

UPDATE

A BULLETIN FOR WESTON FEDERATION STAFF

Welcome to the latest edition of Update - a packed edition reflecting the scale of activity taking place in our schools. Carol Penney (Headteacher of Baytree School) comments " It would have been inconceivable ten years ago that six Headteachers would be collaborating to this degree in support of inclusive practice."

Quality Framework for learning and teaching gets the thumbs up!

A Quality Framework supporting school self evaluation has been agreed. The framework includes lesson observation and student questionnaires. Federation Curriculum and Quality Co-ordinator, Chris Hunt (Priory School) says "The framework provides a baseline for school monitoring activity." Wyvern Headteacher Andy Russell tells us the framework attracted favourable comment from HMI following a visit to the school.

Federation impresses DfES with peer review model

The Federation has been identified by the DfES Innovation Unit as a model of best practice for its peer review activities. Peer review provides opportunities for colleagues in one school to make good practice visits to another school. A number of reviews are planned for the remainder of the academic year. Please contact Chris Hunt at Priory School for more information about peer review.

Gardening together

Baytree and Wyvern students are working together on the Year 10/11 senior garden at Wyvern School. They have sown seeds and planted herbs in the garden and got to know each other in the process. On the second visit to Wyvern a film crew from QCA filmed the project. The students enjoyed the experience and will watch the video together when it is released.

The Bay Plant Company at Baytree School are running a Family Learning Day in May to teach parents how to make productive and long lasting hanging basket displays. They are hoping to pass on their skills to other family members and make profits for their business!

Meanwhile, Westhaven students have notched up impressive plant sales as part of their Horticulture project. The school environment has also been enhanced by the appearance of tubs and

bulbs, all thanks to the efforts of pupils at the school.



Federation staff hit the road to seek out best practice

Ten staff, including Headteachers, heads of department, classroom teachers and community co-ordinators will make best practice visits to different parts of the country next term. The visits focus on vocational courses in Modern Foreign Languages, the use of teaching assistants in classrooms, condensing the curriculum at KS3, the KS4 PE curriculum, special school operation and community engagement at local, national and international levels. Participating staff will produce a report and share findings across the WEP. A real case of **W**orking together to raise **E**xpectations and **P**erformance .

Over 100 nominations for Citizenship Awards!

The WEP held its first Young Citizens of the Year Awards in March. This important event recognised and rewarded young people who, through acts of citizenship, make a valuable contribution to the community.

There were well over 100 nominations from a range of categories including conservation, fundraising and voluntary work. Guests were entertained by students from Worle School.

Chief Superintendent Tracy Hayler of the Avon and Somerset Constabulary opened the event

and Cllr Astra Brand (Town Mayor) presented key awards.

Following the event Astra commented on how much she enjoyed seeing the looks on the faces of students who received a certificate or an award.

Tom Haldane, Student Parliament rep (Priory School) said "It was good to see our students being recognised in this way."

Events such as this help to challenge negative perceptions of Weston and its young people and therefore help to create a more positive image of the town.



Over 600 students have their say on Federation enrichment provision

The Student Parliament has carried out an investigation into enrichment provision with the help of Amy Cliff (Aim Higher Graduate Researcher). The research based on questionnaires completed by over 600 students will lead to a revised enrichment offer for the remainder of the academic year. Tim Haines, Chair of the Student Parliament said "This is one example of how students are having a real say about what's going on in the Federation. They now have a real voice."



Student Parliament takes the lead

Tim Haines (Student Parliament Chair, Priory School) has been updating us on the work of the Parliament. Tim says "The Parliament has brought students together to share and solve common problems. One of the highlights so far

has been our work on school enrichment programmes. Issues for the future include school meals and social facilities for young people in Weston." The Student Parliament will themselves be taking part in a leadership event in the very near future.

Top Tips for SAM Learning

SAM Learning Top Tips for school managers, teachers and students have been produced by the WEP office and you should by now have received copies from your Senior Leadership Team. Please contact the WEP Office on 01934 417603 if you would like further details.

WHEELS — vocational curriculum



Eight students from the Federation have been participating in the 'WHEELS' project at Brislington in Bristol. The students are developing a range of social and vocational skills associated with motor vehicle maintenance. Ian Brinsdon, a student at Wyvern School tells us that the course is extraordinary and good fun. Tom Richards from Wyvern thinks the course is brilliant—course leaders have helped him learn so much since starting the programme.

WEP research into student target setting

Amy Cliff (Aim Higher Graduate Researcher) has been researching the attitudes, aspirations and work practices of former Year 11 students. The research raises a number of issues in relation to target setting, student aspiration and exam preparation. Copies of the research outcomes are available from your Senior Leadership Team or the WEP office.

Maggie Mooney (ex Headteacher at Wyvern School) has been following up the issue of student level target setting and has presented her findings to Headteachers. We are now looking at ways to further improve our academic monitoring systems so that students have a greater awareness and understanding of their personal potential.

Top author leads Federation conference on AS Level Critical Thinking

Over 100 Year 10 AS Critical Skills students from the Federation participated in a Critical Thinking Conference organised by the Weston Education Partnership at the Winter Gardens in April. The conference was led by Dr Roy Van Den Brink-Budgen a nationally acknowledged author and Chief Examiner in this field. Our students not only had the opportunity to develop their analytical skills, but were able to work alongside other North Somerset students following this course as part of their post 16 provision. Our students will be taking the exam a year early – a remarkable achievement!



Federation Business Managers get down to business

Business Managers from across the Federation have been meeting on a regular basis to share information about services and contracts.

To date the team have focused on a number of initiatives including a "better value project" that audited contracts and services across the Federation. They are exploring the potential of joint service agreements for contracts coming up for review. An immediate focus for the task group is grounds maintenance and catering. Martin Kerslake (Business Manager, Priory School) says "The opportunity for Business Managers to work across the Federation has enabled a sharing of strengths and good practice and we look forward to making a real difference."

New era for post 16 delivery

Plans are well under way for the delivery of some A Level provision on school sites from September 05. Federation students will be able to study Psychology and English at Worle, and Spanish and RE at Priory. Federation staff from Worle, Wyvern and Broadoak will also share in the delivery of A Level provision at the Sixth Form College. These long awaited developments are welcome and are the start of a Post 16 partnership that will make Weston the first choice for our learners.

Federation Supply Teacher Support Kits hit the spot!

The Federation Supply and Recruitment Task Group have been looking at ways to improve support for supply teachers. The Support Kits successfully used at Priory School are now available in all Federation schools. The WEP office has equipped the boxes with a range of practical items to assist Supply Teachers in their work. Jessica Tweddle (Priory School and Chair of the Task Group) tells us "Every supply teacher is provided with a Support Kit which contains basic items such as pens, paper, whiteboard markers and erasers, Supply Teachers' Handbook, a map and a print-out of the classes they are going to teach. We even supply a mug!" Feedback from supply teachers and supply agencies has been very positive – they say it gives them a fighting chance in class! A questionnaire on how we can improve life for supply teachers has proved that these boxes really do help.



Weston Hospital partnership goes from strength to strength!

Our partnership with Weston Hospital continues to develop.

Students from Broadoak Community School who are studying GCSE ICT, have been to the Hospital to see first hand the way that ICT is applied in the Health Service. Sarah-Jane Sheldon, Assistant Head of the Midwifery Department at the Hospital is taking part in a business tea with 8 aspiring individuals from Priory School to discuss entry into the midwifery profession. Wyvern School is also hosting a similar event involving their Year 9 and Year 10 students. Aiming higher for the healthcare sector!



Federation ITT hits the big time!!

Federation Initial Teacher Training goes from strength to strength as the academic year 04/05 comes to a close. ITT trainees in our schools are undertaking 16+ placements at Weston College, Weston Sixth Form Centre and Backwell School. Westhaven Special School is hosting 2nd year UWE students for the second time and some primary experience is also being gained by Federation trainees. Significant work has been undertaken by ITT and CPD Co-ordinators with the help of Edunova consultants. They are developing a unique competency and skills framework to underpin the future training of staff at all levels. June also sees the Federation as the subject of a major feature, with professional photo-shoot, in the TTA's national magazine 'Doing ITT'.

University Masterclasses for Federation students

In January and February 2005 some 120 Year 10 Aim Higher students from Federation schools attended subject masterclasses run by our partner universities. With Maths at the University of the West of England, Science at Bristol and English at Exeter, our students have been working with the academic staff on a wide range of activities. These included cataloguing the display behaviour of fighting fish, solving traffic flow problems at the Glastonbury Festival and getting to grips with 19th century poetry!

Federation goes live on STAR Radio 107.7fm

The Weston Federation has teamed up with STAR Radio to promote learning in the town. Year 11 Student dedications have been read out on air together with top tips advising parents on how to support their children in the run up to exams. A big thanks to STAR Radio from the Federation! Further developments are in the pipeline. Watch this space!!!