



Subject: SCHOOLS NorthEast Weekly Update - Week 1

19 OCTOBER 2012	ST JAMES' PARK, NEWCASTLE
<p>MAIN SPONSOR:</p>  <p>Don't miss out - book your place today by emailing: summit@schoolsnortheast.com</p>	<p>The SCHOOLS NorthEast Summit 2012 is fast approaching. With high profile keynote contributions, panel debates and workshop sessions, this year's Summit is set to be our biggest and best yet!</p> <p>Click here to view the full list of speakers, including Lord Adonis, and book your place today!</p> 

Welcome back! This is the first edition of the SCHOOLS NorthEast Weekly Update for the new academic year. Our update goes out to every Head Teacher in the North East weekly, but if anybody else in your school or LA would like to receive the Update, please send their name and email address to r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com

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Focus on...the year ahead

So the Cabinet reshuffle is done and dusted and the news is that there will be no change at the top of the DfE. Gove stays, meaning that this year is likely to be another rollercoaster of change, challenges and reform.

So what can North East schools expect in 2012/ 13?

While we were all trying to enjoy the dying minutes of the summer holidays a raft of changes came into force on 1 September.

Most significantly for those due a visit from Ofsted will be the changes to the inspection framework. From now on there will be no such thing as 'satisfactory'. 'Satisfactory' is now 'requires improvement' and 'notice to improve' changes to 'serious weaknesses'. To be 'outstanding' then teaching must be judged to be 'outstanding' and no teaching in the school can be judged to be less than 'good'.

The new performance management regulations that apply to "teachers in all maintained schools and unattached teachers employed by a local authority" are now in force (these do not apply in academies, free schools and other independent schools, or to support staff); as are the new standards for teachers that replace the previous standards for qualified teacher status (QTS) and the core professional standards and the new regulations and guidance for newly qualified teacher (NQT) induction.

The issue of teacher qualifications and standards was a hot topic of discussion over the summer with Gove's announcement that academies will be allowed to permanently employ teachers who have not gained QTS. From November 2012, the funding agreements for all new academies will state that academies can employ teaching staff who they believe to be suitably qualified, without the requirement for them to have formal QTS. Existing academies can request that their funding agreements be changed in the same way. Special educational needs (SEN) coordinators and designated teachers for looked after children will still be required to have QTS. All teachers in special academies will also require QTS.

From 1 September, schools were no longer required to produce prospectuses, but maintained schools, academies, and free schools will now be required to publish the following key information online:

- Pupil premium allocation, use and impact on attainment – there will be a dedicated session on this subject at the SCHOOLS NorthEast Summit 2012
- Curriculum provision, content and approach, by year and by subject
- Admission arrangements
- The school's policy in relation to behaviour, charging, and special educational needs (SEN) and disability provision
- Links to Ofsted reports and to the Department for Education's (DfE) achievement and attainment performance data

Throughout this summer's controversy regarding GCSE's, Secretary of State Michael Gove made it clear that he did not think the qualification was 'fit for purpose'. Plans for a major overhaul of exams at 16 are expected later this term but from September 2012, for pupils starting two-year GCSE courses, all external exams will have to be done at the end of the course.

The autumn will also bring further news as to changes to the national curriculum with details of the secondary national curriculum, which reportedly will be "stripped down... with 'extreme freedom' for teachers", and a full consultation on the draft primary curriculum.

Changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) have already been introduced and will be implemented from 1 September. The new framework aims to simplify learning and development requirements and reduce bureaucracy for professionals.

In mid-December, the performance tables will be published and will include a number of new measures and statistics – a full breakdown of what will be included is available here: [School and college performance tables: statement of intent – 2012, DfE \(Adobe pdf file\)](#)

Later in the autumn, the evaluation of the 20 local pathfinders piloting the Government's new approach to the assessment and provision for SEND will be published to inform the legislative changes to be included in the Children's and Families Bill expected to be introduced in early 2013.

Undoubtedly the number of academies in the region will continue to rise both as a result of those schools that choose to convert and those who are instructed to convert by the DfE. Following this summer's exams, schools that have not met floor targets will be nervously awaiting 'the call'.

Academy Chains will also become an increasing feature of the North East education landscape both those locally-grown and national chains expanding into the region.

So far, the number of primary schools that have converted in the region is still relatively small and it will be interesting to see whether 2012/ 13 is the year that the number of Primary academies in the North East begins to snowball.

2012/ 13 will see new collaborative groupings amongst our schools and innovative relationships emerging – trusts, federations and partnerships working cross phase, cross sector and across local authority boundaries.

With the first free schools now open in the region, more applications will come forward over the next year and those that are already in development will continue to try to recruit students. Examples of more schools coming together to create free schools to meet specific local needs are also likely to emerge.

Having now had a little time to get established, Teaching Schools will have a greater influence and role within the school system in 2012/ 13 and will take on new responsibilities and areas of training, CPD and school to school support.

If the current pace of change is maintained, the key message for North East schools must be: **expect the unexpected!**

SCHOOLS NorthEast will be reporting on, offering support and facilitating collaborative approaches to these issues and all the others that will arise in the coming year. Get involved to stay ahead of the game and join us at the **SCHOOLS NorthEast Summit 2012 on 19 October** to get the heads up on what's coming next...

In Parliament

Parliament returned from its summer holiday on Monday and Gove was straight up to the Dispatch Box for Education Questions. Yet again, many North East MPs participated in the session.

Unsurprisingly, the controversy regarding this summer's GCSE English results dominated the discussions.

Phil Wilson, MP for Sedgefield, used an Olympic analogy to make clear his views on the issue:

"If, when Mo Farah had run the 10,000 metre final in the Olympics, he had been told he had to run a further 10,000 metres before he could claim that he had won the gold medal, he would say that that was wrong, so why is it right to change the way GCSE exam results are marked halfway through the academic year, which is what happened this year?"

Hartlepool MP, Iain Wright, asked the Education Secretary what work he was doing to ensure that pupils are not disadvantaged in taking up college or apprenticeship places and questioned the fairness of the process:

"How on earth can it be fair that pupils in Dyke House and High Tunstall, in my constituency, as well as those in other constituencies, could obtain the same mark in the same subject from the same examining body in the same year and yet get different grades? What urgent work is the Secretary of State doing to ensure that pupils affected are not disadvantaged and that they will be able to take up the college place or apprenticeship course of their choice?"

And **Jenny Chapman, MP for Darlington**, also questioned the fairness of the situation by highlighting the impact on St Aiden's Academy in her constituency:

"In Darlington, 50 young people at St Aidan's academy should have got a C this year but got a D. That is not a one-off case; there are schools like it up and down the country. The Secretary of State has said that he is sad about this matter. Does he think that it is fair?"

The Secretary of State responded to the GCSE questions by stating the issues were the responsibility of the exam boards and the independent regulator Ofqual, not the Secretary of State and encouraged "all MPs who believe that there are specific cases that defy logic in schools of which they are aware to bring them to Ofqual's attention". In addition, he restated his view that the qualification was not 'fit for purpose'.

On other issues...

Alex Cunningham, Stockton North MP, called on the DfE to reopen the consultation on the future of child care which ran over the school holidays, as he was concerned that there was not adequate opportunity for parents to make their views heard:

“Given the importance of this issue, will the Minister reopen the consultation for at least another six weeks? If not, is that because she and her colleagues have already decided what they are going to announce during conference?”

Minister Sarah Teather said that she would make sure any views passed on to him by his constituents were still taken into account.

Also on the issue of childcare, **Sharon Hodgson, MP for Washington and Sunderland West**, challenged Ministers on the provision of holiday child care for children with SEND.

“As the Minister said, she has today published the draft legislation on the provision for children with special educational needs and disability, so how does she intend to address the shocking fact that 87% of local authorities reported that they do not have enough holiday child care for children with SEND?”

Teather agreed that there was an issue to address and confirmed that a newly launched commission into the affordability of child care would be looking into the problem.

MP for Newcastle upon Tyne Central, Chi Onwurah, quizzed Gove on measures to prevent the sale of academy school sports playing fields and then attacked the Secretary of State on a his approach:

“The Secretary of State made sure that academies were accountable only to himself and then decided that all state schools should become academies. But he gets his figures wrong on playing fields, overrules his own advisers, exempts academies from most of his own policies and, in any case, focuses all his time and his Department’s money on free schools. How can we have confidence in him on sport or anything else?”

Following a meeting with Michael Gove regarding cadet forces in schools, Newcastle East MP, Nick Brown, asked the Secretary of State to address the problem of how the BTEC in Uniformed Public services counts towards league table performance. .

Gove commended Nick Brown for raising the issue:

“I am grateful to the right Hon. Gentleman. He has raised the case of the academy in Wallsend* in his constituency brilliantly. My officials are looking at what we can do to build on that school’s successes.”

*Just for accuracy the school in question is Walker Technology College (which is not an academy and is not in Wallsend!).

You can read the full Hansard report [here](#)

Local news story of the week

King’s School in Tynemouth to become academy and merge with Priory Primary School

A private school in North Tyneside founded more than 150 years ago is to merge with its neighbouring state primary school to form a state-funded independent academy. The collaboration between The King’s School in Tynemouth and Priory Primary will be the first of its kind in the UK and means the school will no longer charge fees (currently £3,330 a term).

The Department for Education has endorsed plans for the two to re-open as the Kings Priory School in September 2013. [Click here to read more.](#)

Local news by area

Darlington

- [Art has capital gain](#) (Northern Echo)

Durham

- [Debate on new £40m Consett Academy goes on](#) (Journal)
- [Fire delays new term at Newton Aycliffe school](#) (Northern Echo)

Gateshead

- [Gateshead MP demands probe into GCSE grade changes](#) (Journal)
- [Birtley Head Teacher makes vow after exam grade changes](#) (Journal)
- [North East Head Teacher warns of GCSE exam threat](#) (Chronicle Live)

Hartlepool

- [School closure reminder](#) (Hartlepool Mail)
- [Repairs delay new term for school](#) (Northern Echo)

Middlesbrough

- [Time to celebrate as Teesside GCSE results roll in](#) (Gazette Live)

Newcastle

- [GCSE delight for Gosforth brother, 10, and sister, 8](#) (Chronicle Live)
- [Evdokia shines in GCSEs only five years after arriving from Russia](#) (News Guardian)

North Tyneside

- [Pupils get a lesson in the 'booze factor'](#) (News Guardian)
- [Star pupils help their schools hit new highs in GCSEs](#) (News Guardian)
- [Success at the double in GCSEs for St Thomas More pupils](#) (News Guardian)

Northumberland

- [North Northumberland school closed this week](#) (Northumberland Gazette)
- [Students spared re-mark heartache](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Tynedale GCSE students are reaching for the stars](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Record results put students on course for university](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Increase in Northumberland's GCSE performance](#) (Morpeth Herald)
- [Star pupils take GCSE pass rates to record highs](#) (News Post Leader)
- [Holly makes the grade](#) (News Post Leader)
- [Cramlington students Nicola and Nithya celebrate success](#) (News Post Leader)
- [Liam proud of results](#) (News Post Leader)
- [High school students shine with GCSE results](#) (News Post Leader)
- [Students are pass masters](#) (News Post Leader)
- [Caitlin over the moon](#) (News Post Leader)

- [Youngsters celebrate successful GCSE results](#) (News Post Leader)

Redcar

- [Marske student's GCSE success - seven years late](#) (Gazette Live)

South Tyneside

- [Schools revamp adds up to £170m](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Pupils offered chance to see free film](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Bede spirit inspires teacher training](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Harton students notch a 100% pass rate](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Academy gets go-ahead for sixth form](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Dawning of new era as school welcomes post-16 students](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Politicians praise exam achievements](#) (Shields Gazette)

Sunderland

- [Children's charity plans to expand activity programme](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Sunderland children try out their new school](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Modest pupil bags 12 A* grades](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [New sixth form college in Peterlee welcomes first students](#) (Northern Echo)

Regional

- [New North-East free schools announced](#) (Northern Echo)
- [Exam board accused of moving the goalposts](#) (Northern Echo)

Top national education news

The Cabinet reshuffle

No change at the top at the Department of Education with Michael Gove staying as Education Secretary. There has been change to Gove's Ministerial team with Liberal Democrat David Laws joining as a Minister of State (he will also be a Minister of State in the Cabinet Office). Elizabeth Truss and Matthew Hancock have also joined the department as Parliamentary Under Secretaries.

The row over GCSE grades continues

Unsurprisingly the news over the summer was dominated by the row over GCSE English grades. On Friday, exam regulator Ofqual announced that exam boards will not be required to regrade this summer's GCSEs in English. Despite admitting pupils have been treated unfairly, Education Secretary Michael Gove has refused to intervene. Speaking to MPs yesterday at the Dispatch Box for Education Questions, Gove stated that the issues were the responsibility of the exam boards and the independent regulator Ofqual, not the Secretary of State.

Also commenting on Ofqual's decision, Sir Michael Wilshaw, Chief Inspector of Schools, believes GCSE exams should be "thoroughly overhauled," and that the row was a "really good opportunity" to examine whether examinations were "rigorous enough".

However, the row looks far from over with unions threatening legal action. The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) says it may take legal action against exam boards over the grading reforms. This morning the Education Select Committee has announced that it will be launching an enquiry into the management of this summer's GCSEs.

- [GCSEs should be overhauled, Ofsted's Sir Michael Wilshaw says](#) (BBC News)
- [Gove admits GCSE pupils treated unfairly in grades row](#) (BBC News)
- [NAHT union on GCSEs: 'You can't change the goalposts'](#) (BBC News)
- [Ofqual To 'Look Closely' At GCSE Grades](#) (Sky News)
- [GCSE grade changes may face legal challenge](#) (BBC News)

Controversy surrounds Free Schools

Yesterday, the Government announced that fifty-five new free schools will be opening this autumn, tripling the current number. Out of the 55 only 11 are in the North, and in the North East the first free schools, Grindon Hall Free School in Sunderland and Cramlington Village Primary, in Northumberland will open their doors.

Much of the news regarding Free Schools has focussed on those that have failed to open. In Bradford more than £200,000 had been invested in setting up the free school 'One in a Million' but just days before the start of term funding was withdrawn because the school had failed to attract enough pupils.

Meanwhile, teaching unions in Merseyside are threatening legal action over the future of dozens of teachers whose contracts were terminated when the Hawthornes Free School replaced two local authority schools. When the new school opened its doors yesterday morning up to 100 teachers had not heard whether they had jobs there.

- [Free school numbers to rise by 55, government reveals](#) (BBC News)
- [Hawthorne's Free School: Teachers plan High Court action](#) (BBC News)
- [Free schools are a disaster](#) (Guardian Blogs)
- [English GCSEs will not be regraded, says Ofqual](#) (BBC News)

Recruitment crisis looms in core subjects

A recruitment crisis could hit schools because of a fall in the number of graduates applying for teacher training places, according to a report commissioned by the Pearson Think Tank. The report warns that ministers are presiding over an impending teacher shortage in the core subjects of English, Maths and Science. Other subjects - including Geography, Art and Economics - are also in danger of having insufficient numbers of new teachers, the report warns.

- [Recruitment crisis looms in core subjects](#) (TES)

Government announces hundreds of new teacher scholarships

Over the summer the Government made an announcement regarding hundreds of new teacher scholarships. The second year of the £2 million National Scholarship Fund will see the Government supporting teachers and SEN support staff to develop their skills and deepen their subject knowledge.

Interestingly the North East has by far the highest number of successful applicants for Maths of any of England's regions, with 22 applicants.

- [Government announces hundreds of new teacher scholarships](#) (DfE)

Resources and opportunities

Inject new life into your PSHE lessons

If you are looking for an innovative way to provide your students with the life skills needed in an increasingly complex world, then local charity 'Doorways' has produced a resource to assist you. Doorways Youth Project, strives to reach out to young people in difficult situations. They have just

launched an educational CD-ROM 'Life-Skills Labyrinth, which acts as an innovative multi-sensory learning resource. For a one off cost of £56 (plus postage) you will receive the full 'Life-Skills Labyrinth' package which can be used on your entire school network, allowing a full class of students to access the resource at any one time. For more information and to order [please click here](#) or email john@door-ways.co.uk

Get ready for the new school year – dry erase boards offer

If you're looking to restock your cupboards for the new school year make sure you stock up on dry erase board packs for Numeracy, Literacy and Science. With packs of 30 available from just £18.99, you can supply a full class for a relatively low cost.

Local company Eduk8 is offering SCHOOLS NorthEast members the opportunity to get 20% worth of free additional resources or a 10% discount on all orders placed this term. Visit www.eduk8worldwide.com or phone 01434 672336 to find out more.

Free wall planner for Academies 2012/ 13

With so many important dates to remember this free wall planner, created by [Clive Owen](#), can help you keep on top financial and tax deadlines as well as company information filling dates.

[Click here to download today.](#)

The MOVE Physical Activity and Wellbeing Project - Durham University

Durham University are looking for secondary schools to take part in an exciting new wellbeing research programme called the MOVE project. The MOVE project aims to determine the effectiveness of two school based approaches on student's physical activity and feelings of wellbeing. The project team has designed two complimentary approaches (i.e. Geography and peer-coaching) that not only aim to educate children about healthy lifestyles and the impact of their environment on their behaviour, but also to change their activity habits.

They are now recruiting schools in the North East region into the main trial and have a limited number of places available. To find out more and to take part please email Ash Routen, Research Associate, School of Education, at ash.routen@durham.ac.uk or visit <http://www.move-and-smile.org>

Events

SCHOOLS NorthEast Summit – 19 October at St James' Park

Now in its fourth year, the SCHOOLS NorthEast Summit is THE annual event bringing together the North East's school leaders, leading educationalists, and decision makers to discuss the issues, practice, challenges and opportunities that will shape education now and in the coming years. The programme includes a wealth of high profile speakers including former Education Minister and architect of the academies programme Lord Adonis and a wide range of useful workshops and inspiring sessions.

Delegate places cost just **£80 for Primaries** and **£100 for Secondaries**, with discounts for SCHOOLS NorthEast Enhanced Members and group bookings.

To find out who will be speaking and to book your place now, [please click here](#) or email summit@schoolsnortheast.com .

Procurement – a legal and financial headache or an exciting opportunity for your academy? – 25 September 2012

Are you aware of the contractual obligations you may encounter when buying goods and services for your academy? Have you considered how to ensure you maintain cashflow levels and how to monitor credit limits?

Accountants Clive Owen & Co LLP are holding an event in conjunction with the Department for Education and Blackett Hart & Pratt Solicitors that will give you all the information you need to ensure that you implement an effective procurement strategy and avoid any headaches.

The event will take place at **Teesside University's Darlington Campus, from 4.00pm to 6.00pm**, and will include a light buffet. To reserve your place contact Clive Owen by **calling 01325 349700** or email info@cliveowen.com.

Subject Inset day for teachers – 19 October 2012

South Tyneside Association of Secondary Heads would like to invite teachers from across the region to join them for their highly-regarded Subject Inset Day. Different subjects will be hosted by different secondary schools in South Tyneside and the programme will feature high quality guest speakers.

The inset day will take place on **19 October 2012, from 9am to 12.30pm** and cost just £50 (plus VAT). To find out more please email r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com.

One minute manifesto

In a new feature for this year, SCHOOLS NorthEast is asking Head Teachers and influential figures across the region to give us their one minute manifestos for North East education. If you were in power what would be your priority for change, what one thing would make the most difference to your school and who should make the decisions for education?

Tell us your views in no more than 180 words or invite us to come and film you delivering your manifesto at your school– email think@schoolsnortheast.com

Quote of the week

"If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter, for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself."

Max Ehrmann, writer