

Governor Mark Assessor Newsletter



No. 1

January /February 2008

Welcome to the first Governor Mark Assessor Newsletter. We plan to forward this every couple of months with the hope of keeping you as informed as possible about how Governor Mark is progressing. We are aware that many of you have done training some time ago and have been wondering what has been happening since.

The three Governor Services teams that make up GLM - Cambridgeshire, Oxfordshire and Warwickshire - have been focusing on building the capacity to deliver Governor Mark when it is once again publicised to governing bodies. When the Standard was first published there was a flurry of activity, with 20-30 schools immediately seeking to go for the award. Our problem of course was the need for infrastructure - in particular assessors, and website access other than our individual LA websites.

We are now in a position to move forward. Assessor training courses have now taken place at 5 locations - Northampton, Peterborough, Reading, Newcastle and Birmingham - resulting in 75 assessors being in place across the country.

The most recent documentation is accessible through the GLM website - www.glmpartnership.org so now we are ready to go! We look forward to a two-way relationship with you as our assessor team, and as this award gets rolling, please keep us informed about how you are finding things.

Susie Hall, Phil Hand, Claudia Wade

Contacting GLM

Our co-ordinator for communications on behalf of GLM is Mary McKay. In due course there will be a direct email address through the GLM website, but for now the best email to use is gmmckay@aol.com

Support for Local Authorities and Assessors

In future newsletters we plan to keep you informed about how Governor Mark is rolling out - particularly levels of take up and numbers of applications.

In order to help you promote Governor Mark in your locality we have attached a copy of a newsletter article and a PowerPoint presentation which you are most welcome to adapt and use in your local newsletters and at training /briefing sessions.

Members of GLM may be available to address conferences or workshops about the standard and award.

The First Assessment

We are delighted to have received the first Governor Mark application from a school in Banbury. The preliminary pre-assessment has been conducted and a final assessment visit takes place on 6 February 2008. If the school is successful we expect that the award will be presented to the school by the Secretary of State on a possible visit to the school later in the Spring.

Phil Hand has the 'no pressure' task of carrying out this first assessment, and he writes:

"When something is new, there will of course be some teething troubles. In this

case it is the 39 attachments forwarded by the school, containing a huge volume of what looks like really good evidence.

Clearly governing bodies will be anxious to impress, but with only 3 hours allocated for preliminary work as assessors we cannot read all of it and certainly won't be printing it off.

Nevertheless the application form and more significantly the impact statement will provide a good steer as to where to focus the assessment, which will be to seek evidence that the governing body makes a real difference"

Publicity

A major campaign has been planned to remind schools that Governor Mark exists. We are planning to use:

- COGS network - offering to support Governor Services Co-ordinators in promoting the award in their area
- *Governor Magazine*, published by the DCSF
- The National Governors Association, who are supporters of this award

If you have local opportunities to promote Governor Mark, please let us know and we will do what we can to support you.

Doubling Up

Among the ideas put forward to support assessors, particularly on their first assessment, is to double up with a colleague. This has to happen on an 'I'll help you on yours, and you help me on mine' basis, since there is only one fee.

Where assessors decide to take this approach it is important that they avoid using the additional capacity to cover more ground. These early assessments should as far as possible model the process followed if there was only one assessor. The benefit of doubling up is to provide greater objectivity in the judgements made.

What happens now?

We are excited that Governor Mark can at last start rolling. At first it will be slow, but a momentum is building. One of our challenges is that assessors are spread across the country in patches, with some areas well served and others with no assessors nearby. Our goal is to spread the work out among you all, but some may need to travel a distance to achieve this. We also plan to issue a list of assessors to colleagues, carrying name, area and email address. **Please let us know if you do not wish to be included.**