



# CHECKPOINT

*Issue 1*

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## **A Newsletter for Staff on the 14 – 19 Learning/Specialist Environment**

### **Foreword:**

CHECKPOINT will be a twice yearly newsletter to inform staff of school, local, county, national and international developments in the 14-19 sector.

### **THE NATIONAL PICTURE**

THERE are eight GCSE titles covering a range of subject areas based on the seven Part One GNVQ subjects (plus Applied Science):-

Applied Art and Design  
Applied Business  
Applied ICT

Applied Science  
Engineering  
Health & Social Care

Leisure & Tourism  
Manufacturing

THE purpose of these GCSE's is broadly to increase students understanding of the world of work and their capabilities to acquire and use skills for working in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and independent learning.

THE government is phasing out the term “vocational” and these examinations are to be called specialist.

THE new GCSE's are designed to allow schools to explore flexible deliveries with other providers.

NEW titles will be added to the list such as Construction.

### **SETTING THE SCENE AT DOWDALES**

THE school has a long and distinguished history in this context. Did you know, for instance, that:-

- Ian Booth, with the support of colleagues, has “blazed the trail” for years and secured many initiatives for Dowdales.
- Gary Howarth pioneered work in this field through BTEC courses.
- We have piloted GNVQ's in Manufacturing, Leisure & Tourism, and ICT and we have received financial assistance to do so from the Furness Vocational Support Group.
- We are now piloting an Applied GCSE in Engineering working flexibly with Furness College.

- We have Science and Engineering Ambassadors in Technology with BAE and Chris Bamber, a former pupil, is receiving a work placement in ICT.
- We are an enthusiastic partner in CBEC (the Cumbria Business Education Consortium).
- Dowdales has been actively involved in Young Enterprise for years.
- The present 14-19 working group consists of Denis Fay, Ian Booth, Rob Matheson and Matt Hardwick.

## PERFORMING ARTS

WE are linking Art into Vocational opportunities through:

- ❖ Year 9 Entrepreneurial Conferences – in partnership with Cumbria Business Education Consortium and Furness Enterprise.
- ❖ A vocational Art Fair scheduled for Autumn 2006.
- ❖ A Year 6 entrepreneurial conference for Autumn 2006.
- ❖ A project with Asdan and the N.W. Arts College Learning Network linking Art activities into the wider key skills.

## SNIPPETS

- We have three Year 11's on a Schools Link course at Furness College involved in construction and engineering.
- One Year 11 student attends Barrow 6<sup>th</sup> Form College on a full time basis taking four GCSE's and the college are pleased with his progress.
- Two Year 11 students have regular work placements in the local community.
- One Year 10 student attends Pitstop for one day a week doing car maintenance.
- One Year 10 student attends Community Action Furness doing reception and catering studies. Hopefully she is soon to start at Barrow 6<sup>th</sup> Form.
- Twelve Year 10's will be attending Jaguar Car's Gifted and Talented Centre with Owen Belsey. This has been sponsored by PV Dobson's Garage.
- Frank Southall and John Richardson have recently visited British Gas to explore links (this was arranged through CBEC).
- We are in early discussion with the Construction Industry Training Board and Rathbone about Dowdales piloting the Construction Applied GCSE in September 2004.
- We are now exploring the possibility of starting Media GCSE in September 2004 by working flexibly with the 6<sup>th</sup> Form College.
- We have a Year 11 pilot group involved in a Careers' Planning Qualification this year and the whole of Year 10 are involved for qualification in the summer of 2004. This will be the equivalent of two GCSE's by 2006 we hope.

## FINAL WORD

A vibrant 14-19 approach is vital to maintaining the allegiance of our older students who might very well benefit from the approaches and flexibility of

the new environments. We see this as a vibrant area resonant with possibilities and open to all!