

Subject: SCHOOLS NorthEast Weekly Update - Week 15



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

In this issue...

- A round up of all the latest local and national education news
- Festive greetings from SCHOOLS NorthEast
- Details of a conference with Achievement for All
- “Raising Standards through Curriculum Innovation” event from Aim Awards
- Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP) Guidance and Support

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from us!

This is the final SCHOOLS NorthEast Weekly Update for 2012. We hope you are all looking forward to a well-deserved break. SCHOOLS NorthEast would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported us in 2012 and wish you all good tidings for 2013.

In looking back on the 40 newsletters we have sent this year we realised what a big year it has been! Therefore, our Christmas gift to you this year is an exclusive SCHOOLS NorthEast festive song card themed to reflect the last 12 months. Why not use it in your staff room before the end of term to celebrate the end of a rather hectic year!

[Click here to download now!](#)

Focus on... coming up in 2013!

After a hectic year of academy conversions, exam marking mess-ups, leaked proposals, new style inspections, funding formula changes and many, many announcements from the DfE, you will undoubtedly be looking forward to the Christmas break. And with the rate of change showing no signs of slowing down for 2013 you're certainly going to need it! So here's a short guide to some of the things you can look forward to in the year ahead...

Curriculum and exams

- **English Baccalaureate Certificates** – with the public consultation now closed, further details from the Government regarding proposals for the new Key Stage 4 qualifications are expected in the first quarter of 2013.
- **Technical Baccalaureate** – following Gove's adoption of the idea for a vocational qualification package for post 16, further consultation is expected on the structure and content of the 'TechBacc'.
- **GCSE grading court case** - Judges, Lord Justice Elias and Mrs Justice Sharp, have heard all of the evidence and will be making their decision soon as to whether this matter should be subject to judicial review and, if so, what measures need to be taken. Speculation is that their verdict will be announced on 13 January.

- **Exam boards to “tighten” GCSEs in key subjects** - Ofqual have ordered exam boards to “tighten” exams in English Literature and History from September 2013.
- **Grammar tests** - the new ‘back-to-basics’ test of spelling, punctuation and grammar will be sat by up to 600,000 Year 6 pupils in the summer. Example questions have now been released.
- **Higher maths qualification** - sixth-form students who do not wish to study maths as one of their main A-levels will be able to study a new maths qualification from next year. The qualification will be “not quite as demanding as an A-level” according to Gove and further details will be set out in a report due to be published later this week.

School structures

- **Free schools opening** - in the North East, Durham Free School Ltd and West Newcastle Academy are set to open in 2013.
- **Academies** – schools across the region will continue to convert, with an expected increase in the pace of conversions amongst Primary Schools and schools converting in multi or umbrella academy trust arrangements. Following announcements by the Prime Minister last month, a further tranche of ‘underperforming schools’ will be targeted to be taken over by an academy sponsor and with the launch of a grant scheme to encourage new sponsors and more local schools and organisations exploring this option, it is likely that we will see new sponsors emerging both from within and outside of the region.
- **Trusts** – There has been a lot of interest in the development of trusts amongst schools in the North East. Whilst some groups of schools have already pushed ahead with this option, we anticipate a growth in the number of trust schools over 2013 as groups of schools work their way through the process and finalise plans. As the Government has been relatively quiet regarding their views on Trust status, it will be interesting to see if Gove reveals any new thinking on this issue in the coming months.
- **Studio schools and UTCs** – Newcastle College’s Discovery School will open in Newcastle in September 2013. Their target is to open with 180 young people in both years 10 and 12, growing to 720 on roll in 2014. SCHOOLS NorthEast is also aware of a number of Studio School applications and proposals currently in development across the North East.

Progression and school leaving age

- **Raising of school participation age to 17** – the much talked about increase in the age to which all young people in England must continue in education or training, eventually comes into force this year. From September 2013 students will be required to continue in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 rising to 18 from 2015.
- **Further education (FE) colleges** – changes will be made to allow FE colleges to enrol 14- to 16-year-olds to study vocational qualifications from September 2013.
- **UK universities in online launch** - a partnership of UK universities is launching an online project, challenging US universities that have dominated this emerging market. They will aim to give the public access to higher education courses via computers, tablets or smartphones.

Ofsted

- **New regional director** - following an announcement from Ofsted regarding the introduction of regional structures, Nick Hudson will take up the post of Regional Director of Ofsted for the North East and Yorkshire and Humber from January of next year and we will learn more about Ofsted’s plans to play a new role at a regional level.

Add to this the growing tensions with the unions, the implementation of further local authority budget cuts and the moves towards a national funding formula and we can be certain that 2013 is set to be another year of upheaval. However, SCHOOLS NorthEast will be on hand to offer advice and support throughout. We have a busy year planned with events every month including ‘Power Lunches’ with influential figures in education, our Patron’s Dinner in March, our first ever conference for school business managers in April and our annual SCHOOLS NorthEast Summit in October.

We will also be launching the SCHOOLS NorthEast 'Partner School' scheme, inviting forward thinking schools to team up with us to shape education in the region and a plan for a major new educational programme working across schools, business and civic society to improve outcomes in the North East from cradle to career... watch this space!!

Let us know your plans for 2013

As you know, at SCHOOLS NorthEast we love to hear all about the exciting events and developments happening in our schools and across the region. Please tell us your school news and share any events or activities you have planned with schools across the region – email editor@schoolsnortheast.com

Local news by area

Darlington

- [School pursues Fairtrade goals](#) (Northern Echo)

Hartlepool

- [Students rewarded for dedication](#) (Hartlepool Mail)
- [Talented Taylor wins fire engine ride](#) (Hartlepool Mail)
- [Pupils create nativity magic](#) (Hartlepool Mail)
- [Carol-singing pupils spread festive cheer](#) (Hartlepool Mail)

Newcastle

- [EDL to stage demo against Islamic school plans for Byker Grove building](#) (Chronicle Live)
- [Byker Grove building set to be an Islamic school](#) (Chronicle Live)
- [Shame of Newcastle children who are left hungry](#) (Chronicle Live)

Northumberland

- [Corbridge school head replaced for 'immediate future'](#) (Journal Live)
- [Tyneside boy back at school a month after smash](#) (Chronicle Live)
- [Scremerston First School pupil designs winning card](#) (Berwick Advertiser)
- [Football-mad Aaron parties with Newcastle United idols](#) (Berwick Advertiser)
- [Young carol singers light up Prudhoe for Christmas](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Students' creative juices flowing](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Academy schools celebrate their joint first birthday](#) (Morpeth Herald)
- [Partnership launch £65k programme](#) (News Post Leader)
- [Middle school performance tables released](#) (Northumberland Gazette)
- [Duchess marks the start of a new era](#) (Northumberland Gazette)

North Tyneside

- [Pupils warn of road dangers](#) (News Guardian)
- [Santa gets on his bike to meet pupils](#) (News Guardian)
- [Boys aim high with rocket challenge](#) (News Guardian)
- [Delight in top rating for school](#) (News Guardian)

Stockton

- [Ian Ramsey School students in anti-bullying campaign](#) (Gazette Live)

South Tyneside

- [Dad admits biting man's finger off at Tyneside school nativity](#) (Chronicle Live)
- [Head masterminds big turnaround](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Students on road to success](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [School gets a head start in election](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Students blossom as business booms](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Record results for primary schools](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Primary school tables released today](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Pupils plough effort into hedge funds](#) (Shields Gazette)

Sunderland

- [Youngsters show they have a head for business](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Special youngsters honoured for work](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Walking in a winter wonderland](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [How's about SATs!](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Free school not affected by funding rule](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Fulwell school now an academy](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Sunderland schools celebrate Sats success](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Sporting double for Sunderland students](#) (Sunderland Echo)

Redcar

- [Academy status boost for Kilton Thorpe School](#) (Gazette Live)
- [Ofsted finds improving Lingdale Primary School to be good](#) (Gazette Live)

Regional

- [Children in the North East arriving hungry at school](#) (Journal Live)

Top national education news

Pupils find out GCSE English re-take results

Today, the thousands of pupils who re-took their English GCSEs after a row about grades this summer are getting their results. Nearly 16,800 pupils re-took English, while 31,000 re-took English Language.

A quarter of students sitting the English paper have been awarded at least a C grade, while the majority (75%) of entries were graded D or lower. In the English Language paper, 43% were awarded at least a C.

Last week exams regulator Ofqual rejected claims that GCSE English grades awarded this summer were "unfair". It is fighting a legal challenge in the High Court from an alliance of pupils, schools and councils. The group says students were treated unfairly when exam boards raised the mark needed for a grade C between exams taken in January and June. Ofqual says it acted fairly to maintain exam standards.

- [Pupils find out GCSE English re-take results](#) (BBC News)
- [Exams watchdog Ofqual rejects claims GCSE English grades were 'unfair'](#) (BBC News)

Gove wants more, as tough approach on 3Rs gets results

Primary school league tables published last week show the number failing to reach the Education Secretary's minimum target of 60 per cent of pupils becoming fluent readers and good at maths by 11 has fallen from 1,310 to 476 in a year.

The Independent reported that last Wednesday night "ministers were believed to be considering raising the targets to ratchet up the pressure on Head Teachers". The paper then speculated that the decision to raise primary targets may be fuelled by the new figures showing Gove's challenging approach to standards had succeeded in more than halving the number of schools failing to give pupils a good grounding in the three Rs.

- [Gove wants more as tough approach on 3Rs gets results](#) (Independent)

PE should be part of Ebacc exam system, experts warn

The Sport and Recreation Alliance has argued sport is at risk of being marginalised under plans for a new exam system. This alleged downgrading of physical education could worsen the "worrying" decline in the number of teenagers studying sport, the experts have argued, with teachers instead focusing too heavily on league tables.

- [PE should be part of Ebacc exam system, experts warn](#) (Telegraph)

What else we learnt this week...

- [Sherwood Park school governors resign after £6,000 party](#)
- [Schools ringed by 19 junk food shops, fat map shows](#)
- ['Back-to-basics' grammar tests for 11-year-olds revealed](#)
- ['Alarming' drop in fathers helping children to read](#)
- [Free school will be first to specialise in maths](#)
- [Teachers 'buy food for poor pupils'](#)

Resources and Opportunities

Future Leaders School and Participant Recruitment for 2013 Cohort now open

Future Leaders is a leadership development programme for teachers with the talent to accelerate to Headship in 4 years and the commitment to improve childrens' life chances.

Your school can get involved by:

- Offering a residency year – Future Leaders are looking for schools to host a Future Leader on your SLT for their first year on the programme.
- Supporting an existing member of staff – places are available for schools to nominate staff to join the programme and remain in your school for their residency year.

The first window for participant applications runs until 8 January 2013 and the second window runs from 9 January to 19 February 2013.

Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP) Guidance and Support

Aura is currently offering support and guidance for schools that are engaging in the Priority Schools Building Programme. Changes in building regulations and recent baseline designs released by the EFA have left many schools uncertain of the level of autonomy they will have over the design of their buildings and the impact the EFA proposals will have on their visions for their new buildings.

Aura is committed to ensuring school designs meet the school specific educational drivers in relation to curriculum organisation, teaching and pedagogy, behavioural and pastoral care and staff and student health and wellbeing.

Having worked with numerous North East schools providing funding, consultancy, design and construction services in excess of £280m, including numerous successful funding applications to bodies including the EFA, Aura works with clients to understand their visions and transform them into buildings and services.

For further information please contact Marisa Nethercott on 0191 223 6818 or m.nethercott@auranewcastle.com

Design a Football Shirt - Competition to Win a Signed Newcastle Shirt

SCHOOLS NorthEast Commercial Supporter, First Class Supply and Training, are holding a competition to get local schools to design their "own" football shirt. The competition will be open to both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 children. The winning entries will have their shirts designed and receive a signed Newcastle shirt.

Simply send your schools designs to daniel@1stclassteachers.co.uk or First Class Supply and Training, 131-133 Whitley Road, Whitley Bay, NE26 2ET

The closing date for entries is Wednesday 30 January 2013 and the winners will be informed by Friday 1 February 2013.

Events

Raising Standards through Curriculum Innovation – 7 February 2013

Aim Awards will be holding a free event early next year regarding 'Raising Standards through Curriculum Innovation.' The event will

- Give practical examples of how qualifications can be used to innovate the curriculum
- Show how using e-assessment can improve standardisation and quality
- Show how learner self-assessment can be used effectively to aid progression
- Identify the current key quality issues facing schools, colleges and training providers

The event will take place on 7 February 2013 at Morrison Trust Conference and Training Centre in Darlington between 9.30am and 3.30pm. To book a place please [click here](#).

Achievement for All - Events

Calling all School Leaders... You are invited to attend a free session in the North East to learn more about Achievement for All, the award winning national charity programme to improve the aspirations, access and achievement of learners. Now working in over 1,200 schools nationwide, the Achievement for All framework tackles pupils' progress, parental engagement, pupil attendance and behaviour, peer relationships, participation in extra-curricular activities and access to future opportunities for pupils and has been independently proven to have a profound impact on the outcomes of pupils with SEND and on school improvement.

These events will enable you to learn more about the impact of Achievement for All from its national leaders as well as from colleagues who are currently engaged in Achievement for All activities and will include a choice of workshops providing the opportunity to learn from one another about what works in implementing the programme.

The events are taking place on the following dates and include lunch:

- **5th February 2013:** Middlesbrough Learning Centre (12pm – 4pm)
- **6th February 2013:** The Beacon, Newcastle (12pm – 4pm)
- **7th February 2013:** Durham Leadership Centre (9am -1pm)

You should be sent a direct invite in the next couple of days but to reserve your place now email: r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com

For more information about Achievement for All visit: www.afa3as.org.uk

Have a great Christmas!

If you have any issues you would like to see covered in the Update, or any other comments, I would love to hear from you at think@schoolsnortheast.com