

Subject: SCHOOLS NorthEast Weekly Update - Week 5



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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

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- New scholarships to attract top chemistry graduates into teaching
- Discounted entry to a Creativity Conference on 16 November
- Details of a competition run by Education Network to win a football kit
- An invitation from the South Tyneside Association of Secondary Head Teachers to join them for their highly-regarded Subject Inset Day for teaching staff.
- One minute manifesto with Beccy Earnshaw Director of SCHOOLS NorthEast

Focus on... the “forgotten 50%”

Labour leader Ed Miliband has outlined his vision for education in his speech to the Labour Conference in Liverpool today. He announced a shift in the Party's education policy, with plans to establish a new post 16 technical route leading to a 'gold standard' qualification at 18.

The Technical Baccalaureate originates from a report by Prof Alison Wolf commissioned by Michael Gove and is supported by Lord Adonis. Alongside its vocational learning, the qualification will require students to continue to study English and Maths to 18 as a strict condition for the award.

In her report, Prof Wolf found: "The staple offer for between a quarter and a third of the post-16 cohort is a diet of low-level vocational qualifications, most of which have little to no labour market value. Among 16 to 19-year-olds, the review estimated that at least 350,000 got little to no benefit from the post-16 education system".

The report also highlighted that only 4% of 16-year-olds who have failed GCSE Maths and English go on to pass them by the age of 19, contrasting negatively with outcomes in other developed nations.

In his speech, Miliband called on his party to shift their focus from the commitment of the last Labour Government to increasing the number of young people going to university towards helping teenagers between 14 and 18 who are in need of good vocational education to keep them from low skilled jobs.

Miliband described these young people as the "forgotten 50%" and said we cannot succeed if we have an education system that only works for half the country. It's time now to focus on those who don't go to university."

He accused the education system of failing half of Britain's teenagers by giving them "second-rate vocational qualifications of little value to employers" and expressed concern over the Coalition's reforms which, he stated, serve "a narrower and narrower elite".

Miliband also used his speech to propose changes to post-18 apprenticeships based on the system in Germany. Under this, companies, on an industry or regional basis, could sign legally enforceable agreements requiring all participating firms to pay a levy to cover the cost of training to avoid companies that do not invest in apprenticeships poaching skilled staff from those that do.

Throughout the speech the Labour leader repeatedly drew on his own experience of school at a London comprehensive and paid tribute to his Head Teacher and one of his teachers who was in the audience. Miliband said his school taught him "a lot more than just how to pass exams", adding "It taught people how to get on with each other, whoever they are and wherever they're from. I will always be grateful because I know I would not be standing here today as leader of the Labour Party without my comprehensive school education."

There will undoubtedly be much reaction to Miliband's speech. Let us know your thoughts and comments by emailing think@schoolsnortheast.com

Further Reading:

- [Miliband planning new qualification](#) (BBC News)
- [Ed Miliband's education vow – end elitism](#) (Guardian)
- [Ed Miliband to focus on forgotten young people](#) (Journal)
- [Ed Miliband is right to make English and maths compulsory to 18: a sensible proposal from the Labour party](#) (Telegraph)
- [Labour's Technical Baccalaureate can save the pupils ignored by Michael Gove's EBacc Certificates](#) (Telegraph)

Top local news

Children in the North East trapped in grip of poverty

According to statistics released by Save the Children, around 200,000 children in the region are now existing in severely poverty-stricken conditions, without enough food to eat or clothes to keep warm.

Graham Whitham, poverty adviser for the UK at Save the Children, has recently said the North East was falling behind the rest of the country when it came to jobs and the economy.

In a report mapping child poverty the charity shows how **Newcastle** has one of the highest levels with 31% of children living in poverty.

In **Gateshead** 25% of children live in poverty, 28% in **South Tyneside**, 21% in **North Tyneside**, 26% in **Sunderland** and 22% in **Durham**.

- [Children in the North East trapped in grip of poverty](#) (Journal)
- [Warning region's poorest children hit hardest by downturn](#) (Northern Echo)

Local news by area

Durham

- [Durham University expert comments on GCSE exam changes](#) (Durham University)

Gateshead

- [Gateshead pupil's work set to aid cancer patients](#) (Journal)

Hartlepool

- [Schoolkids bag extra equipment](#) (Hartlepool Mail)
- [Engineering expansion](#) (Hartlepool Mail)

Middlesbrough

- [Ingleby Barwick new school won't be ready for pupils](#) (Gazette Live)

Newcastle

- [Surprise at plans for closure of All Saints College](#) (Chronicle)
- [All Saints College in Newcastle axed in shake-up](#) (Chronicle)
- [Plans for Newcastle free school take a step closer](#) (Journal)
- [Blakelaw school security stepped up after boy walks home alone](#) (Chronicle)
- [High Spen teacher's kindness is an example to us all](#) (Chronicle)

North Tyneside

- [MP Alan Campbell turns up heat over Tynemouth school merger](#) (Journal)
- [Tyneside MP calls for Kings School to open books](#) (Chronicle)
- [Head Teacher defends school merger plans](#) (News Guardian)

Northumberland

- [Bedlington Catholic high school bus segregation to be discussed](#) (Journal)
- [New school gets 2015 target date](#) (Berwick Advertiser)
- [Consultation approved for special schools](#) (Berwick Advertiser)
- [Summer reading awards handed out](#) (Berwick Advertiser)
- [Berwick schools flying high with kite mark](#) (Berwick Advertiser)
- [Room with a view for growing first school](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Academy proposal for stricken school](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [By Gove! Council now wants to 'save' middle school](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Three-year wait for new school](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [A capital day out for school students](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Parents hoping to end 'apartheid' on school bus run](#) (News Post Leader)
- [Summer school success](#) (Northumberland Gazette)
- [2015 target for opening of new school](#) (Northumberland Gazette)

South Tyneside

- [Cutting-edge learning at new special school](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Little Dahl-ings add character to book day](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Nursery's joy at classy report](#) (Shields Gazette)

Sunderland

- [Families devastated by shock closure of Sunderland nursery](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Pupils from across Europe spend the week at Sunderland school](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Pool opening](#) (Sunderland Echo)

Redcar

- [£1m centre at Kirkleatham Hall School given go-ahead](#) (Gazette Live)

Top national education news

Smaller schools to be built under 'more for less' plans

The Government has unveiled plans to spend on average a third less per new school building compared to those put up under Labour's £55 billion Building Schools for the Future programme (BSF). New schools are also likely to look similar to reduce design costs. The plans are likely to set the template for 261 replacement school buildings to be erected over the next five years at a cost of £2.5 billion.

Design templates prohibit folding internal partitions to subdivide classrooms, roof terraces that can be used as play areas, glazed walls and translucent plastic roofs. The templates also tell architects that new schools should have "no curves or 'faceted' curves", corners should be square, ceilings should be left bare and buildings should be clad in nothing more expensive than render or metal panels above head height. As much repetition as possible should be used to keep costs down.

Mike Green, Director of Capital at the Government's Education Funding Agency, said: "These designs will ensure that new schools can be built to effective designs and specifications, be simple to maintain and energy efficient. And they can be built far faster than many have previously, and for far less money.

- [Smaller schools to be built under 'more for less' plans](#) (Telegraph)
- [New school building designs hit by curve ban](#) (Guardian)
- [New schools to be smaller after coalition cuts building budget](#) (Guardian)
- [Blueprints for 'austerity' schools unveiled](#) (BBC News)

Schools being 'forced to axe religious education lessons'

A study by the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) found that more pupils were dropping religious education at GCSE level or being forced to squeeze courses into just a year. It also emerged that rising numbers of schools were cutting specialist RE teachers and relying on staff with a poor grasp of the subject to deliver lessons.

Researchers warned that the introduction of the "English Baccalaureate" was to blame for a sharp decline in the subject's status. Under the system, pupils can gain the EBacc for achieving good GCSE grades in five core academic disciplines of which RE is not included. Recent reforms mean that the Government is proposing to scrap GCSEs altogether in these core subjects, in favour of new-style qualifications dubbed "English Baccalaureate Certificates". But NATRE claimed the move had marginalised other subjects that are not included in the reforms, meaning hundreds of schools were "killing off RE". It comes despite the fact that RE is currently a compulsory subject in all state schools.

[Schools being 'forced to axe religious education lessons'](#) (Telegraph)

What else we learnt this week...

- [New exams set to be introduced without trials](#)
- [Competitive team sports will alienate inactive schoolchildren](#)
- [Top pupils 'dumb down' to get A* grades, say Heads](#)
- [Three-fifths of six-year-olds reach expected standard in phonics test](#)

Resources and Opportunities

SCHOOLS NorthEast Venue Finder for schools and businesses

SCHOOLS NorthEast has recently launched a new Venue Finder 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 for further details.

New scholarships to attract top chemistry graduates into teaching

The Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) has launched new teacher training scholarships in chemistry. Around 130 scholarships worth £20,000 each will be available. Any graduate with a 2.1 or first class degree will be eligible to apply for a scholarship on a chemistry Initial Teacher Training (ITT) course.

Working with experts in teaching practice, the RSC will award scholarships to candidates with exceptional subject knowledge, enthusiasm for the study of chemistry, and outstanding potential to teach. The RSC's relationship with the scholars will continue into their teaching careers to develop a cadre of outstanding chemistry teachers who are part of a community of chemists across schools, universities and industry. [To find out more and register for a bursary please click here.](#)

Competition to Win a New Team kit

This week's Newsletter Sponsor, 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 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!

Events

SCHOOLS NorthEast Events:

SCHOOLS NorthEast Summit – 19 October at St James Park

The Summit is fast approaching and looks set to be the biggest and best yet! Book your place now before we sell out. Delegate places cost just **£80 for Primaries** and **£100 for Secondaries** with discounts for SCHOOLS NorthEast Enhanced Members and group bookings.

To find out more and to book your place now [please click here](#) or email summit@schoolsnortheast.com

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

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

Join us, along with leading law firm Dickinson Dees, for the first in a series of free twilight sessions 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 free event will now take place at **Stockton Education Centre** (TS20 1PR) 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 or call 0191 204 8866

Other Events:

Woodham Academy Open Morning – 3 October

In need of inspiration? Join Woodham Academy for their Open Morning where they will showcase how within four 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.

Middle Leadership Development Programme 2012/13 for Primary and Secondary colleagues

Introduction to Middle Leadership, SR & CR – 9 October

Charlotte Reynolds, Steve Roe and Damian Groark are facilitating a new Middle Leadership Development Programme. It combines the NCSL (National College for School Leadership) development modules with a person centred approach to motivating and inspiring learners and facilitating them to find their leadership voice. This programme is open to all primary and secondary schools within the North East region and to colleagues in related organisations.

The first session will be held on **Tuesday 9 October at Park View School**, Chester-le-Street between 4 and 6pm. The cost of the full programme is £125 for first delegate and £50 for subsequent delegates. To book a place on the programme contact Hilary Bolton; Company Secretary (Park View) at h.bolton100@durhamlearning.net

[Click here for the full programme.](#)

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 currently 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 2012

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.

Creativity Conference - What can schools do to improve their creative vision in times of austerity? – 16 November

If you want ideas and inspiration on how to boost creativity in your school despite Government changes and funding cuts head to Creativity, Culture and Education's one day conference on 16 November in Sunderland. The event aims to stimulate debate around the creativity agenda and provide participants with practical ideas for using creative techniques in schools. .

Aimed at teachers, creative practitioners and other professionals involved in creative learning, as well as anyone with an interest in creativity, the event will build upon CCE's experience in running the Creative Partnerships programme in the UK.

The conference will take place at the Media Centre, University of Sunderland and National Glass Centre in Sunderland and SCHOOLS NorthEast Members can get a special discount. Simply quote SNE2012 when you book to secure your place for the reduced rate of £140 plus VAT.

To book email bookings@cceengland.org

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, Beccy Earnshaw, Director of SCHOOLS NorthEast, sets out her views on the importance of local solutions in education. She has, however, cheated as her manifesto is much longer than one minute (this won't surprise anyone who has met her!!) and is based on her recent article published in the national magazine Total Politics.

"Place matters in education. The dramatic upturn in the performance of London schools supported by the area based improvement strategies of the London Challenge is testament to this. The architects of the Challenge believed that through sharp local analysis, joint working between schools, local authorities and communities, and unlocking and sharing the expertise of the best schools, educational performance across broad geographical areas could be raised. The recent independent evaluation of the programme and London's position now firmly at the top of performance league tables confirms that they were right.

The need for area-based approaches is not restricted to improving the performance of schools and the measurable outcomes of teaching. The content of what we teach children and young people and the resources used to convey knowledge can also benefit from greater recognition of local context. In Finland, a country that must be getting very bored of showing envious education policy-makers from abroad around its international league-table-topping education system, they have regional support networks for schools and plan local curricula to reflect local concerns. The RSA is piloting new approaches to curriculum development in England that are about, by and for specific geographical areas - addressing the needs of the community and exploiting the assets of the area to enrich, enliven and improve learning outcomes. London Mayor, Boris Johnson, has also announced plans for a London Curriculum.

In the North East, just as in London there are specific educational issues resulting from our geography, demography, economy and culture that whilst not unique to our region are more prevalent and pervasive here than in other areas. We should champion the development of an education infrastructure across broad geographical areas that share a common identity, culture and economy. This will enable schools to benefit from both scale and diversity in their access to expertise, support and challenge, whilst still allowing for sustainable joint working and close relationships based on mutual understanding and trust."

Read the full article on the [SCHOOLS NorthEast website](#).

Quote of the week...

“A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be.”

Rosalynn Carter

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