

SCHOOLS NorthEast Weekly Update - Week 15

December 13th, 2011 at 5:43 pm



The banner features the 'SCHOOLS NorthEast' logo on the left, with the tagline 'The future of our region is in school'. The main text 'WEEKLY UPDATE' is in large blue letters. On the right is the 'CH-ARTED' logo. Below the main text, a dark blue box contains white text: 'Sponsored by CH-ARTED, arts and educations resources crafted by The Customs House. CH-ARTED deliver programmes for children including Arts in Schools programmes and Theatre in Education. To find out more please click here.'

In this issue

- All the latest regional and national education news
- Head to Head with Steve Burrows from Ormesby School in Middlesbrough
- Details of school improvement events for 2012
- Information of how to maximise your Free School Meal take up
- Festive greetings from all at SCHOOLS NorthEast

Focus on...extra funding through Pupil Premium

Good news for North East schools as yesterday's announcement of the Government plans to increase the Pupil Premium and extend the eligibility criteria will bring £31m in extra funding according to reports in the local press.

From next year the Pupil Premium will increase by £112 to £600 per pupil and more children will qualify for the Premium as the Government has extended its reach to cover any child that has been registered for Free School Meals (FSM) in the past six years. The Journal estimates this will mean nearly 80,000 children in the North East will benefit from the expansion.

The move comes after many Head Teachers and education commentators have highlighted the limitations of the current eligibility criteria in reaching all disadvantaged children and young people. Children who have been eligible for Free School Meals at any point in their school career have been found to have consistently lower educational attainment than those who have never been eligible and in the North East just 31% of pupils eligible for Free School Meals leave school with five good GCSEs including English and Maths.

Announcing the changes, Children's Minister Sarah Teather said "For too long social background has been a deciding factor in a child's achievement and future prospects. In a fair society, it's the Government's responsibility to close the gulf in achievement, where the poorest children are less likely to leave school with five good GCSEs than their less deprived classmates."

Head Teachers and local politicians have widely welcomed the increase in funding and change to the criteria however some have raised concerns about where the 'new' money was coming from and whether it would only offset cuts in other services or budgets.

Pat Glass, Labour MP for North West Durham and member of the Education Select Committee, said: "I am, of course, delighted at any additional funding targeted at disadvantaged pupils, but this

increase in funding is coming to schools at the same time as Local Authority funding is being slashed, schools are losing their additional education support allowances and they are having to pay for specialist support services that they previously received free. I am, therefore, not convinced that this is new money and not just more recycling of existing funds.”

Coverage also includes discussions with School leaders as to how they use the Pupil Premium in their schools . Callum Kidd, Head Teacher of Carr Hill Primary School in Gateshead, where 62% of children are eligible for free school meals, said: “It is up to the schools on how the money is spent, but there are guidelines. We look at all of our children and their attainment and those pupils who are considered to be ‘slow movers’ in terms of their progress are put into key groups to get additional support from teachers and teaching assistants. I used this year’s Pupil Premium allocation to recruit more teaching assistants who give one-to-one tuition to targeted pupils.”

At this year’s SCHOOLS NorthEast Summit, Prof Rob Coe of Durham University presented a guide to the most impactful way for schools to allocate the Pupil Premium based on the Sutton Trust’s toolkit which can be accessed [here](#)

In related news, Alan Milburn, ex MP for Darlington and the Government’s Social Mobility Tsar, today delivered a major speech on child poverty suggesting that progress has started to decline and that the Government’s child poverty target would “simply be missed”. He called on the Government to focus efforts on early years support and childcare stating that the countries that have made the biggest improvements in both reducing poverty and increasing social mobility invest heavily in these areas.

- [Pupil premium cash for poorer children rising to £600](#) (BBC News)
- [Government to extend number of children to get £488 pupil premium](#) (Guardian)
- [Child poverty ‘to rise for years,’ says social mobility advisor Alan Milburn](#) (Independent)
- [North East school to receive cash to help poorer children](#) (Journal Live)
- [More children will receive pupil premium](#) (Northern Echo)

In the news

North East education news

Darlington

- [School’s academy bid hit by funding wrangle](#) (Northern Echo)
- [Darlington academy plans to open satellite primary schools](#) (Northern Echo)

Durham

- [Dinner is off after County Durham school project ends](#) (Journal Live)
- [Designer Bruce Oldfield inspires visiting Spennymoor students](#) (Northern Echo)
- [Children dress as Santa for charity run](#) (Northern Echo)

Gateshead

- [Blaydon girl Erin wins Olympic badge contest](#) (Chronicle Live)

Hartlepool

- [Christmas story for school](#) (Hartlepool Mail)

Middlesbrough

- [Parents hit out at faith school transport cuts](#) (Gazette Live)
- [£6m Berwick Hills Primary School means happy early Christmas](#) (Gazette Live)
- [X Factor’s Amelia Lily returns to her old school](#) (Northern Echo)

Newcastle

- [Gallowgate pupils learn about historic crimes](#) (Chronicle Live)

North Tyneside

- [Longbenton pupils create nativity at pet shelter](#) (Chronicle Live)

Northumberland

- [Whole World of praise for school](#) (News Guardian)
- [Parent work sees school gain award](#) (News Post Leader)
- [Cornhill school closer to closure](#) (Berwick Advertiser)
- [Rock Hall School to close at end of summer term](#) (Berwick Advertiser)
- [Berwick Youth Council idea gets initial backing](#) (Berwick Advertiser)
- [Beith backs free rail for students](#) (Berwick Advertiser)
- [Drastic fall in school roll at Cornhill](#) (Berwick Advertiser)
- [Closure looms closer for village school](#) (Northumberland Gazette)
- [Still time to sign up for Olympics](#) (Northumberland Gazette)
- [Scheme has pupils buzzing](#) (Northumberland Gazette)
- [Belsay First School bidding for Wish money](#) (Chronicle Live)
- [Beaconhill Primary in call for Wish cash help](#) (Chronicle Live)
- [High School Musical is uplifting](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Plucky youngsters play harp](#) (Hexham Courant)

Stockton

- [‘Good’ rating after school inspection](#) (Gazette Live)

Sunderland

- [School gets good report](#) (Sunderland Echo)

South Tyneside

- [Man has finger bitten off at school nativity](#) (Northern Echo)
- [End in sight for school upgrade](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [School gets on the right track](#) (Shields Gazette)

Redcar

- [Pupils get chance to pier into future](#) (Gazette Live)
- [Students step up fight to save travel scheme](#) (Northern Echo)

National education news

Head Teacher positions ‘hard to fill’

The target culture, rising workloads and cuts in pay are putting teachers off from stepping up to the role of Headship, according to new research commissioned by the NAHT. More than a third of primary schools and almost a fifth of secondary schools were found to struggle when advertising the position last year. Roman Catholic schools face the most acute shortages because of their recruitment criteria.

- [Schools facing head teacher shortage in pay row](#) (Telegraph)

- [Leadership crisis for schools as report shows a 'worrying trend' in headteacher shortages](#) (Daily Mail)

New standard to recognise 'Master Teachers'

A new 'Master Teacher Standard' to recognise outstanding teachers should be introduced, according to an independent review commissioned by the Government. The award would be given to those who have a "deep understanding of their subject specialisms, going beyond the programmes they teach". Teachers would also have to have gained the respect of both parents and pupils and be highly regarded by colleagues to become known as "master teachers".

- [Great teachers could become 'Master Teachers'](#) (DfE)
- [Standard proposed to recognise excellent teachers](#) (CYPN)

Two-thirds of children fail phonetics reading test

The pilot scheme of a new primary school reading check indicated two thirds of pupils are likely to fail the test when it is introduced next year. Figures released from the pilot show that just 32 per cent of six-year-olds reached the expected level set by about teachers. Schools minister Nick Gibb coined the test "appropriately challenging" and stated, "we need to face up to the uncomfortable truth that, despite the hard work of teachers, not enough of our children are able to read to a high enough standard. We must adjust our sights if we are to tackle the country's reading problem."

- [Two-thirds 'fail new primary phonics reading check'](#) (BBC News)
- [A third of children reach expected level in pilot of phonetics check](#) (DfE)

Events

School improvement seminars

SCHOOLS NorthEast commercial member, Go4 Schools, is hosting four seminars on school improvement for Secondary Schools. Go4 Schools aims to support whole-school improvement and make it easier to capture, analyse and share classroom data in real time; allowing staff, students and parents to make better decisions. There will be two events on each day in the following locations:

1 February 2012 – 4.30pm – The Education Centre Stockton
2 November 2012 – 4.30pm – Newcastle

To see how other schools have benefited from Go4 School's support you can access the following case studies on [Chantry High School](#) and [Neale-Wade Community College](#). SCHOOLS NorthEast Enhanced Members are eligible for a 5% discount on the cost of a one year license.

To book a place, please visit <http://www.go4schools.com> or contact Jackie Davies on 01793 516326

Give parents a break this Christmas and engage their children in sport

SCHOOLS NorthEast Commercial Supporter ACG Sports is working in partnership with Benfield Centre for Sporting Excellence and Fusion to deliver a 4 day activity programme during the Christmas holidays. The programme is designed to get children (aged 5-11) involved in fun activity sessions, delivered by professional coaches. These events are a great way for children to interact with others and to try activities they may not have participated in before. This is also an opportunity for parents to relax, knowing their children are in a safe environment and having fun throughout the holiday period.

The event will run from **Monday 19 December** through till **Thursday 22 December** between 10am and 3pm and cost just £2.50 per child, per day.

To advise parents how to book a place for their child please call ACG Sports on 0191 5194322 or click [here](#) to view their website.

Gain inspiration from local 'improved' school

Looking for new ideas for school improvement in 2012? Take inspiration from Woodham Community Technology College in Durham, who recently transformed their culture through the 'Success Zone Approach' offered by SCHOOLS NorthEast Commercial Supporter, AT Consultants for Change. As a result the school has seen significant improvements across a range of areas including behaviour and attainment.

To showcase their achievement and help inspire other schools, the school is holding an open day for Head Teachers. The event will include presentations from the Head Teacher and staff, classroom observations and the opportunity to discuss the Success Zone™. The open day will be on **January 17 2012** between 9.30am and 1.00pm, with lunch provided. Tickets cost £30 per person and you can book a place by emailing Lindsey@atconsultantsforchange.com.

Breakfast session on procurement and services improvement

In the tough economic times, schools need to ensure that procurement delivers best value. To support schools in exploring a range of procurement strategies, such as the potential of cluster buying SCHOOLS NorthEast Commercial Supporter, Aura, are holding a morning seminar. The event on January 24 2012, will begin with breakfast at 8.30am with an anticipated finish of 10.15am and will be held at Muckle LLP offices in Newcastle.

To book a free place please contact Marisa Nethercott at m.nethercott@auranewcastle.com

Resources and ideas

Guardian Teacher Network - Free resources for teachers

If your teachers are looking for high quality lesson plans, activities and presentations then why not suggest they join the free Guardian Teacher Network. Thousands of teachers already use the network every day to help them plan and deliver innovative and engaging lessons. Click [here](#) to sign up.

Free School Meals matter

The Pupil Premium means that it has never been more important to ensure all eligible students in your school are receiving their Free School Meals. Many parents simply do not realise their child is eligible which can be detrimental to themselves as well as affecting your funding. SCHOOLS NorthEast Commercial Supporter, School Food Trust, have devised a toolkit containing information about the pupil premium including tackling stigma and eligibility criteria, and a host of practical tips and resources such as posters, parent letters and leaflets. Click [here](#) to utilise the resource.

Grants and funding

Funding for 'hands on' science projects

If you're looking to bring science to life in your school then the Partnership Grants scheme provides grants of up to £3,000 for science projects run at a primary or secondary school. The scheme gives pupils the chance to work in a 'hands-on' environment with a scientist or engineer, gaining a better understanding of what they do and of the science involved.

For your chance to benefit from this grant, prepare yourself for the next round of applications which will open on **3 January 2012** and close on **24 February 2012**. If you need inspiration for your project then have a look at the case studies and project summaries of work which has been funded in the past by visiting <http://royalsociety.org/education/partnership>. Applications can be made through the online portal (accessible when the next round is open).

Head to Head

This week we spoke to Steve Burrows from Ormesby School in Middlesbrough.

This week was...the first real taste of winter for us with ice and gale force winds. We secured our supply of salt and grit for the season but have no solution for wind in school!

The two best things that happened at school last week were... 1) I was asked to judge the inter class Christmas tree competition at Priory Woods Special School and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. I have delegated the job of Santa! 2) A sticky toffee pudding made by year 11 hospitality and catering pupils. I did not delegate the tasting.

The biggest disappointment at school last week was... I don't have one. I just don't do disappointed.

The funniest thing that happened at school last week was... I was asked to the OAP Christmas Dinner by a pupil.

One thing that would have made my job easier last week was... If everyone I had meetings with had been on time, however I must admit to being late to one myself!

Top of my to-do list for this week is...RAISEonline analysis/action planning and the working party document "Financial Education and the Curriculum"

My hero of last week was... A pupil who stopped a fight over a book!

My villain of last week was... our ICT managed service provider.

Question from last week's Head Teacher: How many students have you permanently excluded in the last two years, did you have to...? Four, and yes.

My question for next week's head Teacher is.... What are you planning to do with your ROL?

Star pupil...running Santa's

Nearly 500 young people took part in a festive fun run fundraiser at Durham Johnston School. The students and school staff dressed in Santa costumes as part of the Santa Run raising money for St Cuthbert's Hospice.

[Children dress as Santa for charity run](#) (Northern Echo)

Could try harder... cheating exam boards

This week's news was flooded by stories of cheating exam boards and the underhand tactics used to increase market share. The reports have prompted the Government to launch an investigation, with reforms to the system likely to follow.

[Michael Gove responds to the Daily Telegraph investigation](#) (DfE)

[Exam boards could be closed down over cheating revelations](#) (Telegraph)

[Profit motive has created corrupt education system, say teachers](#) (Independent)

[Edexcel went from charity to £1bn business](#) (Telegraph)

And Finally...listen to Ross Noble represent his old school on Radio 5 Live

Regular BBC 5 Live listeners will know every Sunday Danny Baker's show looks at the week's news in the style of a classic school curriculum. Each week guests represent their old schools in the quiz-

like format. Those of you who tuned in last week would have heard Comedian Ross Noble describing his school days in Cramlington. Click [here](#) to listen to the amusing show on BBC iPlayer.

Have a great (final) week!

Have you signed up as a SCHOOLS NorthEast Enhanced Member yet? For full details on the great range of benefits available to Enhanced Members, click [here](#).

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.

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all at
SCHOOLS NorthEast!**