

### ***From Anne Whiteley***

I hope you all managed to enjoy a restful half-term holiday despite the absence of very much decent weather and are returning refreshed for the final weeks of this academic year.

Our thoughts have naturally been dominated by the failed bomb attack on Exeter just before we broke up. I found it particularly ironic that only days before this event I was enjoying the inspirational stories of some of the 13 students who are our first Youth Cultural Champions.

The 13 students from St James School in Exeter and Coombeshead College in Newton Abbot are from years 7, 8 and 9 and come from diverse backgrounds including the Turkish, Pakistani, Polish, Ukrainian, Malaysian, British Chinese and British Indian communities.

They are acting as Cultural Champions with students from their own colleges and primary schools across the county to raise awareness of their home countries and cultures. I was very moved by some of their stories and delighted to recognise their considerable contribution to improving understanding of our multi-cultural world. The project was devised by our EAL service and we intend to expand it across the county. While I am on the subject of the Exeter bomb, I would reiterate what I said in my note to you all the day after. If you need any advice or support please contact Ray Beale in the first instance on 01392 382860.

On a happier note I would like to say congratulations and good luck to the 13 finalists that Devon has in this year's South West teaching Awards.

Jan Baker from Orchard Vale in Barnstaple and Holly Torvell from St Giles on the Heath are both competing for the Primary Headteacher of the Year while Steve Maddern from West Exe Technology College in Exeter is a finalist on the Secondary Head of the Year. Lee Knight, also from West Exe, is in the Outstanding New Teacher category.

Hilary Green, the head of Southbrook School in Exeter is a finalist in the Lifetime Achievement category, while Olly White from Kentisbeare and Karen Schulz from Clyst Hydon are both in the running for the Primary Teacher of the Year.

We have three finalists in the Teaching Assistant of the Year category. They are Jenny Downing from Bowhill Primary in Exeter, Sarah Felgate from Orchard Vale and Tina Casson from Feniton Primary.

Two of our primary schools, West Hill and Kentisbeare, are competing for the Sustainable School of the Year while Paul Adams from Okehampton Community College is in line for the Governor of the Year.

Devon has more than a third of the finalists from all over the South West and their contribution to education will be celebrated at the award ceremony in Torbay on June 25. The winners will go on to the national finals in London in October.

Our new Children and Young People's Plan, to which many of you contributed, was officially launched last month in children's centres in Exeter and Ilfracombe and at the Manor Primary in Ivybridge with the kind hospitality of Ian Hemelik. This is our strategic plan for the next three years and it has already been commended by the Government Office South West.

Finally it's the time of year for political change in the county council. John Smith remains the lead councillor for CYPS, supported by Nick Way and Brenda Taylor, with Vanessa Newcombe as youth champion.



### ***Charter Mark success for DES***

Devon Education Services have successfully completed their annual health check for Charter Mark. This means DES now have both Charter Mark and Investors in People Standard.

The assessors said DES place the customer at the heart of what they do with both customers and partners citing improvements over the past year and highlighting a listening, professional and proactive service.

Contact Roger Fetherston on [roger.fetherston@devon.gov.uk](mailto:roger.fetherston@devon.gov.uk)

### ***On-line success for Admissions***

Devon has the highest number of new secondary school students in the South West this year, according to figures released by the DCSF.

This year 8,011 students will join our secondary schools. And the Government has also confirmed that Devon has one of the highest rates of parents using the internet to apply for a secondary school place in the country – almost 70 per cent. For the third year running we are also set to remain at 100 per cent of our children in care getting their first preference for the school of their choice.

Contact Karen Howes on [karen.howes@devon.gov.uk](mailto:karen.howes@devon.gov.uk)

### ***New primary for Sherford***

The developers Red Tree have been selected as promoters of the first new primary school for the Sherford new community near Plymouth. This was the first new school in Devon to be subject to competition. The school will have places for 420 pupils with a 30 place nursery and be built in the first phase of the development.

Contact Christine Mc Neil on [christine.mcneil@devon.gov.uk](mailto:christine.mcneil@devon.gov.uk)

### ***School dinners features on new Devon TV***

St Peter's Church of England Primary in Budleigh Salterton features on the pilot for a new web-based video bulletin, My Devon TV. This aims to offer a direct line of communication between the county council and the community. The first edition celebrates local food and the importance of buying local and looks behind the scenes at how school meals are produced.

The video-bulletin can be viewed at [www.mydevon.tv](http://www.mydevon.tv)

### ***Finance Policy***

The updated Finance Policy has been issued and can be found at [http://www.devon.gov.uk/finance\\_policies.htm](http://www.devon.gov.uk/finance_policies.htm). There is a covering letter, an exemplar and a version in word that can be customised to the circumstances of your school. There's a requirement to review school finance policy annually to meet the Financial Management Standard in School. If you need support in reviewing your policy, you may find it helpful to discuss this with your Finance Officer.