

Many thanks to Gentoo Group for their kind support of the
SCHOOLS NorthEast Patron's Dinner tonight!

Week 30 – 01 May 2012

In this Issue

- A roundup of the latest in local and national education news
- School to School with John Hardy from St John Vianney School in Hartlepool
- Information about a free energy use and management breakfast seminar hosted by Aura
- Details of a free event with Muckle LLP on community use agreements for schools
- Exclusive 33% discount for schools attending the Whole Education [Northern Conference](#)

Focus on...attracting and retaining great teachers

Performance related pay, a member-led College of Teaching, and sabbatical scheme for teachers were among the recommendations of an Education Select Committee report released today.

The Cross Party Group of MPs said that their inquiry 'Great teachers: attracting, training and retaining the best' had made 'explicit the profound impact that the best—and worst—teachers can have' and stated that the 'recruitment and retention of those most likely to be outstanding teachers should be firmly at the top of our education system's agenda'.

The report recommends:

- That all teacher training providers include teaching observation as a key part of assessment before the offer of a training place is made.
- The development of 'teaching taster' opportunities, for sixth formers and undergraduates to experience first-hand the content, benefits and potential of a career in teaching including actual teaching, and not just observation or being a teaching assistant.
- That the Government consults on the quality, range, scope and content of a high-level strategy for teachers' professional development, with the aim of introducing an entitlement for all teaching staff as soon as feasible.
- The creation of a National Teacher Sabbatical Scholarship programme, where outstanding teachers can apply for a substantial period of sabbatical, supported by the Government and closely linked to their professional activities.
- The introduction of new, formal and flexible career ladders for teachers, with different pathways for those who wish to remain as a classroom teacher or teaching specialist, linked to pay and conditions and professional development.
- The creation of a new, member-driven College of Teaching, independent from but working with Government. The College could play important roles in accrediting CPD and developing teacher standards, amongst others.

- That the DfE develops proposals for a performance related pay system, which rewards those teachers adding the greatest value to pupil performance.

In addition, the MPs supported the Government's new bursary scheme, which offers financial incentives for trainees with higher class degrees but said that there was a need to identify which additional personal qualities make candidates well-suited to teaching and questioned the use of degree class as the determinant of bursary eligibility for primary teacher training. They also welcomed the greater diversity of training routes for teachers and the nationwide expansion of Teach First.

The Committee's report said that they had been consistently struck by the passion, expertise and skill of the vast majority of teachers, and by the commitment with which they tackle a vital and often challenging role in society.

"Clearly, the recruitment of teachers with the capacity to accelerate learning is even more important than previously understood. Raising teacher quality isn't just a technical challenge in education, it's critical to our future competitiveness and our ability to prepare young people for progression in education and employment," said Graham Stuart, the Chair of the committee.

"The current generation of teachers is the best ever," but we need to speed up our improvements in teaching quality and the systems which support it if we aren't to be left behind by other nations who are driving up their standards at an even faster rate.

It's crucial that we have an educational system which celebrates great teachers, keeps more of them in the classroom, supports their development and gives them greater status and reward."

Media coverage of the report has focussed on calls to extend performance related pay.

Schools Minister Nick Gibb said the Government "welcomed the committee's report into this important area" and has asked the school teachers' review body to make recommendations on introducing "greater freedoms and flexibilities" in teachers' pay, including how to link it more closely to performance.

Performance-related pay for teachers was first introduced under the last Labour Government so that teachers at the top of the existing scale could increase their salary with merit-based rises. A study by the Centre for Market and Public Organisation, found the scheme improved pupils' results "by about half a GCSE grade" per pupil.

The MPs' report acknowledged there would be practical and political difficulties in introducing a performance related pay system but concluded that "no longer should the weakest teachers be able to hide behind a rigid and unfair pay structure." The Committee pointed to examples in Singapore, where starting salaries were broadly in line with those in Britain but high performing teachers are paid bonuses as an incentive and Florida where performance-related pay rises operate successfully.

However, the proposals were slammed by Christine Blower, General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers (NUT), who said: "Payment by results is total nonsense. Children are not tins of beans and schools are not factory production lines. Successful schools rely on a collegiate approach and team working."

"Performance-related pay [PRP] is not only inappropriate but also divisive. Children and young people differ and class intakes differ from year to year, making it impossible to measure progress in simplistic terms."

What's your view? Will the Committee's report improve the calibre of teachers and the quality of teaching? Is performance related pay a driver of success or a divisive measure that will undermine relationships between colleagues? How can Teaching Schools improve initial teacher training and CPD? Tell us by emailing: think@schoolsnortheast.com

- [Teachers face payment by results](#) (Telegraph)
- [Pay Teachers according to performance](#) (Guardian)
- [Teaching would get boost if sixth-formers could try it, says MPs](#) (BBC News)
- [Teachers should be given a Royal College Education](#) (Telegraph)

Top national education news

A-level overhaul to halt "rampant grade inflation"

In an interview with the Sunday Telegraph Glenys Stacey, the chief executive of Ofqual, explained that the value of A-levels and GCSEs has been undermined after more than a decade of "unjustifiable" grade inflation in exams. She said widespread changes were needed to the structure of exams and the culture within exam boards and sounded the death knell for the two-part A-level, introduced 12 years ago.

- [A-level overhaul to halt "rampant grade inflation"](#) (Telegraph)
- [Exams watchdog plans A-level reforms to curb persistent grade inflation](#) (Guardian)

Warning over school pay as 700 Heads pocket £100k

Official figures show that 700 Heads are earning at least £100,000 this year following a rise in average salaries for senior staff members. According to data from the Department for Education, 100 heads in primary schools now fall into the top pay bracket, alongside a further 600 secondary head teachers. The figures suggest almost a fifth of secondary heads are now paid six-figure sums.

- [Warning over school pay as 700 heads pocket £100k](#) (Telegraph)

Catholic pupils 'invited to sign anti-gay marriage petition'

Education Secretary Michael Gove is to examine claims that the Catholic Education Service (CES) broke impartiality rules on the topic of gay marriage.

It emerged this week that the CES wrote to nearly 400 state-funded Roman Catholic schools inviting them to back a petition against gay civil marriage. Schools and teachers are forbidden from promoting one-sided political arguments. The CES has denied breaking any laws, saying Catholic views on marriage are religious not political.

- [Catholic pupils 'invited to sign anti-gay marriage petition'](#) (BBC News)
- [Catholic schools face 'indoctrination' claims over gay marriage](#) (Telegraph)

Local news by area

Darlington

- [Darlington College free meals protest](#) (Northern Echo)

Durham

- [Hopes of finding Willington boy Ian Bell fading](#) (Chronicle Live)
- [Search for Sunnybrow boy Ian Bell stepped up](#) (Chronicle Live)
- [East Durham school chosen to hone teachers skills](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Stanley school plans £1m facelift](#) (Northern Echo)

Hartlepool

- [Girls to play at Twickenham](#) (Hartlepool Mail)

Middlesbrough

- [Teesside children's bus service could face the axe](#) (Gazette Live)

Newcastle

- [Central High pupils raise £3,000 for Richard Hunter](#) (Chronicle Live)
- [Free Newcastle schools plans pass first stage](#) (Journal)

Northumberland

- [Prudhoe headteacher praised for buying vital equipment for pupils](#) (Journal)
- [Green group gets energy fund boost](#) (Northumberland Gazette)
- [By Royal appointment](#) (Northumberland Gazette)
- [Spreading the word to schools](#) (Northumberland Gazette)

Redcar

- [Redcar's Rye Hills School 'improving rapidly' says Ofsted](#) (Gazette Live)

South Tyneside

- [A Ripon time for school penpals](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [VIDEO: Pupils get a taste of C.S.I. Boldon-style](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Kids aim to slam-dunk their way to a title](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Pupils show they care for the environment](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Pupil power boosts dad's hospice fund](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [School head disappointed by 'satisfactory' report](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Youngsters celebrate St George's Day](#) (Shields Gazette)

Sunderland

- [Olympic stars encouraging future students](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [The Futureheads help teenagers with learning](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Indian teachers visit Sunderland school](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Pupils turn CSIs for forensic science lesson + VIDEO](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Trainee teacher back in his old classroom](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Mining banner unveiled for academy's official opening](#) (Sunderland Echo)

Regional

TES school award shortlist

The TES School Awards celebrate the very best of UK education. SCHOOLS NorthEast would like to congratulate the following schools and teachers in the NorthEast for making the shortlist:

- Grange Park Primary, Sunderland
- Stamfordham First School, Newcastle
- The King Edward VI School, Northumberland
- Thornhill Business and Enterprise College, Sunderland
- Amer Sheikh from Thornhill Business and Enterprise College, Sunderland
- Tanya Wood (CBGB) from Washingwell Community Pre-school, Whickham
- Lauren Dalgarno from Conyers School, Stockton-on-Tees

Events

'Energy use and management' breakfast seminar – 9 May

Join Aura at a breakfast event aimed at helping schools gain a greater knowledge and understanding of energy use and management .

A range of topics which affect energy management in the school estate will be explored including the “future” of energy costs and energy monitoring. This event will help schools make informed choices and include a demonstration of how to reduce energy wastage to make organisational savings. There will also be a brief discussion of how real life examples can be turned into educational tools.

The event will be held at East Durham College from 8.30am with an anticipated finish of 10.15 am. To book a place on this free event contact r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com or call 0191 204 8866.

'Community use agreements' breakfast seminar - 17 May

Schools and academies are uniquely placed to provide access to opportunities and facilities which may help the local community. The benefits of such engagement are not only financial but can engender a greater commitment to the school or academy and to education generally. Regrettably, often the arrangements around community use are ad hoc and not fit for purpose.

This free breakfast seminar for schools addresses the dos and don'ts of community use and what a community use agreement should cover.

The event will take place on Thursday 17 May between 8.30 am and 10.30 am at Muckle LLP's offices in Newcastle Upon Tyne. [Click here](#) to register your place.

Academy Conversion event – 22 May

SCHOOLS NorthEast Commercial Supporter Samuel Phillips is hosting a free event to discuss the opportunity that academy conversion presents to our region's schools. Speakers include the Department for Education's Academy Conversion Division and a Head Teacher who has been through the conversion process and will share their experiences. There will also be a debate where the audience will have a chance to put their questions to the panel.

The event is taking place on Tuesday 22 May 3.00pm until 5.30pm at Middlesbrough Football Club, Riverside Stadium. For more information and to book [click here](#) or email sarah@beaconhouse-events.co.uk or phone 0191 289 4805.

'Becoming an outstanding school in challenging circumstances' conference – 24 May

Whole Education is hosting a [Northern Conference](#) in Leeds on **Thursday 24 May 2012**. The event will bring together high profile educationalists, school leaders and over 20 innovative projects. SCHOOLS NorthEast members receive a 33% discount off the standard school rate of £175, if they book by the 8 May and quote the code: SNE33.

The School Food Trust – extended workshop dates

- Workshop 1 – 14 June
- Workshop 2 - 10 July
- Workshop 3 - 17 September

The Small Step Improvements, delivered by the School Food Trust, help you achieve a lot without spending a lot. Through practical workshops, they'll show you how to work out which small changes

could have a big impact for how your dining room looks and feels, how your kitchen functions, your turnover for catering and what your lunchtime service says about your school to parents.

The workshops will take place at the Central Square Conference Room, Newcastle upon Tyne. For more information or to book a place click here www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/ssi or contact 0114 2996901.

Ceilidh Band Meet - 8 October

The Sage Gateshead would like to invite you and your school ceilidh band (up to 15 members) to join them for an exciting celebration of traditional music and local talent at the newly established Schools Ceilidh Band Meet. Suitable for a range of experiences and ages, bands from all over the region can come together to learn new skills, repertoire and techniques and can share in fun music making together with renowned band 422. The day costs £130 and includes workshops, a concert by 422 and an opportunity for your band to perform at The Sage Gateshead in a shared ceilidh.

The event will take place on Monday 8 October between 9:45am and 4:00pm at The Sage Gateshead. For more information please contact Leon Tighe on 0191 443 5169 or emailleon.tighe@thesagegateshead.org

SCHOOLS NorthEast Summit 2012 – October 19

We are pleased to announce the launch of the SCHOOLS NorthEast Summit 2012. This is our annual Head Teacher's Summit which sees over 300 leaders in education gather to network and enjoy presentations from key educational figures. To find out about more about the Summit and to register your interest please email summit@schoolsnortheast.com . Book early as last year's event was sold out!

Resources and Opportunities

Presentation on school systems improvement, leadership and school to school support

On 20 April, the National College held a regional visioning day to explore how the North East education community moves towards a self-supporting system. Steve Munby, Chief Executive of the National College addressed the event at Lord Lawson of Beamish School, giving a very useful and comprehensive overview of the picture with regard to school systems improvement, leadership and school to school support. His presentation, which includes the findings of national and international research, can be [accessed here](#).

New National Professional Qualification for Headship Deadline – 15 May

The National College has licensed the North East Teaching Schools' Partnership to deliver Levels 1, 2 and 3 of its new modular curriculum provision for school leaders in the North East region for the next 4 years.

There will only be one application round each year from now on and the current round closes on 15 May, 2012 at 1pm. [Click here](#) to apply now.

School to School

This week we spoke to John Hardy from St John Vianney School in Hartlepool.

Our school is... (how would you describe your school in an 'elevator pitch') a family. And, like any family, we have many different characters bringing their varied gifts. We don't always choose the easy path, but go the extra mile to realise everyone's potential . . . child, family, staff . . .

Our school mission is... In the Light of Christ, 'Come as you are and grow with us.'

Our school is good at... making everyone feel they belong, nurturing their potential and realising their gift.

Our school is working on... partnership building . . . with anybody . . . please . . .

The biggest challenges for our school are... to offer an alternative to the narrow, target driven, prescriptive education that prepares children for our past rather than their future.

We think other schools would be interest in our... curriculum structure of 'pearls and threads'

We would be interested in hearing from other schools about... how they engage parents in their child's learning

Question from last week's school is: *"Although we start formal schooling earlier than other countries and we regularly test our children, why is it that when compared with other countries we are not at the top of the league tables?"*

David Hargreaves would argue that as a country we need to value and support a culture of learning that creates social harmony and stability, where school leaders strive for the success of all schools and all students, not just their own.

Our question to next week's school is? *In a climate of increasing autonomy, how do we encourage schools to cooperate with each other to improve outcomes for all children?*

In the last 7 days we learnt...

Click the links below to go straight to the story.

- [Being bilingual 'boosts brain power'](#)
- [Secondary school pupils are 'not eating enough'](#)
- [A-level sciences 'lack the maths students need'](#)
- [Children's social skills have been 'eroded by decline of family meals'](#)
- [Inquiry lays bare academy chief's lavish spending of school funds](#)

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.

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.