

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS & EDUCATION

COUNCILLOR TONY HUMPHRYS PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING

DIRECTOR:

LISA BIBBY

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THE BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN 8TH SCHOOLS CELEBRATION OF DANCE 2013

The Celebration of Dance 2013 took place on Wednesday 13th and Thursday 14th March at the King George's Hall, Blackburn. The two evenings saw over 1,000 children and young people from 50 schools across Blackburn with Darwen performing on the stage.

This year's performances were based on Children's Literature (coinciding with World Book Day) with all schools interpreting the theme in their own unique way. The standard of dances improved once again along with the costumes and props used by the pupils. It was an amazing two nights of fun, entertainment and sheer joy!

Quote from a head teacher - *'It was a fantastic evening – the children loved it – I told one of them he was a superstar dancer today – he turned and said, "yes I know I am"! – and that's from a timid SEN pupil. Fantastic confidence'*

DARWEN VALE HIGH SCHOOL & ST SILAS CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Darwen Vale High School and St Silas CE Primary School were both entered for a Civic Trust Award earlier this year. The Civic Trust Awards were established in 1959 to recognise the very best in architecture, design, planning, landscape and public art. Awards are given to projects of the highest quality design, but only if they are judged to have made a positive cultural, social or economic contribution to the local community.

Both schools received a 'Commendation' which is given to projects that make a significant contribution to the quality and appearance of the built environment. Commendation level schemes demonstrate a good standard of architecture or design, sustainability, inclusive design and provide a positive social, cultural, environmental or economic benefit to the local community.

The awards were presented at a ceremony in Cardiff on the 9th March 2013.

PARTNERSHIPS AWARDS

Blackburn with Darwen and Bolton BSF team has been shortlisted for the Best Local Government Project Team at the Partnerships awards. These awards are a celebration of industry best practice and recognise outstanding achievements in private public partnerships, not just nationally but internationally.

Darwen Vale High School has also been shortlisted for the Best Designed Project. The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony in London on 23rd May 2013.

GOVERNORS CONFERENCE - 16 MARCH 2013

Approximately 120 governors joined a small group of Local Authority officers at this year's Governors' Conference at Darwen Vale High School Engineering College and Extended School. The theme of the Conference was 'Governance in Changing Times' and the keynote speaker was Professor Mick Waters. Other speakers at the event were Councillor Mike Johnson, Lead Member for Schools and Education, Councillor Tony Humphrys, Executive Member for Schools and Education and Lisa Bibby, Director, Schools and Education.

The Conference began with a welcome session from 5 students from Darwen Vale who talked of their experiences in education, their aspirations for the future and what was important to them growing up being educated in the Borough. Their key message was that they have excellent facilities, hardworking teachers willing to go the extra mile for them and wonderful opportunities. Their challenge to governors was to think about how all of this could be made available to all young people in the Borough and the importance of young people being heard and having a voice.

Professor Waters gave a very interesting and powerful keynote address about the changing role of governors, the fragmented nature of the system, and the increasing challenges of being a governor. He touched on the proposed new curriculum, Ofsted inspection and how teachers can bring alive learning for young people. His delivery was engaging and fast paced punctuated by time for reflection and discussion. Feedback from the evaluation sheets commented on his inspirational style and delivery.

The Conference was chaired by Don Heatlie-Jackson, Chair at Darwen Vale and Vice Chair of the Governors' Forum who along with the Headteacher, Fiona Jack gave interested governors a tour of the new school building.

INCLUSION QUALITY MARK

Shadsworth Juniors has been awarded the Inclusion Quality Mark. The summary report from IQM (the awarding body) said of the school "Shadsworth Junior School is a fully inclusive school. The school is in an area of very high deprivation. A high percentage live in very difficult circumstances, many experiencing poverty, physical and emotional abuse and/or crime on a daily basis. This is a school where every child does matter and is made to feel special. Although the school community faces many difficulties there is an excellent ethos running throughout the school. Nothing is too much trouble for the staff, as they do not see challenges or problems but barriers to learning which must be overcome".

The school joins St Matthew's CE and Brunel Nursery and St Thomas's PRU who have already received the award.

TRADED SERVICES UPDATE

Work has been ongoing over recent months to review the Council's traded services offer to schools. From the 1st April a dedicated Traded Services function will be established within the Schools and Education Department that will support and coordinate the council's traded services offer to schools. The traded services function will act as 'client' for our schools providing a central point of contact that will receive and coordinate requests for services. Our new look Traded Services function will be launched with schools in June to coincide with the 2nd edition of our Traded Services brochure and a traded services web based system that will enable schools to purchase services on-line.