

Bridge Schools Inspectorate

Newsletter for schools

Issue 3. Summer 2010.

Welcome to the summer 2010 newsletter for schools.

Welcome to the summer edition of the BSI newsletter for busy head teachers and schools.

As the academic year draws to a close we reflect on another eventful term. The result of the general election has inevitably set our thoughts towards potential changes within education and how these may affect our schools and inspection work. BSI will continue to keep up to date with these events and inform schools. In this edition we hope you will see that we are continuing to do this and that you find it helpful – please let us know!

Who's who?

Christopher Schenk has led BSI inspections since they first started in the autumn of 2008. In the dim and distant past, he was successively a primary teacher, a university lecturer in primary education and a primary head teacher. In 1985 he became an HMI and continued in that role until 2008, with a couple of secondments: on a Harkness Fellowship in the States in the early 90s; and to the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority at the time of the Dearing Review. As an HMI, he inspected a number of independent schools of various faiths including Jewish, Christian, Muslim and others. He also travelled the world inspecting service children's schools and European schools. His last day of full-time paid employment was a Friday in January 2008. The following Monday, much to everyone's surprise, BSI was given approval in principle by the Secretary of State, resolving any difficulties he may have had in filling in his time during retirement! When he is not working, he enjoys travelling, taking photographs and cooking. On the increasingly rare occasions when he is at home in term time, he goes to evening classes in Italian.



Watch this space!

The DfE (as the DCSF has now become) will be making changes to the regulations for independent schools by bringing out a new Statutory Instrument (SI), introducing regulations about leadership and management among other things. The Department had originally intended to publish the final version of the SI in May so that it could enter force in September 2010. However, the election has put back this timescale. The new ministers will be involved in approving the SI and since the coalition government has an agenda of deregulation, they will, no doubt, be keen to make simplifications. It is still possible that the new regulations will start in September; but it is also possible that the implementation date will be delayed. Whatever happens, there will be a period of a few months between the publication of the final version of the SI and the date from which schools will have to follow the new set of regulations. During that period, BSI will update our inspection instruments and our guidance to schools on completing the SIEF. BSI looked carefully at the draft changes when they were announced last autumn and commented fully on them during the consultation period. We expect that the regulations on leadership and management will be phrased in a general way that does not mandate particular forms of management in schools, but does require proprietors and school leaders to work together to ensure that all the other regulations are met.

BSI will keep schools informed as events unfold... so watch this space!

Let us know your thoughts...

As always – we would welcome news items and other suggestions from you. Your thoughts are just an email away – bsi@dsl.pipex.com

BSI's links with other organisations.

BSI was recently approached by an HMI, with responsibility within Ofsted for faith schools, who subsequently spent time in a CST school to gain a greater understanding of a Christian ethos and appreciate the thinking behind Christian curriculum. The aim is to repeat the process in a Muslim setting. More detailed guidance will then be given to Ofsted inspectors inspecting faith schools.

Guidance for the teaching and inspection of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

Following the Ofsted survey requested by the Secretary of State of SMSC in a selection of faith schools, a series of meetings were planned for practitioners and representatives of the independent inspectorates to formulate guidance for schools and inspectors. This was reported on in the BSI Spring Newsletter. This document produced is now available at the following address:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/reg-independent-schools/>

It is a detailed and useful document which may prove beneficial to you.

More detailed guidance will then be given to Ofsted inspectors inspecting faith schools.

BSI Team Inspectors' Update Training.

The update training will take place for all BSI team inspectors on Saturday, July 10th at 10am–4pm at Madani High School, Leicester. A light lunch will be provided.

Safeguarding update.

Many colleagues in BSI schools will have attended the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) Road Shows. These were held earlier in the year across the country to update practitioners in many public services, including schools, on the latest developments for staff checks (including CRB) and safer recruitment. The Department for Education (DCSF as was), the Home Office and ISA were represented. It was reported that the CRB has recently established a dedicated customer service to administer all the CRB and ISA enquiries and registrations (except ISA case work and barring decisions). To quote the speaker's PowerPoint slide 'ONE NUMBER, ONE ADDRESS, ONE E-MAIL'.

Here it is for your information:

Website: www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk

Telephone: 0870 90 90 811

Also a reminder:

www.crbeguide.co.uk

If you were unable to attend, it is worth visiting the ISA website on a regular basis to get the latest information. If you did attend, we are sure you will be sharing information with other colleagues in local schools and within your associations – CST or AMSUK. We are keeping alert to developments, in this and other areas of education policy that may relate to BSI schools, now there is a new government. BSI will seek to keep you informed.

Safeguarding:

www.isa.gov.org.uk

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/

socialcare/safeguarding

Access to List 99:

www.teacherspensions.co.uk

We trust that you will all have a well-earned summer break and we send greetings to AMSUK colleagues for Ramadan.

BSI administration. If your school contact details change please let us know immediately. Those expecting an inspection in 2010-11 should send their term dates to the BSI office if they have not already done so.