

Subject: SCHOOLS NorthEast Weekly Update - Week 8



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 our Governor Event later this week
- School Business Managers needed to help with SCHOOLS NorthEast survey!
- Free Educational Psychologist support from One Education
- One Minute Manifesto with Dr David Hemery CBE.

Focus on...manifestos for educational reform

Over 320 delegates at the SCHOOLS NorthEast Summit last Friday at St James' Park witnessed Lord Adonis set out his manifesto for change for England's schools. As a pioneer of the academy school movement, Adonis is at the forefront of education reforms to promote social mobility and social justice and believes that wider and bolder reform is now imperative to make England's schools world class. Based on the issues raised in his recent book, 'Education, Education, Education,' Adonis gave a provoking speech on the need for reform within our schools stating "Schools are the bedrock of society – and radical education reform is what builds a better, stronger, more dynamic and more equal society."

Adonis highlighted the shift in economic activity from the North to the South over the last 50 years and the impact that this has on opportunities in regions like the North East. He then described the programme of change he would like to see introduced to improve the system from teacher supply right through to pupil progression. Lord Adonis criticised Gove's plans for changes to qualifications at 16 which he described as 'replacing a GCSE with wait for it... a GCSE', and stated his support for a form of TechBacc and a broader qualification at 18 (an ABacc) to include requirements on community work and taking of 'contrasting subjects'. He also challenged the public sector and specifically Government to take on more apprentices and called for an end to general primary teaching undergraduate degree routes suggesting that in all the top performing nations primary teachers have specialist degrees. A full summary of his speech including video highlights will be available soon on the SCHOOLS NorthEast website and coverage in the local media is available [here](#).

Lord Adonis's ideas have sparked much discussion and this week six leading education thinkers inspired by his book, gave their own ideas on school reform. Their proposals published on the Guardian website include:

- **Appoint commissioners to drive school improvement** (Rick Muir, Assistant Director of Public Service Reform, Institute for Public Policy Research).
- **Increase the focus on learning** (Robert Hill, Visiting Senior Research Fellow at King's College, London).
- **Offer alternatives for less academic students**, (Lucy Lee, Head of Education at Policy Exchange).
- **Change the exam system** (Sir Tim Brighouse, Former Schools Commissioner for London).

- **Offer loans to support good child care** (Ryan Shorthouse, Researcher at the Social Market Foundation).
- **Use pupil premium to target literacy** (Tom Frostick, Researcher, CentreForum).

[Details of their views can be found here.](#)

The need to influence and shape the reform agenda has also led a group of Heads who recently 'met' on Twitter to form a pressure group to get their grassroots ideas heard by policymakers.

Education writer and blogger Ian Gilbert came up with the idea of translating online activity into something more concrete after reflecting on Twitter's potential for "social outrage" – but also its limits. "You can give vent in an informed way and find information," he explains. "But you can also sit back in the evening with a glass of wine tweeting and think you have done your bit for society.

"I realised we needed to go further and get together people who have something to say. A strong theme coming through the social media was a frustration with current policy, but also frustration with no alternatives from Labour. We want to put forward the voices of people who know what they are doing. People who are in it for the kids, for the right reasons, to discuss what has and hasn't been good and come up with some concrete alternatives."

The Head Teachers, from a mixture of maintained and academy schools joined Dr Phil Wood from Leicester University's School of Education for a meeting at the Guardian offices and devised their priorities for reform.

Their five point plan for change is:

1. Schools should be assessed in a range of ways, not just judged by the numbers achieving five specific grades at 16;
2. Ofsted should be replaced by local partnerships that would hold schools to account and help them to improve;
3. The curriculum and assessment should be taken out of political control and given to an independent agency (under licence for 20 years);
4. The government should encourage small families of local schools in preference to large national chains;
5. "Norm referencing" in exam grading is not fair, ie capping the number of students who can achieve a certain grade. There shouldn't be a cap on what individual pupils can achieve.

You can join their movement by tweeting [@thatiangilbert](#) or [@johntomsett](#)

At the SCHOOLS NorthEast Summit Lord Adonis encouraged North East schools to come together to discuss, debate and devise our own priorities for change and agreed to return to the region in January to discuss the ideas generated and explore how these could be taken forward. So - we need to know your views. What would be your one big reform of the current education system in the North East? Do you agree with Lord Adonis' programme? What can we do at a local level to influence the national agenda?

Email your views to think@schoolsnortheast.com

- [Tweeting headteachers plan to reform education](#) (Guardian)
- [On the Guardian Teacher Network ... how Tim Brighouse would improve the exam system](#) (Guardian)
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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.

Darlington

- [Parents win reprieve in school transport funding cuts row](#) (Northern Echo)
- [Mowden schools expansion will go ahead](#) (Northern Echo)

Durham

- [Durham health care students get hands on at college](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Special school to celebrate 50 years](#) (Northern Echo)
- [Youngsters open storyteller's garden at Gainford school](#) (Northern Echo)
- [Parents invited to hear plans for new Free School for Durham](#) (Northern Echo)
- [Spennymoor children take part in walk to school month project](#) (Northern Echo)

Hartlepool

- [Top-dog students are stars on BBC](#) (Hartlepool Mail)
- [Sport maker boost for sixth form college](#) (Hartlepool Mail)
- [A busy final year for Clavering students](#) (Hartlepool Mail)

Middlesbrough

- [Yarm School alters plans after residents raise concerns](#) (Gazette Live)
- [Parents' anger over school place row](#) (Northern Echo)
- [Hemlington headteacher's vow after Ofsted report](#) (Gazette Live)
- [Teesside pupils getting better results in their GCSEs](#) (Gazette Live)
- [Teesside school absentee rates revealed](#) (Gazette Live)
- [School given more freedom with conversion to academy](#) (Northern Echo)

Newcastle

- [Newcastle Church High School actors stage cult classic](#) (Chronicle Live)

North Tyneside

- [Concern grows over Tynemouth King's School merger](#) (Journal)
- [Festival's contest on the buses is poetry in motion](#) (News Guardian)
- [Youngsters offered experience of lifetime](#) (News Guardian)
- [School helps record books for library](#) (News Post Leader)

Northumberland

- [Allendale School plan could run out of time](#) (Journal)
- [Rural Northumberland schools at risk under new system](#) (Journal)
- [Blyth Bede Academy pupil helps send satellite into space](#) (Journal)
- [School helps record books for library](#) (News Post Leader)
- [Purchase a promise to pay for school days out](#) (Northumberland Gazette)
- [Love is in the air for pupils with poems and artworks](#) (Northumberland Gazette)
- [Students have designs on a facelift for disused pool](#) (Northumberland Gazette)
- [All growing great for pupils' green dream](#) (Northumberland Gazette)
- [Prestigious award for Amble First School](#) (Northumberland Gazette)

Stockton

- [Detailed proposals to build a new school and houses for Ingleby Barwick are submitted](#) (Northern Echo)

South Tyneside

- [School set to be a sponsored academy](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Student sport awarded Lotto cash](#) (Shields Gazette)

Sunderland

- [Sunderland pupils recreate the world of Roald Dahl in scarecrow form](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Pupils fundraise in memory of tutor who died of pneumonia](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Sunderland student's stint on X Factor](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Smart school kids get on their bikes](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Primary's significant improvements](#) (Sunderland Echo)

Regional News

- [North East schools inspector issues wages warning to teachers](#) (Journal)
- [North East students buck national GCSE trend](#) (Journal)
- [We need to sustain economic growth in the region](#) (NE Business)

Top national education news

Universities need to do more says Alan Milburn

After undertaking a recent review on social mobility, government advisor and former Labour MP for Darlington, Alan Milburn wants universities to "redouble their efforts" to give places to all those with talent and potential.

Milburn says that currently, universities spend hundreds of millions of pounds giving poor students bursaries and subsidised tuition fees to take degree courses. However his report claims that many pupils fail to apply in the first place because of poor performance at school. "The principal reason... is not money, it's qualifications," he told The Sunday Times. "Universities should offer guaranteed interviews and, where appropriate, lower offers to less-advantaged pupils in schools they support."

- [Unis 'should offer poor pupils automatic interview'](#) (BBC News)
- [Alan Milburn: 'school failure creating barrier to university'](#) (Telegraph)
- [Social mobility: Universities need to do more says Alan Milburn](#) (BBC News)
- [Helping pupils to stay in education](#) (Sunderland Echo)

Few bedtime stories for some children, says survey

In a survey, commissioned by Pearson to mark the launch of its Enjoy Reading campaign, it was discovered that nearly a third of UK parents read their children a bedtime story once a week or less.

Literacy experts say one of the key ways of helping children to learn to read and write well is to give them a love of books. They say the youngest children can enjoy looking at simple books, being told about what is going on or hearing the sounds of the words and rhymes and that this ultimately helps them understand the meaning of words and develop their speech and language.

- [Few bedtime stories for some children, says survey](#) (BBC News)

Michael Gove attacks schools' 'low standards' in Labour-led inner cities

In a speech to the thinktank Politeia this week, Education Secretary, Michael Gove revealed that he is writing to all MPs in areas of school underperformance, demanding they side with him to open up the education system in their areas "to the new providers who can raise standards." Gove stated that "there are hundreds more under-performing primary schools, many concentrated in other disadvantaged communities, where we need to act." He added "In a number of communities the local forces of conservatism have worked against reform and have thrown every possible obstacle in the path of potential academy sponsors and free school founders trying to make a difference."

- [Michael Gove attacks schools' 'low standards' in Labour-led inner cities](#) (Guardian)

Resources and Opportunities

£20,000 scholarship for top graduates to train as Computer Science teachers

As part of the Government's mission to ensure Britain competes globally, Education Secretary Michael Gove has set out plans to boost the teaching of Computer Science by training up the first generation of outstanding new teachers in this vital subject.

Top graduates will be enticed into a career in teaching with a new prestigious £20,000 scholarship programme set up with BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT and supported by industry experts such as Microsoft, Facebook, BT and IBM. Around 50 scholarships will be available in the first year. Any graduate with a 2.1 or first class degree will be eligible to apply for the scholarship to do a Computer Science Initial Teacher Training (ITT) course. To find out more [click here](#) or register your interest via an email to: bcsacademy@hq.bcs.org.uk

Calling all School Business Managers...tell us what you want!

Changing school structures, pressure to do more with less, new partnerships, reforms to regulations, procurement challenges and much, much more – the role and responsibilities of School Business Managers are becoming increasingly complex and demanding.

To help you access the support and advice you need and to create opportunities for you to collaborate with colleagues and share best practise, SCHOOLS NorthEast is arranging a conference and programme of events especially for you! Like all SCHOOLS NorthEast events these will be offered at no or low cost to schools, at venues across the region. To make sure we know exactly what you would like and need we would be very grateful if you would please take part in this short survey: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2ZTNRQ6> and to register your interest for these events email info@schoolsnortheast.com

Free Educational Psychologist support from One Education

One Education Educational Psychology Connect is an expert confidential telephone and e-mail advice service and online resource. It aims to connect you with an educational psychologist who can provide practical support and psychological advice regarding good practice.

One Education is offering all SCHOOLS NorthEast members free access to this service until Christmas. To find out more visit the website www.epconnect.co.uk, call 0844 967 1115 email@epconnect@oneeducation.co.uk.

Events

SCHOOLS NorthEast Events:

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@schools-northeast.com or call 0191 204 8866

Other Events:

Free training day: Improving extra-curricular activities - 26 October

UFA in partnership with Continyou, with support from the Department for Education, is offering a free training day to help schools improve the extra-curricular activities they offer children. The training consists of a morning focusing on raising the quality of your extra-curricular activities and the afternoon on monitoring and evaluating the outcomes.

The event will take place at the Langdale Centre in Wallsend between 9.00am and 3.30pm. To book your place contact Lynne Shilton at lynne.shilton@northtyneside.gov.uk or call 0191 6438537 or book directly at: www.Continyounorthtynesideoct12.eventbrite.com

'Closing the Achievement Gap' seminar – 6 November

Do you want to hear about successful approaches to closing the achievement gap? Would you like to visit a school that is producing excellent outcomes for all children? Do you want to consider what research and evidence about approaches to narrowing the gap tells us? If so then the National Education Trust will be hosting a seminar on 'Closing the Achievement Gap.'

The event will take place on Tuesday 6 November at Oakdene Primary School in Stockton-on-Tees, between 9.30am and 1.00pm. Please [click here](#) for more information and [click here](#) for online booking. The cost of attending is £10 per delegate. If you have any queries please email: events@nationaleducationtrust.net

Procurement: A legal and financial headache or an exciting opportunity? – 13 November

Clive Owen and Co LLP has teamed up with the Department for Education and Blackett Hart and Pratt Solicitors, to give you the opportunity to find out what you need to know to ensure you implement an effective procurement strategy to avoid any headaches.

This free event will take place on Tuesday 13 November between 4pm and 6pm at Teesside University, Darlington Campus on Vicarage Road (DL1 1JW).

To reserve your place contact Margaret or Sarah on 01325 349700 or email info@cliveowen.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...Dr David Hemery

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 Dr David Hemery CBE. David, who presented at the SCHOOLS NorthEast Summit, is an Olympic Champion and World Record Holder in the 400m hurdles. David has also been a coach, teacher, leader and writer and, following his Presidency of UK Athletics, he is now Vice-Chair of the British Olympic Association.

Click this link to see David's Manifesto: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yadssipWoro&feature=g-up>

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