

## Subject: SCHOOLS NorthEast Weekly Update - Week 4



# WEEKLY UPDATE

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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](mailto:r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com)

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### Focus on... success for the region's Primary schools

Primary schools across the region are celebrating some of the best Key Stage 2 results in their history. According to figures released by the Department for Education (DfE) last week, the North East outperformed many regions and was joint third for results in the country, narrowly beaten by the North West and London. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in both English and Maths increased by 5% from last year's results, from 75% to 80%.

North Tyneside was the highest performing area with 83% of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in both English and Maths. Middlesbrough remains the lowest performing area with 75% of pupils achieving the expected level, but achieved an 8% improvement over last year's results.

Nationally, the number of 11-year-olds reaching the standards expected of them in English and Maths has risen. More than 500,000 children in England took the SATs tests in May, the first to be taken following a government review of testing.

In Maths, the number achieving Level 4 or above shot up four percentage points to an all-time high of 84%. In reading, the figure rose three points to 87%, equalling the highest ever number recorded four years ago.

In writing, 81% reached the required standard compared with 75% last year. For the first time this year, teacher assessment was used instead of externally marked exams.

Responding to the results, a DfE spokesman said: "There is evidence to support a real increase in the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level this year. However, as no information on writing teacher assessment is available for previous years and the writing sample test results are not directly

comparable to test arrangements in previous years, the evidence for a real increase in attainment in writing is less strong.”

### Local press coverage

Local press stories celebrated the success of our region’s Primary schools. We have summarised some of the coverage below. If you would like to share your success stories please email [r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com](mailto:r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com)

**Durham** saw a 3% rise in pupils achieving a Level 4 in English and Maths, moving up from 77% to 80%.

Caroline O’Neill, Head of Education at Durham County Council, said: “We’re very pleased with this year’s Key Stage 2 results, which demonstrate the continuing trend of improvement in levels of achievement in County Durham’s Primary schools.

“The results reflect the efforts of pupils, staff, parents and Governors and all those involved are to be congratulated.”

The percentage of youngsters in **Hartlepool** making the grade in English and Maths rose from 77% to 81%.

Councillor Cath Hill, the council’s children’s services portfolio holder, said: “This is a stunning achievement by our primary schools and I’d like to offer my congratulations to everyone who has played a part in making this possible: pupils, teachers and other school staff, parents, Governors and support staff in the council’s children’s services department.

“Given the challenges facing many of our children as they set out on their lives, the rate of progress they are making in school is nothing short of phenomenal.

“It is clear that Hartlepool’s Primary schools are going from strength-to-strength and they are providing a very good start in life to all of their pupils.

“However, it is now vital that we do not become complacent, and we aim to build on this tremendous achievement by continuing to strive for the best possible results in the future.”

Primary schools in **Newcastle** have taken giant strides towards matching national expectations with 79% of primary school pupils in the city achieving Level 4 or above in English and Maths, compared to 72% in 2011.

Councillor Joanne Kingsland, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, said: “I would like to congratulate all our Primary school pupils, as well as their teachers and families, on another great year of Key Stage 2 results for the city.

“The city council is dedicated to working in partnership with all our schools to make sure children have the education they deserve and every opportunity to fulfil their potential in the future. The city has made remarkable progress in closing the gap and matching the national average and this year’s results should serve as encouragement to us all for another big push in 2013.”

In **South Tyneside**, 80% of children reached Level Four in English and Maths, an increase from last year’s figure of 76%.

Coun Joan Atkinson, Lead Member for Children, Young People and Families, said: “These are strong results and it is particularly pleasing to see a sharp increase in the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 in both English and Maths.

“The performance of our pupils in this important combination of subjects is above the national average, and I’d like to congratulate them, while offering thanks to the staff, parents, carers and council officers who support them.

### Further reading

- [Pupils prove they’re a real class act](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Sats results show rise in standards](#) (Hartlepool Mail)
- [School’s delight at its classy results](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Record results for primary school pupils](#) (Independent)
- [More primary school pupils hit their Sats targets](#) (Guardian)
- [Key Stage 2 results are up](#) (Newcastle Council)

## Top local news

### Flooding forces schools to shut!

Many schools across the region were today forced to close due to severe weather conditions. Share your flooding stories with us by emailing [r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com](mailto:r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com)

### Mass legal action threatened over GCSE English results

North East schools and councils are backing a legal challenge over the exam regulator’s refusal to regrade this summer’s English GCSE papers. Last Friday, an alliance of schools, local authorities, teaching unions and individual pupils, began the legal challenge against Ofqual, the exam regulator for England. The group includes 113 schools, 36 councils, seven teaching unions and 180 pupils.

#### North East signatories include:

- Gosforth Academy, Newcastle
- Greenfield Community College, Durham
- Heaton Manor School, Newcastle
- Darlington Borough Council
- Hartlepool Borough Council
- Newcastle Upon Tyne Local Authority
- South Tyneside Council
- [GCSE examiners face legal challenge](#) (Northern Echo)
- [Full list of signatories to the letter](#) (ASCL)

## Local news by area

At SCHOOLS NorthEast we scour the local press to find out the latest news from our schools however, some stories inevitably slip past our beady eyes! Please keep us in the loop and share your news stories by emailing [editor@schoolsnortheast.com](mailto:editor@schoolsnortheast.com).

### Darlington

- [Plans announced for Darlington special needs free school](#) (Northern Echo)
- [Darlington primary school prepares for academy status](#) (Northern Echo)
- [How does it add up? The difficulties of planning future schools for Darlington](#) (Northern Echo)

### Hartlepool

- [Town school is a class act](#) (Hartlepool Mail)
- [Heads worried by GCSEs axe](#) (Hartlepool Mail)

#### Middlesbrough

- [A £200k music mission for young people on Teesside](#) (Gazette Live)
- [St Peter's Catholic College in Wish campaign appeal](#) (Gazette Live)
- [EBaccs divide opinion among Teesside MPs](#) (Gazette Live)

#### Newcastle

- [Dame Allan's School pupils get a blessing from the Bishop of Newcastle](#) (Journal Live)

#### North Tyneside

- [Fears for the future as Tynemouth schools set to merge](#) (Chronicle Live)
- [The King's School merger bid 'misguided' says Coun Jim Allan](#) (Chronicle Live)
- [MP Alan Campell probes minister over The King's School merger row](#) (Chronicle Live)

#### Northumberland

- [New youth council aims to give young people a voice](#) (Berwick Advertiser)
- [Academy leaders condemn change to GCSE grade boundaries](#) (Berwick Advertiser)
- [Bedlington church and school opposed bus move](#) (Journal Live)
- [Allendale Middle School isn't 'inadequate' say parents](#) (Journal Live)
- [Education officers "must shoulder blame" for Allendale Middle School situation](#) (Journal Live)
- [From classroom to boardroom](#) (Morpeth Herald)
- [Council went against school to segregate children on buses](#) (News Post Leader)
- [Pupils in pioneering Newton Aycliffe apprentices initiative](#) (Northern Echo)

#### Stockton

- [Students at Yarm's Conyers School up for Community Champion award](#) (Gazette Live)

#### South Tyneside

- [Pupils prove they're a real class act](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [School's delight at its classy results](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Shields school picks new head boy and girl](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Shields school is wild at award win](#) (Shields Gazette)

#### Sunderland

- [Sunderland schoolchildren's fight against speeding drivers](#) (Sunderland Echo)

### Regional

#### **Six conversions in six months for academies team**

SCHOOLS NorthEast Commercial Supporter BHP Law, has successfully completed their sixth academy conversion in as many months. A team of specialist education lawyers has worked with primary and secondary schools throughout County Durham, Darlington and Sunderland.

[Six conversions in six months for academies team](#) (Northern Echo)

# Top national education news

## **Pupil Premium to rise from £619 to £900 in 2014**

David Laws, the new Liberal Democrat Schools Minister, announced on Saturday that the Pupil Premium paid to schools for every child they take from a disadvantaged background will rise from the current £619 a pupil to £900 in September 2014. Speaking at his party's conference, Laws also announced that Summer Schools for disadvantaged young people are to benefit from £100m in extra funding from the Government.

The announcement comes after Ofsted Chief Sir Michael Wilshaw warned that the Pupil Premium was having little impact on many schools.

- [Pupil premium to rise from £619 to £900 in 2014](#) (Guardian)
- [Liberal Democrats announce £100m for summer schools](#) (BBC News)
- [Ofsted says poor pupils losing out on 'premium' funds](#) (BBC News)

## **Clegg pledges £100m for childcare**

Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg has stated that a "revolution in early education" can be expected when the Government gives councils in England £100m to help meet its promise of providing free nursery places for 100,000 two-year-olds. The coalition has pledged to create this additional provision for the poorest two-fifths of households by 2014.

Speaking at the Liberal Democrat annual conference in Brighton, Nick Clegg said: "Good quality early education gives children a head start before they even start school and helps the most hard-pressed families who are struggling with the cost of child care.

"The money we are announcing today will help nurseries and child minders get ready to deliver this revolution in early education."

- [Clegg pledges £100m for childcare](#) (BBC News)

## **Schools need to act earlier on child protection, Commissioner says**

Teachers must be the first responders, spotting and handling the signs that pupils might be in trouble, says Dr Maggie Atkinson, the Children's Commissioner. It is not always wilful neglect or abuse they need to be looking out for, but signs that poverty is overwhelming families so that some parents are no longer coping.

- [Schools need to act earlier on child protection, commissioner says](#) (Guardian)

## **Schools fall victim to technology lease rip-off**

At least ten Head Teachers have been suspended or have resigned after they fell victim to a large-scale equipment leasing con. The BBC's Panorama programme found that at least 169 schools fell for the elaborate scheme. Some schools signed deals that saw them paying as much as 10 times the going rates for computers and photocopiers. A High Street bank has agreed to write off the millions of pounds in debts owed by the 27 schools that fell victim to the scam.

- [Bank forgives debt for school technology lease rip-off](#) (BBC News)

# Resources and Opportunities

## **SCHOOLS NorthEast Venue Finder for schools and businesses**

SCHOOLS NorthEast has recently launched a new Venue Finder service to help schools and educational organisations access high quality venues easily and to offer venues a way of promoting their offer to the education market. [Click here to see the Venue Finder now.](#)

Venue Finder is **free for schools** to both access and advertise on, and is open to commercial venues for a small fee. Simply email [r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com](mailto:r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com) for further details.

### **‘Getting to Know Your Parents’ - Parental Engagement Study**

Kirkland Rowell Surveys and the National Governors’ Association have recently published a joint briefing paper on parental engagement. Entitled **‘Getting to Know Your Parents’**, the paper covers how and why schools should engage with parents, with particular focus on the parental survey. It also includes findings from over 420,000 parental surveys conducted by Kirkland Rowell Surveys over the last 12 months. [Please click here to find out more and to download the briefing paper.](#)

### **Competition to Win a New Team kit**

The Education Network is offering schools in the region the chance to win a new football strip. All you need to do is complete and send back a fun wordsearch! [Click here to download](#) the wordsearch and either fax 0191 2323111, email [newcastle@ednetwork.co.uk](mailto:newcastle@ednetwork.co.uk) or post to: The Education Network, Watson House, New Bridge Street West, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 8AQ.

The Education Network will then enter your school into a draw which will take place towards the end of October. Winners will be notified by telephone and the strip will be hand delivered. There are three strips to be won before Christmas 2012!

### **New Service for Governors**

SCHOOLS NorthEast Commercial Supporter Avec Partnership Ltd, has launched Avec Governance for schools and academies in the North East.

AVEC can work with you to review your current governance practice and help you to develop a programme of activities that will ensure that you more than meet the new Ofsted framework criteria, as well as dealing with the professional, efficient and effective operation of governor meetings. In particular, AVEC specialises in supporting schools that have converted to academy status to meet the new challenges that this brings to governance.

To find out more, please contact David Walker by emailing [david.walker@avec-partnership.com](mailto:david.walker@avec-partnership.com) or telephone 07825 788315 for an initial discussion.

## Events

### **Clive Owen – Procurement Seminar – CANCELLED**

Due to severe weather conditions, today’s Procurement Seminar hosted by Clive Owen LLP at Teeside University, has been cancelled.

### **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 and leading educationalists and decision makers to discuss the issues, practice, challenges and opportunities that will shape education now and in the coming years.

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](mailto:summit@schoolsnortheast.com)

### **Woodham Academy Open Morning – 3 October**

In need of inspiration? Join Woodham Academy for their Open Morning where they will showcase how within 4 years they created a mutually respectful culture within their school, where students are fully engaged and behaviour contributes well to learning.

The open day is aimed at Head Teachers and senior leaders and will take place on **3 October** at Woodham Academy in Newton Aycliffe between **9.30am and 1.00pm** and will cost £30 per delegate.

For further information and to book a place please email [annemtimothy@gmail.com](mailto:annemtimothy@gmail.com).

### **Careers Education and Guidance Forum – 9 October**

SCHOOLS NorthEast Commercial Supporter Vision for Education is hosting a free forum on the new duty on schools to secure independent and impartial careers guidance for their Year 9 to 11 pupils. It will provide an opportunity to discuss the key issues which are affecting you and to explore how other schools are responding. The forum will be led by Sue Barr, Director at Education for Employability, and Marie Brett, Management and Career Guidance Professional with Sunderland City Council. All are welcome.

The event will take place at Boldon School at 4.30pm. For further information or to book a place, call Liam Roberts on 0191 267 4555.

### **Subject Inset day for teachers – 19 October**

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](mailto:r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com).

### **Rescheduled Governor Event: Collaboration, conversion, coercion and confusion – 25 October**

We have rescheduled our governor's event after being forced to cancel it last June due to the Newcastle floods!

Join us, along with leading law firm Dickinson Dees, for a twilight session for school governors. The event will be an opportunity to find out more about the changing education landscape and explore the questions and issues facing governing bodies over the coming months.

The event will take place at **Stockton Education Centre** on **25 October** between 6pm and 8pm and is free (multiple delegates from each school are welcome.) To book a place please email [r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com](mailto:r.clegg@schoolsnortheast.com) or call 0191 204 8866

### **Half day drama workshops - 6 November, 7 November, 8 November or 9 November**

Have you ever wondered how you could turn the book in your hand or the idea in your head into a play on the stage? Artistic Director Bernie C Byrnes from [Kipper Tie Theatre](#) will show you how. Bring your classroom to life with your set texts, favourite books or a brand new idea of your own.

Kipper Tie Theatre and Tyncan Learning will be holding drama workshops for both teachers and students. Choose to attend on 6 November, 7 November, 8 November or 9 November:

**Workshops for teachers - Location:** Tyncan Learning, 9 Portland Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle; **Timings:** 9.00am – 12.00pm; **Cost:** £70 per delegate.

**Workshops for students - Location:** in school; **Timings:** 1.00pm – 3.00pm; **Cost:** £150 (full class).

To book contact Tyncan Learning on 0191 2399022 or email [enquiries@tyncan.com](mailto:enquiries@tyncan.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?

This week we spoke to Stephen Crossley from the North East Child Poverty Commission.

### What are we teaching the teachers?

I was surprised when I read last week the findings of an NFER opinion poll that suggested many teachers believed 'lack of parental support', 'low aspirations' and a 'lack of effort' were the biggest barriers to learning. But why was I surprised? Public attitudes towards people living in poverty are hardening and political rhetoric is largely based on behaviourist explanations for disadvantage. Many teachers appear to believe that poor families are to blame for their own circumstances, portraying the school environment and wider society as largely benign. So, again, why the surprise? Teachers are, after all, members of the public too. Maybe, because much academic research in education would disagree with these opinions? Diane Reay wrote presciently in 2006 of her concerns 'about the ability of the education system to positively address social class in the classroom when contemporary initial teacher training rarely engages with it as a relevant concern within schooling.' Which begs the questions, 'what are we teaching the teachers?' and 'shouldn't we be teaching them more about structural causes of inequality?'

If you would like to tell us your views, in no more than 180 words, email [think@schoolsnortheast.com](mailto:think@schoolsnortheast.com)

## Quote of the week...

*"Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."*

This quote has been credited to several people including Ralph Waldo Emerson, George Bernard Shaw, and Harold R. McAlindon.

## 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 the above address.