

Subject: SCHOOLS NorthEast Weekly Update - Week 16



The banner features the 'SCHOOLS NORTH EAST' logo on the left, the text 'WEEKLY UPDATE' in large blue letters in the center, and the 'SCHOOLS ADVISORY SERVICE' logo on the right. Below the banner, a dark blue box contains white text: 'This week's update is sponsored by the Schools Advisory Service who specialise in the education sector exclusively. SAS began insuring schools in 1997, and now have more than 2,500 schools nationwide with whom they have built long term relationships. To find out more about SAS click here on go to www.schooladvice.co.uk

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
- Details of a conference with Achievement for All
- "Raising Standards through Curriculum Innovation" event from Aim Awards
- Details on a STEM Teacher Network meeting next week
- How do you tackle hunger in your school? – help with research

Focus on...the year ahead

Just before we all headed off for two weeks of turkey, tinsel and television specials, SCHOOLS NorthEast provided you with a useful run down of the likely educational agenda for 2013. But now January's in full swing anything pre-Christmas seems like a distant memory, we thought we would give you a gentle reminder of things to expect for the year ahead.

[To see the full SCHOOLS NorthEast guide to 2013 please click here.](#)

On Monday, the Coalition Government's Mid –Term Review restated the 17 priority policy pledges on reforming schools that the DfE plan to implement prior to 2015. There were no surprises in the list which includes the replacement of the GCSE and major reforms to A Levels, introduction of revised Key Stage 2 Tests, raising of the floor standards and acceleration of the Academies Programme for failing schools, £1 billion pounds to expand good schools and a further 100 new Free Schools and an overhaul of teacher's pay. So in 2013, arguably the biggest issue facing schools remains the speed and extent of change as much as the change itself! Before Christmas both the exam regulator and Chair of the Education Select Committee expressed concerns about the extent of change. But the Secretary of State was resolute in his determination to drive through reforms stating "if a red light flashes, we will take account of it but my very, very strong view is that we should stick to the timetable we already have."

This week, the Pearson Think Tank produced a series of their regular Pocket Watch guides to education policy looking back at 2012 and forward to 2013/14. They identified the following key themes for the coming year:

- **Reform of the qualification system:** with considerable wrestling over ownership of the Bacc template. A number of issues stand out here including: resolution of some of the technical issues in EBacc design including tiering and grading let alone the status of non EBC subjects;

recognition and provision for those pupils who do not achieve the EBC package; and coherence amongst the various Bacc variants at 16-19.

- **Reform of the exam market:** with a proposed single board model for KS4 and HE involvement in KS5, both await greater operational clarity.
- **School accountability:** where consultations on both EBacc performance measures and 16-19 performance table criteria are expected.
- **Further developments for the profession:** with tougher entry tests due this autumn and performance related pay looming.
- **Further diversity in the school system:** following the additional funding (nearly £1bn) given for this in last month's Autumn Statement and its featuring in 4 of the 17 Coalition mid-year review promises for future school activity.

Some useful dates

To help keep you ahead of the game, below is a timescale of some key consultations and reports expected in 2013:

- Publication of 2012 school performance tables (**Jan 2013**)
- Consultation on criteria for 16-19 performance tables (**Jan/Feb 2013**)
- Consultation on regulatory criteria for KS4 exam system (**Spring 2013**)
- Consultation on the next round of drafts for the national curriculum (**Spring 2013**)
- Series of regulator reports on exam system (**Feb-April 2013**)
- Ofsted Access and Achievement Report (**May 2013**)
- Introduction of new 16-19 funding and RPA regime (**August 2013**)

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

Top local news

New Year's Honours List

The New Year's Honours List has been published and as always there were many people recognised for services to education. Notable names from North East education included:

- **Angela Mary O'Donoghue** Lately Principal, City of Sunderland College. – for services to Further Education (CBE)
- **Leslie Howard Walton**, OBE Lately Chair, the Young People's Learning Agency. For services to Education (CBE)
- **Janet Susan Bridges** Principal, Castle View Enterprise Academy, Sunderland. For services to Education (OBE)
- **Timothy Arthur Bird** Social Fund Manager, Jobcentre Plus. For services to Jobseekers with Mental Health Issues and voluntary service to Seaview Primary School (MBE)
- **Florence Mary Kirkby** Vice-Chairman, Association of School and College Leaders Associates Committee. For services to Education (MBE)

Local news by area

Darlington

- [Darlington primary school becomes a new academy](#) (Northern Echo)

- [Olympic swimmer causes a splash at North-East school](#) (Northern Echo)
- [Students gear up for cycling challenge](#) (Northern Echo)

Durham

- [Durham School forms partnership to expand globally](#) (Journal Live)
- [Fishburn Primary School allotment project benefits from a £10,000 grant](#) (Northern Echo)
- [Durham schooling model to go global](#) (Northern Echo)
- [Consett school singled out for national praise](#) (Northern Echo)
- [Students tackle lunchtime queues in Staindrop School dining hall](#) (Northern Echo)
- [Schools sign up for world record attempt](#) (Northern Echo)

Hartlepool

- [Kids enjoy library fun](#) (Hartlepool Mail)
- [New apprentice scheme planned](#) (Hartlepool Mail)

Middlesbrough

- [Teesside school pupils put on festive event for pensioners](#) (Gazette Live)
- [Avenue Primary School in Nunthorpe gets "good" Ofsted grade](#) (Gazette Live)
- [Grangetown Primary School kids get their hands dirty](#) (Gazette Live)

Newcastle

- [West Newcastle Academy free school appoints headteacher](#) (Journal Live)
- [Corbridge school headteacher mysteriously leaves](#) (Journal Live)
- [Thief stole £2,000 in Newcastle private school raid](#) (Journal Live)

Northumberland

- [Allendale Middle School improvement 'too late'](#) (Journal Live)
- [Recycling scheme will benefit school](#) (Berwick Advertiser)
- [Governors help pre-school plan ahead](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Allendale school inspectors detect progress](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Top marks for 'exemplary behaviour'](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Our middle schools undergo a rigorous examination](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Academy in top ten nationwide](#) (News Post Leader)
- [Academy's carol service to mark end of the year](#) (News Post Leader)
- [Harry wants his fellow students to speak up](#) (Northumberland Gazette)
- [The step up to chemistry at A-Level](#) (Northumberland Gazette)

South Tyneside

- [Jarrow School teacher Jill Gillies awarded role of headteacher](#) (Journal Live)
- [Nimble-fingered kids learn to knit](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Pupils rise to schools eco-challenge](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [College intake soars after revamp](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Stamp of approval for Royal Mail's gesture](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Kids use art to warn of 'stranger danger'](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Pupils chip in to help young homeless](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Council quick to act over failing school](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Pupils have designs on success](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Funeral firm boss's gift to school](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Knitting revival at Jarrow primary school inspired by new website](#) (Northern Echo)

Sunderland

- [First cow arrives at college for new farming courses](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Sunderland pupils in sign singing world record attempt](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Seaham school marks pupils' special achievements](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Sunderland teacher joins worldwide project to help boys learn to read](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Sunderland pupils plant thousands of bulbs](#) (Sunderland Echo)

Redcar

- [Normanby Primary School launch own smartphone app](#) (Gazette Live)

Top national education news

Girls facing increasing pressure

Speaking in the Journal, Hilary French newly-appointed President of the Girls' Schools Association and Head Teacher of Newcastle Central High School, warns that girls are still being brought up to believe that raising children is more important than their own ambitions. In her first interview as President, Mrs French said it is the responsibility of girls' schools to help their pupils to "be strong in making decisions and secure in the rightness of the decisions that they have made".

Also concerned about the pressure girls face, Steve Biddulph has warned in a new book, Raising Girls, that girls were being forced to grow up too quickly and warned that parents had failed to protect them from external pressures. He says that a "greedy corporate world" increasingly sees girls – particularly those in the pre-teen group – as soft targets to be exploited. Parents should take a number of steps to safeguard their daughters, including restricting access to television, banning gadgets from the bedroom and organising more family time with grandparents and other relatives, he claims.

- [Girls still seen as homemakers - Girls' Schools Association head](#) (BBC News)
- [Newcastle headteacher warns girls 'still brought up to be mothers'](#) (Journal Live)
- [Girls 'still seen as child rearers'](#) (News Guardian)
- [Girls need more protection from 'greedy corporate world'](#) (Telegraph)

Teacher 'bias' gives better marks to favourite pupils

A study commissioned by the Department for Education found that staff allow "bias" and "personal feelings" to influence their marking. The research involved more than 2,000 teachers judging essays written by their 11 year old pupils over the course of a year. The overall marks awarded to pupils were then double checked by specially trained, external "moderators". They discovered that in one in ten cases teachers had marked the work too favourably. In 5 per cent of cases the work was marked too harshly. Nearly two thirds of the moderators said they thought that "teachers' personal feelings about particular pupils influenced their assessments" on some occasions or on a regular basis.

- [Teacher 'bias' gives better marks to favourite pupils, research reveals](#) (Telegraph)

Parents warned to stop negative interfering

New research suggests that parents are putting growing pressure on Head Teachers to produce better grades, tailor the curriculum and ensure children move on to the best senior schools. It revealed that parental interference was the biggest source of "frustration" for Heads of schools teaching the youngest pupils.

Also speaking on the matter of parental involvement, Peter Tait, the Head of Sherborne Preparatory School in Dorset, cited "excessive mollycoddling from parents" as a factor in creating a generation of

weak children who are unable to stand up to bullies. In an article in the Telegraph yesterday, he argued that many families are failing to “bully-proof” their sons and daughters by constantly allowing them to be “centre-stage” instead of promoting independence, self-confidence and resilience.

- [Private school heads warn over 'unrealistic' parents](#) (Telegraph)
- [Parents failing to make children 'bully-proof', head warns](#) (Telegraph)

What else we learnt over Christmas...

- [Record number of parents convicted over child's truancy](#)
- [Pupils to learn Byron and Blake by heart in poetry drive](#)
- [Free school breakfasts for all tested by council](#)
- [A third of poorest pupils 'without internet at home'](#)
- [White working class boys missing out on university](#)
- [UK university applications down for second year running](#)
- [Reading aloud in class 'does children no good'](#)

Resources and Opportunities

Bring science to life in your school

Would your school like to run exciting and innovative projects in partnership with a professional scientist or engineer? Do you have a great idea for bringing science to life in schools? The Royal Society's Partnership Grants scheme provides grants of up to £3,000 for science projects run at a primary or secondary school.

Funds are available for projects working with students aged between 5 and 18, as long as the project involves a UK school or college and a practising scientist or engineer. There are two funding rounds each year and the current round for applications closes on **22 February 2013**. For more details about eligibility criteria and to find out how to apply via the online application system, go to the [Royal Society website](#).

How do you tackle hunger in your school?

A researcher at Child Poverty Action Group needs your help! Rys Farthing is gathering information for a “school food, obesity, and tackling inequalities conference”. He would like to hear from any schools that are involved in anything relating to school hunger. He is looking to try and share some examples of possible practice in a toolkit that the Child Poverty Action Group is producing for local authorities next year. If you are using part of your pupil premium to fund breakfast clubs or extend FSM provision or if you are trying to do innovating things he would love to hear from you!

Email RFarthing@cpag.org.uk to help support this important research.

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

Achieve Together launch in the North East – 11 January

TeachFirst, Teaching Leaders and Future Leaders would like to invite school leaders in the North East to the launch of an exciting new education initiative.

Join Dr Kevan Collins, Chief Executive of the Education Endowment Foundation, Bill Jordan CBE, Executive Principal of North Shore Academy and Sarah Connor, Director of Collective Impact at Teach First to find out more about Achieve Together's potential impact on the region and how you can get involved.

Date: Friday 11 January 2013

Time: 9.00 – 11.00am

Venue: Unity City Academy, Ormesby Road, Middlesbrough, TS3 8RE

RSVP: Matt Robinson, matthew.robinson@future-leaders.org.uk Tel: 0113 366 3053

STEM Teacher Network meeting – 15 January

The STEM Teacher Network is for teachers in the local area who want priority access to STEM-related events and information from Newcastle University. STEM Teacher Network meetings are the forum to feedback on the activities currently planned, giving you a chance to shape the activity offered to schools and colleges in future.

The next STEM Teacher Network meeting will be next week on **Tuesday 15 January between 4.30pm and 6.30pm** and it would be great if you could attend, you can also extend this invite to colleagues. Free refreshments and snacks will be served and all attendees will receive a Teachers' Toolkit gift bag.

The meeting will be hosted within an academic school at Newcastle University. You will meet the selector for that School and have the opportunity to ask what skills, subjects and interests are most suitable for gaining admission to their courses. They can also provide in-depth information on career paths, fees and scholarships and course content. The meetings also feature a 'behind the scenes' tour of some of our unique laboratories and facilities. This time, the meeting will be in Civil Engineering, visiting the Geosciences laboratory and the Materials Testing Lab.

If you would like to attend, please register online by [clicking here](#). Places are limited and registration will close on Monday 14 January at 9am. For further information email simon.laing@ncl.ac.uk

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; demonstrate how learner self-assessment can be used effectively to aid progression; and identify the current key quality issues facing schools, colleges and training providers.

The event will take place on 7 February 2013 at the 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)

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 week!

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