

# SCHOOLS NorthEast Weekly Update - Week 20

February 7th, 2012 at 2:18 pm



**SCHOOLS**  
**NORTHEAST**  
The future of our region is in school

# WEEKLY UPDATE



Concept Training

This week's update is sponsored by Concept Training who provide Autism Spectrum training. Their current online training package provides learners with a basic awareness of the autism spectrum. For more information please [click here](#).

## In this Issue

- A roundup of all the latest local and national education news
- 'School to School' with George Ford from Federation of Abbey Schools in Darlington
- North East joins in National Apprenticeship Week
- Details of this Friday's lunch in Durham with Roberta Blackman-Woods MP

## Focus on... Unemployment, Employability and EMA.

A report out yesterday by The Commission on Youth Employment said that "radical and immediate action" is needed to address the UK's youth unemployment emergency. All 12 North East Local Authorities are among 152 LAs in England, Scotland and Wales where over one in eight 16-24 year olds claim job seekers allowance. The Commission's Chair, David Miliband MP said that in his South Shields constituency unemployment has risen by 200% in the past year.

The Commission supports plans to introduce Destination Measures for schools and calls upon Government to give education providers stronger incentives to prepare the most disadvantaged young people for progression towards work and review the role of Ofsted in holding schools to account for the work readiness of their students.

On the issue of work experience the Commission recommends that the statutory requirement should remain. This view is backed up by a report from the Education and Employers Taskforce that looked at ways to prevent young people from dropping out. They found that the more young people come into contact with employers while they are at school, the less likely they are to go on to be unemployed.

The Youth Employment Commission's findings coincide with this year's National Apprenticeship Week, which aims to highlight the benefits of taking on apprentices to employers and promote the opportunities apprenticeships can provide to young people. To support the expansion of apprenticeships the Commission recommends the introduction of a national application system for apprenticeships similar to the UCAS system for University places.

These reports follow last week's announcement of major changes to vocational education in the UK. Most of the changes introduced as a result of the Wolf report are welcomed by the Commission, however an Observer Editorial on Monday states that "Mr Gove's overhaul of vocational education is

necessary, although too brutal. In the two years before the streamlining takes place, he and we have time to consider what a world-class education system ought to offer." The article then goes on to argue that a vocational element is vital to a full education, "we are often "blighted by a notion that divides academic and vocational into first- and second-class educations, while non-cognitive abilities, the ingredients that make up employability, are an "extra" instead of an integral part of learning."

Finally, research by Barnardos released today has found that the Governments Bursary Scheme designed to replace the axed Educational Maintenance Allowance is inadequate meaning that many poor students are faced with no option but to drop out of further education. Barnardos calls for immediate improvements to the way the Bursary Fund is targeted and administered including increasing payments to £30 a week, and widening funding to all young people who have received free school meals. But a Department for Education spokesman said: "The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) was wasteful and poorly targeted. Some 45% of all 16-19 year olds received it, including many private school pupils.

SCHOOLS NorthEast is working with organisations across the region to explore how we can best support our children and young people to develop the aspirations, motivations and skills needed to prosper in their future working lives. In the coming months we will be launching a series of initiatives. These include an Alumni scheme for North East schools. This will enable schools to identify and reconnect to ex pupils that can be used to inspire children and young people about the world of work and provide practical advice on careers.

Further details will be sent out to all SCHOOLS NorthEast enhanced Members but if you are interested in hearing more, would like to be part of the pilot or are already engaged in a similar scheme, please let us know by emailing [think@schoolsnortheast.com](mailto:think@schoolsnortheast.com).

- [North East youth unemployment must be tackled - David Miliband](#) (Journal Live)
- [Work experience 'cuts dropout rate'](#) (BBC News)
- [Michael Gove accused of "trashing" vocational training after qualification down-grading](#) (Mirror)
- [A vocational element is vital to a full education](#) (Guardian)

## Local news story of the week...North East joins in National Apprenticeship Week

Events are taking place around the region to mark National Apprenticeships Week after figures revealed a big increase in the number of positions. Department for Business, Innovation and Skills statistics show a 167% increase in the number of new apprenticeships started in the region in 2010/11 compared with 2006/07.

In Newcastle, the city council today launches its own week of action to encourage young people and private firms to sign up for apprenticeships.

Northumberland firm SCA Hygiene Products UK is marking the week by appointing 13 new apprentices at its paper mill in Prudhoe.

Hartlepool College of Further Education runs more than 180 apprentice courses and is giving youngsters the chance to learn more and also meet potential employers.

In Stockton, MP James Wharton swapped the House of Commons for computer aided design when he took up his role as a North East Chamber of Commerce apprentice for Teesside company CAD21.

- [MP James helps highlight apprentices' role](#) (Gazette Live)
- [Events around the North East to mark National Apprenticeship Week](#) (Journal Live)

- [Finding out about apprenticeships](#) (Hartlepool Mail)

## Local news by area

### Darlington

- [Poolies help Darlington cause](#) (Hartlepool Mail)
- [Children hurt in separate incidents in Hurworth](#) (Northern Echo)

### Durham

- [MP's war of words over Consett Academy site](#) (Journal Live)
- [Mum fumes at son's taxi ride to school](#) (Northern Echo)

### Hartlepool

- [Sacred Heart pupils looking forward to Olympics](#) (Hartlepool Mail)
- [Greece is the word for Lynnfield pupils](#) (Hartlepool Mail)

### Middlesbrough

- [Middlesbrough school in special measures](#) (Gazette Live)
- [Thornaby's St Patrick's RC school making progress out of special measures](#) (Gazette Live)
- [Why mum's backing under-fire North Shore Health Academy](#) (Gazette Live)

### Newcastle

- [Top Olympic athletes visit Tyneside schools](#) (Chronicle Live)
- [Olympic stars visit Benfield School to launch Gold Challenge](#) (Journal Live)

### Northumberland

- [Storyteller Taffy Thomas tells tales at Cragside Primary School in Cramlington](#) (Journal Live)
- [Cramlington Learning Village pupils scoop first prize in national event](#) (Journal Live)
- [School rugby team all kitted out](#) (Morpeth Herald)
- [Workers share experiences](#) (Morpeth Herald)
- [Students give a new twist to a classic adventure](#) (Morpeth Herald)
- [Students lead the way to beat the bullies](#) (Morpeth Herald)
- [Car dealer's school fund-raising drive](#) (Morpeth Herald)
- [Students give a new twist to a classic adventure](#) (Morpeth Herald)
- [Headteachers' pride in pupils](#) (Northumberland Gazette)

### Stockton

- [Thornaby mum in campaign for school nit nurses](#) (Gazette Live)
- [MP urges 'failing' Stockton academy to accept help](#) (Gazette Live)

### South Tyneside

- [Denise turns up for the books campaign](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Pupils enjoy taste of French culture](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Head to retire as school revamp ends](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Parents celebrating school's new centre](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Students use skills to promote citizenship](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Teacher defends vocational qualifications](#) (Shields Gazette)

#### Redcar

- [Loftus school petition to save free bus service](#) (Gazette Live)
- [Redcar girl gets highest singing exam marks in the North-east](#) (Gazette Live)
- [Saltburn pupils quiz Olympic torchbearer](#) (Gazette Live)

#### Regional

- [Academy status for North East leading schools](#) (Journal Live)

## Top national education news

### **5,000 head teachers lack leadership, says Ofsted chief**

Sir Michael Wilshaw, the new chief schools inspector, has claimed Head Teachers in more than 5,000 schools are not up to standard and are responsible for unacceptably high levels of poor teaching. He said he wanted less tolerance of poor leadership and a 'no excuses culture' in which head teachers stopped using poverty to explain low exam grades. He also blamed the poor leadership for the 'national disaster' of thousands of teachers leaving the profession soon after qualifying, as their enthusiasm is dimmed by head teachers' failure to enforce behaviour rules for children.

- [5,000 head teachers lack leadership, says Ofsted chief](#) (Telegraph)
- [Underperforming head teachers blighting Englands schools says Ofsted chief inspector](#) (Daily Mail)
- [Headteachers fear exodus after inspector's attack](#) (Independent)

### **Educational development: one in four children 'at risk'**

A quarter of today's children are living in families which pose more than one risk to their educational development, a study says.

Institute of Education researchers analysed 10 risk factors affecting more than 18,000 families. Risks included financial stress, teenage parenthood, depression, low skills, and substance/ alcohol abuse. Previous research suggests families with multiple risk factors are the most damaging.

The government has pledged to turn around the lives of England's 120,000 most troubled families by 2015. To qualify for help, the families need to meet five out of seven criteria - including truanting children, parents with addiction and anti-social behaviour.

- [Education 'risk factors' listed](#) (BBC News)

## In the last 7 days we learnt...

Click the links below to go straight to the story.

- [Blurting out answers can be good for pupils](#)
- [Bright state school pupils are less likely to get in Oxford](#)
- [Applications are down for the second cohort of teaching schools](#)
- [Tottenham Hotspur plan to open a free school](#)
- [GCSE Equivalent vocational qualifications reduced from 3175 to 125](#)
- [Teenagers are 'failing to study maths to a good standard'](#)
- [New changes to GCSE 'will penalise dyslexic pupils'](#)
- [More pupils are not toilet trained](#)

## Events

### SCHOOLS NorthEast MPs' Lunches

These lunches are great opportunities for Head Teachers to sit down with local MPs to discuss and debate the key challenges and opportunities facing North East schools.

#### Upcoming lunches this term:

- **Roberta Blackman-Woods MP (Durham) - Friday 10 February 2012**
- **James Wharton MP (Stockton South) – Friday 16 March 2012**

Places at the lunches are free but are very limited and exclusive to Head Teachers. If you would like to attend a lunch, or if you would like any more information, please email [clegg@schoolsnortheast.com](mailto:clegg@schoolsnortheast.com) or give us a call on (0191) 204 8866

### Events This Month...

#### Workshop to help your school raise its profile - 21 February 2012

If you would like to find out how to successfully market your school then Principled Learning are holding free workshops. The morning session starts at 9.30am and finishes at 11am, followed by a networking hour with light refreshments.

The half day workshops will be held at Close House Hotel, Wylam for Head Teachers and School Business Managers. Choose to attend either the morning session which starts at 9.30am and finishes at 11am, or the afternoon session starting at 1.30pm and finishing at 3pm. To book a place or for more information please email [lesleyg@principledlearning.co.uk](mailto:lesleyg@principledlearning.co.uk)

#### Education Britain: Where next for North East Education? - 22 February 2012

In November, The Education Foundation, the UK's first cross sector education think tank, asked 35 leading figures in education to identify where education goes next. Their visions were varied, challenging and inspiring. Now the Foundation is taking to the road to engage educationists, policy makers and business leaders outside of the Westminster Village in the debate. Education Britain Newcastle is a preview of an event series which will run across the country from the Summer 2012 and you are invited to take part.

Join the Education Foundation and a high level audience from the worlds of education, local government, policy and business to discuss the future priorities for education in the North at 5:30pm on the 22 February at The Royal Grammar School, Newcastle Upon Tyne. To find out more and book your place visit <http://educationbritainnewcastle.eventbrite.co.uk/>. You can download a copy of the educating Britain report at <http://www.ednfoundation.org/educationbritain/report/>

### Future Events...

## **Academy Conversion Presentation - 1 March 2012**

Many schools and governing bodies across the region are currently debating whether or not to convert to an academy. SCHOOLS NorthEast Commercial Supporter, Samuel Phillips, is hosting a presentation to address this issue.

At the event, John Edmunds from the Academy Conversion Division, Department for Education will be presenting and we will also be joined by a school that has first-hand experience of academy conversion. The event will be Chaired by Beccy Earnshaw (Director of SCHOOLS NorthEast).

The event will take place on 1 March 2012 between 3.00pm and 5.30pm at Lumley Castle, (Garter suite). To find out more or book a place please contact **Sarah Thackray** on 0191 289 4805 or email [sarah@beaconhouse-events.co.uk](mailto:sarah@beaconhouse-events.co.uk)

## **SCHOOLS NorthEast Clash Diary**

To view all upcoming events please visit the SCHOOLS NorthEast Website and view the [clash diary](#).

# Resources and Opportunities

## **Teach First in primary schools**

Last year independent charity Teach First expanded to the North East and this year (2012/13) it will be placing participants in primary schools for the first time. Teach First recruits high quality, well rounded graduates to teach in schools in challenging circumstances (your school meets the strict eligibility criteria) for a minimum of two years, whilst completing a workplace based teacher training and leadership development programme (which includes a PGCE) provided in partnership with Northumbria University. There are currently 40 participants teaching across 20 North East schools and Teach First hopes to place a similar number of participants in both primary and secondary schools this year.

As I'm sure you're aware, Teach First originally began as an organisation placing in secondary schools, however, following a three year pilot, primary has now been rolled out permanently across the country. The new primary model was based on a positive and comprehensive evaluation by the TDA, and designed in conjunction with primary head teachers, university tutors and experts from across the primary sector. This partnership approach has meant that the programme has developed with pupil impact and the needs of schools at its core. This has led to 75% of those primary participants passing QTS at the outstanding level (21% at good) with 70% still teaching in the classroom.

If you like to find out more contact Donna at Teach First on [dpetrie@teachfirst.org.uk](mailto:dpetrie@teachfirst.org.uk) or call 0191 350 6409

## **Coping with Cancer North East 30th anniversary year 2012 –Playing your part in recycling**

As part of the 30th anniversary celebrations schools can have on their premises a clothing bin which would be used by pupils, parents and employees to collect unwanted garments that could be recycled. The bins would be delivered for you, emptied and maintained for you. There is also an offer for your organisation to share the proceeds. [Click here to find out more.](#)

# Welcome to new Commercial Supporters

SCHOOLS NorthEast has a growing network of Commercial Supporters who help us to be able to continue to work on behalf of North East schools. The network offers opportunities for schools to interact with organisations that provide a range of products and services to education many of whom offer special discounts and unique provisions for SCHOOLS NorthEast member schools.



This week we are delighted to welcome The Sage Gateshead to SCHOOLS NorthEast. Click [here](#) to find out more about what they do.

## School to School

In this new feature, we ask a local Head give us a brief insight into their school. This week we spoke to George Ford from the Federation of Abbey Schools in Darlington.

**Our school is...** an established hard federation of junior and infant schools in the west end of Darlington. We converted to academy status on August 2011. Our site has evolved both internally and externally and offers a real primary philosophy and the transition opportunities that benefit all 630 children and 70 staff. We believe that effective collaboration that focuses on learning at all levels is the key to the success of any school.

**Our school motto is ...** Teaching, learning and growing together in friendship

**Our school is good at...** ensuring children leave us with a good level of attainment in the core subjects and that they have support to develop individual talents. At producing children who can communicate and have the confidence that prepares them for the rigours of secondary education.

**Our school is working on...** developing our academy status and operating independently for the benefit of our children and the community.

**The biggest challenges for our school are...** having consistent approaches when giving messages across a large school site. Providing challenge for children who come from family homes where high achievement is expected.

**We think other schools would be interested in our...** Staff development, particularly linked to leadership for the future. We were involved in the initial teacher training of seven of our TLRs as part and then they followed our Middle Leader Programme. Our deputies have completed NPQH and we were part of the co construct pilot for the National Primary Executive Heads Programme. Pupil development that has incorporated international links and exchange visits for pupils to Russia and China (Y6) and France (Y4)

**We would be interested in hearing from other schools about ...** the different strategies they use to measure progress in subjects other than Maths, English, Science and ICT

**Question from last week's school is: If you could eliminate one thing from your daily routine to make you more effective, what would it be ...** wandering!

**Our question to next week's school is ...** How does the media coverage of education have an impact on your school?

If you would like to take part in a 'School to School' please contact [r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com](mailto:r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com)

## Have a great week!

The SCHOOLS NorthEast Weekly Update goes out to every Head Teacher in the North East every Tuesday, 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](mailto:r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com).

Plus 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 the above address.

