parents would expect?



Christopher Liddle
Chairman of HLM Architects
'Designing for Boarding in the 21st Century'

Talking about new building in historic school sites, Chris Liddle improvised a lectern from a stack of chairs.



Ian Yorston
Head of Digital Strategy at Radley College
'Futures Thinking: Every Child Matters'

Listening to Ian makes you want to go, 'Yess!' about the exciting future world which awaits our students. 'Do not be afraid,' he says, 'Do not be very afraid!' And you believe him!



Dr Jean Humphrys
Deputy Director Children, Ofsted
'New Boarding Inspections'



Dr Sarah-Jayne Blakemore
Royal Society Dorothy Hodgkin Research Fellow - Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience, University College London

'Adolescent Brains'

We knew there was a reason for teenagers to turn into Kevins and Laurens - Dr Blakemore explained why, in an exemplary account of the most recent research and its likely conclusions.

Annual Conference for Deputy Heads

January 31 - February 2 2008
Manchester

Speakers



Dr Roger Morgan
OBE
Children's Rights Director for Ofsted
'Children's Rights'

Dr Christopher Greenfield
Principal of Sherborne International College

'International Children'

A timely reminder of the value of our international students, and how to cater better for them and their parents. So, are you translating all school information and reports into their native languages?

Alison Baverstock
co-author of 'Whatever!'

'Making the most of teenagers'

A sane and sensitive reflection on how to deal with teenagers - ten tips for the audience to put into practice on their return to school.

New from next year

Look out for an addition to our Day Seminar Programme, introduced in response to considerable demand from schools.

Tuesday 9 June 2009
London

Marketing boarding

The seminar will be conducted by Russell Speirs, of RSAcademics Ltd, Education and Marketing Consultants well known to many schools.

Further details are in the Day Seminar Programme, included in this mailing.

Book early to avoid disappointment.

What is going on in teenagers' brains?

There must be times when you have wondered, so it's good to be in touch with experts who may have some of the answers.

Dr Sarah-Jayne Blakemore, a Royal Society research fellow at the Institute of Cognitive Neuro-science at University College London, and co-author, with Uta Frith, the development psychologist, of 'The Learning Brain', was a warmly-received speaker at the Deputies' Conference in Manchester at the end of January. Dr Blakemore's stature in her field was highlighted by her inclusion in the cover story in The Times Magazine on 8 March, 'Science: Big Questions, Small Answers.' One of 9 experts in their field, addressing questions about saving the planet or finding extra-terrestrial life, Dr Blakemore responded to the question, 'What is going on in teenagers' brains?'

In brief - the article was far shorter than the Manchester presentation - she compared brain activity in adolescents to that in infancy, when massive brain development includes a reduction in the number of synapses, the connections between neurons, or nerve cells.

It appears that teenagers do have more going on in their brains than was recognised before MRI scanning made brain activity visible. This may help to account for the moodiness, self-consciousness, risk taking and the tendency to be led astray by peers. Reflecting on how we educate adolescents, Dr Blakemore said, 'At

the moment we focus on academic subjects, but we know that parts of the brain that are involved in non-academic things such as social understanding, self-awareness, decision-making and planning are developing. It is possible that lessons could include that kind of learning.'

There may be students in boarding school who can 'hold it together' better in lessons than in their free time, so boarding staff may feel more of the brunt of what appears to be anti-social behaviour on the part of the adolescents in their care. It is reassuring to know that there may be good reason for such behaviour, and scientific evidence which suggests what we have perhaps always known: they will grow out of it.

('The Learning Brain' by Sarah-Jayne Blakemore and Uta Frith, pub. WileyBlackwell, ISBN - 10 1405124016, £16.99)

HM



Annual Conference for Heads 2008

Last chance to book...

Boarding: Education in the Round



Speakers include:

Gervase Phinn *Writer, broadcaster*

Dr Martin Stephen *St Paul's*

David Smellie *Farrer & Co*

Olivia Denson *CEAS*

Christine Ryan *ISI*

Matt Perry *ex England Full Back*

Go to www.boarding.org.uk for an application form and call Alice on **020 7798 1580** to check availability

What's new?

The BSA was approached in mid-February and asked to advise any new academy which might be thinking of including a boarding house in its plans.

By the end of March, the Director of Training and the National Director had met with representatives of one such academy twice and reviewed the boarding plans of this and one other. We had also met for further discussions with representatives of the DCSF Boarding Team.

New boarding schools have been few in recent years. It is therefore interesting to observe the mechanisms by which schools move from being a day school to offering boarding to at least some of their pupils.

As with independent schools, the reasons for beginning boarding are different in each case, but the hundred and one elements to be considered, from staffing and accommodation to the number of toilets needed and whether or not you need an in-house laundry and what exactly is a House Tutor, are a reminder of the complexity of boarding, and even the delicacy of the operation which many of us already in the business take for granted. New boarding of course also offers the chance to take a fresh look at how boarding currently operates. There

may be much to learn from how the academies finalise their plans without the baggage of years of custom and practice which may now be out-dated.

Whatever happens to the fledgling plans in the coming months, Government encouragement for new boarding is in itself very encouraging. It will surely help send out the message that boarding can be a very good thing indeed for the right pupil.

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So you want to be an examiner?

There was a time when examining was a weird but rewarding experience, squeezed into every available moment from dawn until the small hours of the morning during an intense three week period. It is good to hear that things have changed, as the following request from NAA indicates.

The National Assessment Agency and the awarding bodies are jointly recruiting English and religious studies examiners for 2008.

Being in at the start of the revolution in 14-19 learning will give examiners invaluable insight into the revised A levels and GCSEs, new secondary

curriculum and new Diplomas, benefiting teachers, students and schools. Success for learners will depend on examiners working effectively as part of the new system.

The reforms mean that the role of examiner will be more varied and more flexible, with greater opportunities for promotion.

By examining, teachers can help shape the development of the subjects their students learn and how they are examined so that they are better equipped for the future.

Examiners say that examining is the best professional development,

improving classroom skills and boosting career prospects. It provides subject insights and opportunities for sharing ideas with subject colleagues in other schools.

Applications are welcome from teachers at any stage of their career, including those about to retire.

The awarding bodies provide full training and support.

To find out more, visit the NAA website www.examinethefuture.org.uk, or contact your preferred awarding body if you have any questions about subjects, workloads or training.

Heads on the Move

The following Heads recently took up post. We wish them every success. We thank their predecessors for their service to BSA schools and wish them every good fortune in the future.



Roedean School (GSA)

Mrs Frances King

Formerly the Head at Heathfield St Mary's School, has been appointed Headmistress at Roedean, following the retirement of Mrs Carolyn Shaw.



Rydal Penrhos School (HMC)

Mr Patrick Lee-Browne

Mr Patrick Lee-Browne, who was the Deputy Head at Clifton College, Bristol, has taken up the post of Head at Rydal Penrhos School, on the retirement of Mr Michael James.



St Leonard's (IAPS)

Dr Michael Carslaw

Previously the Deputy Headmaster at Ardingly College, replaces Robert Tims who has retired, and becomes only the second headmaster in the school's 130-year history.



The King's School, Canterbury (HMC)

Mr Nicholas Clements

Mr Nicholas Clements is the new Headmaster at King's School Canterbury, succeeding Canon Keith Wilkinson who has become Conduct of Eton.

Trinity School (ISA)

Mr Tim Waters

The previous Head at The Royal Wolverhampton School, has taken up the position of Head at Trinity School following the retirement of Mr Colin Ashby.



The Scots School Albury, Australia

Mrs Heather Norton

Following the retirement of Mr Warren Howlett, Mrs Heather Norton has been appointed Principal.

We would be grateful for information and photographs from any school appointing a new Head, so that we can include them on this page in future editions of The Bulletin. Please email administrator@boarding.org.uk

Lies, damned lies and...

The last couple of days before going to press were disturbed by a press release from Halifax Financial Services which brought a flurry of press calls to the BSA office.

The Press Release proclaimed, 'Boarding school fees rise by nearly three times inflation in the last ten years.' By the time the embargoed release had gone public, journalists had enjoyed a field day, with online news screaming, 'Boarding Fees Soar'.

The Halifax reported that boarding pupils' fees increased by an average of 86% between 1997 and 2007, three times the increase in the Retail Price index, at 31%. Boarding was thus less affordable than ten years ago, and now out of the reach of doctors and pilots, for instance.

That last comment is hard to believe. Doctors? The newspapers have been full of stories of doctors' salaries rising dramatically in the last two years. Perhaps they have kept pace with boarding fees. In any case, many boarders now come from families in which both parents work.

According to the Halifax, the highest annual fees for boarders are in London, the lowest in Wales. One wonders if the Halifax number-crunchers have noticed some of the great truths about London and Wales? London is more expensive. Durr! I am reliably informed a straightforward pint of beer in Cardiff is £1.80, and in London it's £3.25. And let's not even think about house prices.

Actually, house prices are pertinent if we are going to point the finger about rising fees. A random raid of a website about house prices showed a semi-

detached house in Dorset selling in 1997 for £112,000, and in 2007 for £305,000. Slightly more than an 86% rise.

Whatever the fees, boarding schools know they offer a great product. To coin a phrase, they know they're worth it. But it is useful sometimes to cast fees in a historical context, and give some thought to the cumulative effect of a series of what seem at the time like prudent, even inevitable, financial decisions. Go forward, even, and contemplate average boarding fees in 2017 of £43,245. Eye-watering, isn't it?

By the time you receive this Bulletin, the ISC census figures for 2008 will be on the point of release. What will it say are the new average boarding fees, as we apparently stand on the brink of a recession?

More urgent for all of us, perhaps, is: what will boarding numbers in independent schools be? In 1997, there were 77,876; in 2007, 67,335. While numbers have hovered around 71,000 - 68,000 for the last six years, even rising by a thousand in 2002 and 600 in 2003, no one would wish to see a further decline this year. And if there is a decline - why? And what can be done to reverse it?

There is no doubt that cost is as important now as adverse publicity was some years ago. I really do believe parents are now more open to the idea of boarding being intrinsically a good thing; it's not vast dormitories with

flimsy curtains any more, and it's not Spartan conditions and freezing showers or forced runs. It's great accommodation - last year, schools spent on average £1,250 per boarder, refurbishing or building new boarding accommodation. In 1997, the statistics do not show boarding as a separate item, but total spending on new buildings and improvements in independent schools was just £525 per pupil.

Boarding today is also higher levels of staffing and better trained staff - almost 1,000 staff in boarding schools have completed the BSA professional development courses accredited by Roehampton University, not to mention the hundreds who have benefited from courses on child protection or meeting boarders' emotional needs, to name but two.

And it's the kind of 24/7 education which the government seems to want for every child, with extended schools and wrap-around care trying to cover the parenting gaps in the working day.

So I do believe parents have come round to seeing the merits of twenty first century boarding. If numbers are falling, is it because of the cost? And if so, in any individual school, what could be done to turn the tide?

30% of independent school children are already helped financially by their schools. No doubt pressure from the Charity Commission may cause this number to increase.

There is certainly demand if the calls to the BSA office are anything to go by. And boarding numbers in state boarding schools in the last year are up. Perhaps there's a message there?

Publications gone!

You will notice that this Bulletin does not carry the usual list of our publications and an order form for them. This is because Briefing Papers can be downloaded from the website and larger publications can be ordered there.

Any problems, please call the office on 020 7798 1580

We hope you will find Briefing Paper 23, 'Cyberbullying', enclosed with this mailing, useful.



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