

Awards Update

We were delighted with the number of applications we have received for our Best Practice Awards 2011/12. Shortlisted candidates will be notified later this month and an announcement made via the IAA website.



With 2011 behind us, we wanted to thank the IAA schools who have recruited through Impact this year!

Together we have accomplished the following:

- 400 Children at Living Oracles School & Oasis of Love School in Uganda for whom daily lunches are provided.
- 60 Local Ugandan & Indian teachers participated in our training programmes.
- 26 Impact teachers have had the opportunity to travel to India or Uganda.
- 13 Local teachers completed their 2-year training and passed their exam.
- 12 Local schools in Uganda and India participated in our training programmes.
- 4 International Development Team trips – 2 to India, 2 to Uganda.

In addition we have also been able to complete the following projects:

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info@impactteachers.com
www.impactteachers.com



UGANDA-Teacher Training Programme.



INDIA-Purchase of generator and construction of generator room at Falka School in Bihar.



INDIA-Construction of classrooms with cement walls to withstand monsoon season.



UGANDA-Children from the MK Learning Centre that will benefit from the construction of new classrooms.



2012 ANNUAL CONFERENCE, AGM AND BEST PRACTICE AWARDS

I am delighted to confirm the details of our next National Conference & AGM at the Park Plaza Riverbank in Central London on 23rd & 24th February, entitled **Leading a self-improving system - the power of Academies.**

The content of the conference will be relevant to both primary and secondary colleagues. Confirmed keynote speakers include Lord Andrew Adonis, Sir Michael Wilshaw, Mick Waters, Brett Wigdortz and Conor Ryan. In addition, there will be a stimulating panel debate on how academies can combine independence and collaboration to improve the school system.

Delegates will have the opportunity to question presenters and offer their opinions and views, as well as share their experiences and network and learn from other academy professionals. There will be a range of topical workshops and exhibition viewing offered by a host of relevant high quality organisations involved in the academies movement. Details are available on our website www.iaa.uk.net, but if you would like to know more, please contact Rosemary on 0115 942 1238 or email iaa@djanogly.notts.sch.uk.

I look forward to seeing you there.

David Wootton - IAA Chair

IMPROVING THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP - 2011 REVIEW



Much has happened during the last year as we continue to grow and develop as an organisation.

We introduced our first 3 year Strategic Development Plan at the beginning of the year and have reviewed our membership rates reducing the base subscription rate, reflecting economies of scale. We also introduced new attractive rates for groups and chains of academies, smaller primary schools and academies committing to extended periods of membership. A new Board structure is now in place with subcommittees covering Policy, Curriculum, Partnership and Collaboration and Finance, Legal and Membership. We have also introduced a simple regional structure based on 3 areas: North, Midlands and South, which, when fully up and running, will allow for more interaction and networking with and between our members. The Board has also been slightly extended to ensure that it is representative of our broader membership.

During the summer our first Member Satisfaction Questionnaire posed questions relating to all main areas of our service and also invited general feedback. We were delighted with the overall positive results and will incorporate a number of the elements of your feedback into the way we work. We now plan to run the questionnaire on an annual basis so please make sure you have your say when we circulate it again in the summer term.

As part of our improved Member benefits package, we now offer a free day's consultancy for all new full paying members. To help resource this and indeed the potential wider school improvement needs of our members, we have also launched IAA Consulting (IAAC) offering value for money, quality assured consultancy support provided by either current or recently retired high calibre academy practitioners. Also in direct response to the needs of our members, another very tangible new member benefit is currently being developed in partnership with Nexus Associates. Together, under the name of Independent Academies Assured Services (IAAS), we are building up a brokerage service offering a quality assured, pre-tendered, value for money, technology enabled procurement service which will ultimately cover the full range of essential services required by schools.

Conferences and events continue to be a big area of growth for us with numbers of delegates growing all the time. Our conference in February was highly successful, but as the Royal Horse Guards Hotel can no longer accommodate our numbers, we have moved this year's conference to a new venue, The Park Plaza Riverbank. We continue to try to devise interesting programmes with high quality speakers, provocative debate and useful workshops showcasing best practice to complement the first class networking opportunities that we know our members value greatly. The IAA Strategy Day, held in June, offered the opportunity for members and the Board to meet and discuss our strategic direction and to inform our lobbying agenda. This event is restricted to members only and is provided free of charge. Lobbying continues to be central to the work that we do throughout the year both at our regular termly meetings with ministers and senior civil servants and in our ongoing communication with key personnel at the DfE and our active involvement in a wide range of consultations and representation on various key educational bodies.

Partnership working is also absolutely key to the way we work and we seek to continue to build on new and existing strategic and commercial partnerships to the benefit of the Association and the wider academy movement. We have grown significantly over this last year and have further ambitious growth plans to become the automatic membership organisation of choice for a significant majority of Academies and other state funded independent schools. We remain totally committed to strengthening 'the voice of academies' and building a strong movement around our shared moral purpose. We would like to take the opportunity to wish all our members and our partners a very happy New Year and we look forward to continuing to working together to make a real difference to the lives of the children and the families of the communities we serve.

Caroline Whitty - IAA Executive Director

We have refreshed our marketing to ensure a consistent message across all our communications and have improved our website. We have also introduced a new style email newsletter, distributed 6 times a year, including a regular feature from Conor Ryan, (independent education writer and consultant). We also email a weekly bulletin featuring local and national academy related news.

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Contact us

If you would like to contribute to future newsletters, please contact the Executive Office.

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IAAC SWINGS INTO ACTION

Following its launch at the October Conference, Independent Academies Association Consultancy (IAAC) has successfully just undertaken its first consultancy role.

Kerry Inscker, who is the Principal of South Wolverhampton and Bilston Academy, and who was involved in this pilot, commented:

"Thank you for the excellent work you have undertaken with us over the last two days. It can only help us in securing a positive outcome in our Ofsted inspection. I appreciate your very focused comments and suggestions and the extremely professional way in which you have conducted the whole experience."

To make sure IAAC goes on to be a huge success, we need to continue to grow the number and range of consultants available to it to cover the many requests which we anticipate both at leadership and subject levels.

We are therefore looking for future consultants who fall into the following categories:

- Senior leaders (Principals, Vice Principals and Assistant Vice Principals) who have or are about to retire;
- Current senior leaders who have the time and capacity to offer their services to other academies;
- Subject leaders with a strong track record of success in leading their areas.

All of the above should preferably have consultancy or training experience.

With the significant increase in the number of academies, the best form of support will be found in those who have experience of working in and leading academies. This would be an ideal opportunity for colleagues to give something back to the academy movement to sustain its current rate of success.

In addition to those above, if you feel you have any specific expertise e.g., special educational needs, pastoral support, behaviour management etc. in your academy we would be very pleased to hear from you.

Further information about the application process and remuneration will be sent on request.

Finally, if you know of anyone you would like to recommend this information to, please let us know via iaaconsultancy@dandtassociatesitdeducationalsolutions.com

David Daniels, Christine Tinkler
D and T Associates Ltd on behalf of IAAC



Christmas Card Competition

Many thanks to our academy students for their entries for last year's Christmas card design. We had a wonderful mix of both traditional and modern, well-designed and colourful entries.

Congratulations to Myles Rogers at CTC Kingshurst Academy for his winning design, and to Andreea Voinea and Sophie Wilson of Cottingham High School for winning 2nd and 3rd places. You can find a montage of the entries on the home page of our website www.iaa.uk.net

We would also like to thank our valued partner PS Financials for their generous sponsorship of the cards. We intend to run the competition again next year really look forward to receiving your entries.



Myles Rogers
CTC Kingshurst Academy



Andreea Voinea
Cottingham High School



Sophie Wilson
Cottingham High School

Sponsored by:



EXCITING DEVELOPMENTS BY IAA New Services For Academies

The IAA set out at the October Conference its creation of a set of quality assured services brokered from the best industry and fellow members can offer to our members. This is to cover all that academies procure, including HR, legal, payroll, school improvement, FM and insurance.

The pilot phase of the IAA's Brokerage IAAS is now well underway and four pilot projects have been commissioned by IAA members spanning 10 service functions. They are using the Brokerage to get the best services for their academies whilst helping the IAA shape the working processes of the Brokerage, with our strategic partner Nexus Associates. 30 commercial providers and 14 academies have expressed interest in supplying quality assured services to our members through the Brokerage and 52 academies have so far demonstrated interest in using the service.

Members of the IAA Executive and Nexus Directors have briefed DfE policy and procurement officials about the initiative and this development was warmly received by the Academies Division.

We are very keen to hear from you if you are planning a procurement exercise this Spring that you would like support with in order to help you achieve best value and to provide case studies for this strategic initiative. We will provide you with independent, high quality advice and project support to aid your decision-making so that you are able to achieve your purchasing goals.

Natalie Dalvarez, Business Manager of one of the academies involved in the pilot commented:

"We recently commissioned IAAS to do such an exercise here at the Hammond Academy to ensure that our newly converted Academy is getting the best deal in several strategic areas. As a new member of the IAA, we are excited that we have joined a community of academies keen to help each other."

We will be sharing news from the pilots at the February conference with interim findings.

Philip O'Hear
IAA and IAAS Board Member

CONOR'S COMMENTARY

Conor Ryan is an independent education writer and consultant, contributing to national media and providing strategic and communications advice to education organisations including IAA. He has written and edited several books and pamphlets on education. He is a former senior education adviser to Tony Blair and David Blunkett. He also blogs regularly on education issues at www.conorryan.blogspot.com.



GOVE GOES HIGH-TECH

There was amazement in Birmingham in December when Education Secretary, Michael Gove, spoke in praise of technology. Gove told the Schools Network that we were wrong to assume "that we care more about Tennyson than technology."

Instead, he was committed to ensuring that schools prepare children for the changing world, while "embracing the technological advances which are transforming education." And his enthusiasm continued at the BETT technology fest early this year, where he detailed plans to free up the ICT curriculum to allow more computer programming.

Gove rightly identified that investment had been greater in hardware than content, though it is worth recalling just how limited any such investment was before 1997. Of course, with cloud technology, tablets and smartphones, much hardware can quickly seem obsolete. That doesn't mean schools and academies won't need to invest in kit as well as content. The danger is that what schools have becomes outdated if they feel that they can't afford to modernise.

Yet, content development presents real opportunities for innovators. Shireland Academy has won praise and contracts for its pioneering portal. Gove cited the California-based Khan Academy with its 2,700 micro-tutorials on the web. The wealth of resources to support teaching and learning is growing rapidly, and there is room for so much more.

Even more remarkably, perhaps, Gove embraced the potential of gaming technology, praising games developed at Oxford University to help engage students with complex Maths problems. Hence his backing calls by the industry for more computer science.

But two big issues must be addressed if Gove's conversion is to be more than mere words. The first is a big change in expectations from ICT teaching. An Ofsted report on ICT teaching in December suggested that the subject was only taught well in half of secondary schools, and there was often too little opportunity to develop concepts such as control technology or data handling.

Many would argue that technology needs to become a seamless part of the teaching and learning experience, whatever the subject. While there are still too many teachers who are wary of the technology, or see it as gimmicky, attitudes are shifting all the time.

And Gove is right to see the case for more advanced skills, which is where the demands from ICT industries, including the £2bn a year videogames sector, come into play. They have had a sympathetic ear from Culture and Education ministers for their call in Nesta's Next Gen report for GCSE Computer Science and a greater emphasis on programming rather than more basic office skills in what students learn.

And there's the rub for Gove. The Education Secretary has not responded to their idea that Computer Science should be accorded the status of EBacc subjects. And by elevating Ancient Hebrew and Geography above other subjects through the English Baccalaureate, he has left little room to credit Technology or Engineering, let alone Computer Science. Moreover, will freeing schools to teach IT as they choose really mean this happens in schools that have previously taught the subject poorly, especially where other subjects are seen to be valued more?

Ministers know the power of such accountability measures. They have been quick to highlight increased take-up in EBacc subjects, including languages. Yet they have been slow to hear the calls from many of their natural allies – including Lord Baker, who is advancing his university technical colleges – for a Tech Bac of equal value to the EBacc in the league tables.

If Gove's Damascus moment is to matter, he must reward as well as encourage technological excellence in all schools and academies.

**Read more: Gove's speech - <http://bit.ly/rqoBLo>
Next Gen - <http://bit.ly/t5j8YB>
Ofsted report - <http://bit.ly/vjrsyG>**

The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the IAA and its directors.

NEW IAA BOARD APPOINTMENT



We are pleased to welcome **Dr Sue Affard** to the Board of Directors of the IAA. Sue is Headteacher of Lark Rise Academy in Dunstable, one of the first outstanding Primary schools to convert in October 2010. Sue is passionate about the moral purpose of education being community-based and a strong collaboration of the voices of the children, parents and the staff. Research-based practices transform the way ideas are formed and shaped in the school with listening and talk highly valued.

Sue has taught for 35 years in special and primary schools across greater London and Shire Counties. Prior to joining Lark Rise she held a post for three years as Deputy Headteacher in a Buckinghamshire First School in which parent led aspirations were framed by success in the eleven plus. This year Sue is due to take up a new role as Principal of Hatfield Community Free School which will open in September 2012.