

## SCHOOLS NorthEast weekly update

*The future of our region is in school*

### This week...

The DCSF launches a new campaign to help young people to make more informed choices about contraception, look after their sexual health and avoid unwanted pregnancies.

'Contraception – worth talking about' aims to promote more open and honest discussions about sex, relationships and contraception among 16- to 24-year-olds and their parents. Research shows that a lack of knowledge, and misinformation, coupled with poor attitudes and communication is currently hindering their safer sexual behaviour.

Despite recent progress, with teenage births down 23 per cent to the lowest level for 15 years, there is still more to do. Research and evidence shows that better communication and more knowledgeable conversations about sexual health and relationships are crucial to helping people make informed choices and take care of their health.

The campaign will:

- give people the facts about sexual health
- encourage people to talk about sex and contraception - research shows that open and honest conversations about sex and relationships can stop young people having sex too early
- raise awareness of the range of contraception that can fit with different people's lifestyles
- encourage people to take a chlamydia test.

The news comes just a week after the government confirmed that PSHE (personal, social, health and economic) education is to become compulsory, after the DCSF found that four in five parents thought that all young people should receive RSE (relationships and sex education).

The launch also coincides with World AIDS Day 2009 which takes place on Tuesday 1 December, aiming to raise awareness of the disease while promoting fundraising. The theme of this year's event is HIV: Reality, looking at the real life stories of people living with HIV and AIDS.

The World AIDS Day website has a special schools section where you can download a schools pack containing lesson plans, ideas for assemblies and HIV fact sheets. There is also a link to a schools fundraising pack containing ideas and tips for holding your own World AIDS Day event.

Click [here](#) to find out more about what your school can do for World AIDS Day.

### News and events

#### **Free IAG Event - Impartial Careers Education**

Recent research by the National College suggests that IAG is integral to school effectiveness and improvement. Strong leadership of this area is key to ensure that information and support systems are aligned with curriculum changes.

Where comprehensive IAG provision is in place and personalised to the needs of individuals, students are supported to make the right choices and go on to succeed both in further learning and in their future career. Put simply, where IAG is good to outstanding, life chances are enhanced. It is therefore essential to drive forward the leadership of all these aspects at school and college levels.

These free events are suitable for senior leaders, members of senior leadership teams, LAs, 14-19 and IAG partners. They will:

- share the National College's research findings and case studies of effective practice
- show how structures, systems and practice might be combined and integrated to implement a coherent and relevant careers education and IAG programme
- include workshops to discuss the DCSF's new principles of impartial careers education and statutory guidance recommendations.

The North East event will be held on Tuesday 1 December at the Dryden Centre in Gateshead. To book your place visit [www.nationalcollege.co.uk/iag](http://www.nationalcollege.co.uk/iag).

### **Traidcraft Snack Attack Challenge**

Take part in Traidcraft's Snack Attack Challenge – a competition for year groups 3-13 (and equivalent) to invent a new Fairtrade snack, its packaging and a marketing campaign.

Whether a healthy snack or an addition to Traidcraft's confectionery range, the Snack Attack Challenge is an opportunity for students to use their creativity and develop their business skills. With links to many subjects including DT, English and literacy, citizenship, enterprise and IT, the competition can be run as part of the curriculum or as an activity in a Fairtrade club or school group.

A range of prizes are up for grabs including £350 for the school, goody bags, a visit and prize giving presentation. Traidcraft also hopes to make one of the snack ideas a reality.

The closing date for entries is 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 so you could even make the Snack Attack Challenge part of your activities in Fairtrade Fortnight.

All entries must follow the guidelines outlined in the full competition pack which can be downloaded from [www.traidcraft.co.uk/snackattack](http://www.traidcraft.co.uk/snackattack).

### **School Librarian of the Year award**

Nominations are now open for the 2010 School Librarian of the Year award. The School Library Association created this Award in 2004 in response to the need for recognition of the excellent work that is carried out in school libraries every day, and to highlight best practice through celebrating those whose work is outstanding. Nominees do not need to be members of the SLA, and may be from any phase of education.

You have until 15 January 2010 to make your nomination, and full information, including the nomination form and guidelines, can be found at [www.sla.org.uk/slya.php](http://www.sla.org.uk/slya.php)

### **DCSF: Be involved, make a difference**

The DCSF is looking at ways to better engage with teachers and pupils across England. Would you be interested in taking part in a pilot scheme to:

- Find out what the government does and how it works
- Know more about the work of the DCSF
- Share your views on the DCSF's policies with officials either at one of their offices or your school?

To register your interest or to find out more send your details to [be.involved@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:be.involved@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk).

News round-up

This week, the TES revealed the results of a survey which showed that just a third of primary teachers qualifying in the North East find permanent roles due to falling school rolls. Just 33 per cent of NQTs in the region got permanent jobs in primary schools compared with 73 per cent in London. Twenty per cent of those trained in the South West went into supply work, compared with just four per cent in the East of the country.

With teacher training available at Sunderland, Newcastle, Northumbria and Durham universities, North East NASUWT representative Mick Lyons says something must be done. He said: "The employment is just not here - I know 85 people applied for one primary job in Gateshead. Something needs to be done, because there are so many people graduating here still. They are unlikely to move to the South East to find jobs because they can't afford it. The irony is that this is the perfect reason to have smaller class sizes but councils aren't taking that approach."

Do you agree that reducing class sizes is the right direction to go? Do you worry about the current level of NQTs out of work? Let us know your thoughts on this, or any other of this week's stories, by emailing [think@schoolsnortheast.com](mailto:think@schoolsnortheast.com).

#### Regional news

- [North East parents fork out to clinch school spots](#) (Journal)
- [Ofsted deliver incredible tribute to Ellington school](#) (Journal)
- [North schools get top marks in report by Ofsted](#) (Journal)
- [Pupils to have their say on park revamp](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [St Peter's School can appeal closure plans](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Kylie's a vital link to school for Thornaby parents](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Whinney Banks School tower clock restored](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Pupils brush up on art skills](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Ian Ramsey C of E School pupils put forward school designs](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Mentoring trio a 'first' for Stockton Sixth Form College](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Ofsted brands Jarrow school 'inadequate'](#) (Evening Chronicle)
- [Jarrow school hits back at critical Ofsted](#) (Evening Chronicle)
- [Tiny school's fair brings flood of firms](#) (Hexham Courant)
- ['Good' report for Corbridge school](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Future of school building queried](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [BNP row teacher in bid to save his career](#) (Journal)
- [Parents condemn plans for new police HQ in Morpeth](#) (Journal)
- [Schools in the money after voucher contest](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Pupils dress up to bring stories to life](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Plans to build new school gets green light](#) (Evening Chronicle)
- [Trainee teachers encouraged to study in regions where jobs are scarce](#) (TES)
- [BNP teacher to take religious intolerance case to Europe](#) (TES)

#### Ofsted annual report

- [Ofsted warns 'mediocre' schools](#) (BBC News)
- ['Stubborn core' of bad teachers holds back progress – Ofsted](#) (Guardian)
- [School improvements undermined by 'stubborn' teachers](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Ofsted: half of academies not good enough](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Ofsted commentary: schools no longer free to educate](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Ofsted has become a jack of all trades](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Poor teaching 'hampering childrens' education'](#) (Independent)
- [Defiant Ofsted rejects mounting criticism of its performance](#) (Independent)

- [Christine Gilbert: Ofsted is up to the task of policing our schools](#) (Independent)
- [Christine Blower: Ofsted is \*not\* up to the task of policing our schools](#) (Independent)
- [Chief inspector cast as villain as she unveils Ofsted annual report](#) (TES)
- [Office for standards in self preservation](#) (TES)
- [Gilbert rejects fears that focus on raw results caps potential](#) (TES)

#### Muslim school funds row

- [Brown agrees to investigate claim extremists received public funding](#) (Guardian)
- [Muslim school accused of extremist links hits back at David Cameron](#) (Guardian)
- [Ed Balls hits back in row over funds given to Muslim Schools](#) (Guardian)
- [David Cameron condemns £113,000 award to schools linked with 'extremist' Muslim group](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Brown denies Tory claims over 'extremist' school funds](#) (BBC News)
- [Public cash 'did not go to schools fronting terrorism'](#) (Times)
- [David Cameron accused of 'divisive smears' over Islamic schools claim](#) (Times)
- [Balls accuses Cameron over Muslim schools claim](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Cameron claims 'extremist' schools given public money](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Brown denies Tory claim that £100,000 of public money was given to 'Muslim extremist schools'](#) (Daily Mail)
- [Cameron on the defensive after mistake over publicly funded Muslim schools](#) (Times)
- [Ed Balls comes out fighting – for 'racist' Islamic schools](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Ed Balls creates smokescreen over extremist school funding](#) (Daily Telegraph)

#### Other faith school news

- [Why Conservatives failed the test on Islamic schools](#) (Independent)
- [Faith schools 'better at tackling extremism'](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Faith schools 'strong on community cohesion'](#) (BBC News)
- [Faith schools are truly a blessing](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Islamic school fears](#) (TES)

#### Ofsted safeguarding

- [Safeguarding is a monster beyond our control](#) (TES)
- [The fight to stay safe](#) (Sunday Times)
- [Home-schooling parents may face criminal record checks](#) (Daily Mail)
- [Day of the door handles dawns in Ofsted safety crackdown](#) (TES)

#### National Challenge

- [National Challenge – a hindrance, not a help](#) (Guardian)

#### Changes to the PSHE curriculum

- [School lessons to tackle domestic violence outlined](#) (BBC News)
- [Classroom drive to curb violence in relationships](#) (Guardian)
- [Lessons on equality and domestic abuse for children of five](#) (Daily Mail)
- [This is no way to curb domestic violence](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [PSHE moves beyond sex and drugs to win respect for girls](#) (TES)

#### School efficiency drive

- [Ed Balls demands schools cut back on heating to save £750m](#) (Times)

- [Schools urged to save power in £750m efficiency drive](#) (BBC News)
- [Ed Balls demands schools cut back on heating to save £750m](#) (Times)

#### Special needs teaching

- [Schools face huge rise in special needs cases](#) (Independent)
- [Meet the latest challenge for every special needs teacher](#) (TES)
- [SEN pupils struggle as support programmes fail to make mark](#) (TES)

#### Poor boys crime link

- [Poor boys 'turned into criminals' at school](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [How schools 'turn white working-class boys to crime'](#) (Daily Mail)

#### Primary school news

- [Tories to give primaries posh touch](#) (TES)
- [1 in 4 primary teachers made ill through stress](#) (Independent)

#### Independent school news

- [Independent schools refusing to sign up for new diplomas](#) (Independent)
- [It's not all OK – croquet at independent schools](#) (TES)

#### Testing and exams

- [Poor teachers linked to GCSE grades slump](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Science exams may be too easy](#) (Sunday Times)
- [Exam regulator handed power to stop ministers 'distorting' league-table values](#) (TES)
- [Balls tackles teachers with a nod to Sats axe](#) (TES)

#### First female head for boys' school

- [It's a woman's world: Top female heads smash through boys' public school 'glass ceiling'](#) (TES)
- [No job for the boys as Abingdon school picks first woman head](#) (Guardian)
- [Private hell in a boys' public school](#) (Daily Telegraph)

#### School discipline

- [Tories propose no-notice pupil detentions](#) (Guardian)
- [Behaviour tsar slams Tory 'nonsense' over new powers to exclude](#) (TES)

#### Teacher discipline

- ['Bullying' headmistress 'reprimanded teachers for using the toilet too often'](#) (Daily Mail)
- [Lessons in ambition as more teachers aim for the top](#) (Independent on Sunday)
- [Five month suspension for dishonest teacher](#) (TES)
- [5-year classroom ban](#) (TES)
- [Cleared by crown court on pupil injury but banned from school for a year](#) (TES)

#### Other teacher news

- [Training amiss for teaching MOT, warn unions](#) (TES)
- [New teachers 'lack secure jobs'](#) (BBC News)

- [Excellence is colour neutral](#) (TES)
- [Federate or axe staff, Balls warns](#) (TES)

Parent Christmas vetting

- [Schools vet parents for Christmas festivities](#) (Sunday Times)
- [Parents vetted before being allowed to Christmas Carol service](#) (Daily Mail)

Language teaching

- [Teach English history 'in French'](#) (BBC News)
- [Halting language drop](#) (TES)

TES Myths – grammar schools

- [Myth: 'A return to grammar schools would improve standards and social mobility'](#) (TES)

Other education news

- [How to teach children about war – can Tattonia make the world a safer place?](#) (Guardian)
- [Sacked dinner lady to appeal to tribunal](#) (Independent)
- [Children 'becoming aggressive younger'](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Drive for free schools shifts gear](#) (TES)
- [A lifeline for the town that nearly drowned](#) (TES)
- [Bloodhound buzz](#) (TES)
- [New-builds at risk](#) (TES)
- [Unpopular is understandable – unfair is not](#) (TES)
- [Pupil Voice dubbed failure by children's commissioner](#) (TES)
- [Research reveals one-way traffic in global teaching skills exchange](#) (TES)
- [Knock knock – Who's there? A better grasp of English](#) (TES)
- [Boris Johnson announces first mayoral academy will open in September](#) (Guardian)

## Head to Head

This week we spoke to Carolyn Roberts, Head Teacher of Durham Johnston School, who told us about one of their pupils winning the Saatchi Gallery Sunday Telegraph Art Prize for Schools and how much they are enjoying their new building.

**This week was** a bit windy, but we don't care now. After moving from dodgy split site outdoor buildings into a wonderful single new building we still spend a lot of time on duty with big silly grins saying 'isn't this nice?'

**The two best things that happened at school last week were** firstly winning the Sunday Telegraph Saatchi Schools prize against international competition! We entered an exquisite pencil drawing of her Grandfather by Lauren Mincher, who joined us in the 6<sup>th</sup> form, and won the prize (not that it is remotely relevant, Eton had 2 shortlisted entries). Secondly, we sent off our tiny junior girls' cross country team to the national finals.

**The biggest disappointment at school last week was** talking to a great ITT student about her application to teach at an independent school

**The funniest thing that happened at school last week was** discovering that you get invited to do this when you have something to celebrate! I thought contributing heads were plucked at random and just happened to be winning something every week, and was quietly depressed. What a relief!

**One thing that would have made my job easier last week was** more money!

**Top of my to-do list for this week is** applying for a Confucius Classroom grant to build up our Mandarin teaching, so that Durham children can compete against the world's best on a stronger footing.

**My hero of last week was** Lauren and her picture, Sheila Hitchcock our Head of Art – and Derek the caretaker who teleported himself to me at the station when I'd left my train ticket on my desk.

**My villain of last week was** Kafkaesque bureaucracy.

**How do you respond to the possibility that your improving school might go down a grade due to the new Ofsted framework?** Mild panic and never letting the Evaluation Schedule out of my sight. Perhaps by staring distractedly at the damned thing I can become one with its contents – as good an idea as any contained within it.

**My question for next week's head is...** Why do we believe the jargon?

### Star pupil... *Lauren Mincher*

Congratulations to 18-year-old Lauren Mincher from Durham Johnson School who has beaten 19 other finalists to be awarded first prize in the Saatchi Gallery Sunday Telegraph Art Prize for Schools.

Lauren's portrait of her grandfather was described by the judges, who included Sir Peter Blake and Antony Gormley, as being 'beautifully observed', and will now be displayed in the Saatchi Gallery, along with the other finalists' work, from 3 December until 14 December.

The competition was open to schools both from Britain and around the world, and featured paintings, photography, collage, film and installations. Click [here](#) to see Lauren's prize winning piece.

### Could try harder... *new school buildings*

The recession could put an end to new high-quality school buildings, according to the outgoing head of the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment. Sir John Sorrell was speaking at the Partnerships for Schools design conference, and said progress which had seen better-designed classrooms was under threat and called for continued investment.

He said: "We must keep on investing in the school estate. And don't imagine that refurbishment and makeovers will solve all the problems. We still need to be investing in new-build schools."

## Opportunities and resources

### **Narrowing the gaps for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils**

New guidance materials are now available for teachers and early years practitioners in all schools and settings to help raise the achievement of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils.

'Building futures: Developing trust' (for early years foundation stage settings and schools) and 'Moving forward together' (primary and secondary schools) offer teaching, leadership and management strategies, case studies, approaches for developing an inclusive environment for your school and ideas for engaging pupils, parents, carers and the wider community.

Click [here](#) to access 'Building futures: Developing trust' and click [here](#) to access 'Moving forward together'.

### **Green Energy UK school resources**

Green Energy UK have produced a new toolkit showing pupils how to reduce emissions. The kit helps to monitor lighting, heating and electrical appliances.

They also have resources including assembly guides and additional projects to carry out around building a school pond and attract wildlife.

The resources, along with further information, can be accessed at [www.greenenergy.uk.com/schoolresources/default.aspx](http://www.greenenergy.uk.com/schoolresources/default.aspx).

### **Pirates galore!**

The most popular download this week on the TES website is Pirates Galore, an extensive collection of pirate related resources in the form of interactive presentations and printable documents for use in all key stages.

The resources can be used in a range of lessons for history, English or art and design. For a broader, theme-cased topic they could form the basis of a pirate-themed project incorporating films and characters. The slides can be used throughout the term and adapted as needed.

To access this extensive and engaging resource go to [www.tes.co.uk/pirates-galore](http://www.tes.co.uk/pirates-galore).

### **Sky Sports Living for Sport**

Sky Sports Living for Sport is a new free initiative which encourages pupils to take on different activities and learn new sports, from football to fencing; basketball to boccia. Teachers can use these sessions to help pupils work towards measurable self-development goals.

As pupils grow and develop they are encouraged to put their new skills into practice by developing and managing their own sporting events. Sky Sports are providing free online planning tools and sports kit, supporting teachers to help young people be the best they can be.

For more information visit [www.skysports.com/livingforsport](http://www.skysports.com/livingforsport).

### **Free Jeans for Genes resources**

Jeans for Genes have launched a brand new website where you can find great free resources to use in science, citizenship and PSHE for key stages 1 to 4.

Resources include short films and animations, interactive whiteboard activities, discussion ideas and assemblies for all.

For more information and to access the resources visit [www.genesareus.org](http://www.genesareus.org).

## Grants and funding opportunities

### **LinkedUp award scheme**

Are you working on an innovative language learning initiative that you could develop further by sharing it with others? If so, you could apply for funding through LinkedUp.

The LinkedUp award scheme offers funding for curriculum development projects carried out by groups of language teachers and other partners working in primary, secondary or 16-19 education in England. The scheme will fund more than 100 projects which aim to transform the language learning experience of learners.

LinkedUp will:

- Fund a range of projects varying in size and scope
- Help networks which already exist to take innovative and effective ideas further
- Encourage new networks to come together to develop projects
- Encourage collaboration between different organisations and sectors
- Provide a mentor for each funded project
- Award an additional recognition, the 'links mark', to all schools and other institutions involved in successful projects
- Connect with a range of networks to ensure that the results of the projects have impact and sustainability
- Publish resources and ideas from each project in a national resource band accessible to others

The next deadline for applications is 15 December 2009, for projects that will run from February to November 2010. For more information go to [www.linksintolanguages.ac.uk/linkedup/index.html](http://www.linksintolanguages.ac.uk/linkedup/index.html) or contact Ingrid Nyaundi on 0116 229 7454 or [Ingrid@all-languages.org.uk](mailto:Ingrid@all-languages.org.uk).

## And finally...

28-year-old former maths teacher Matt Parker has rebranded himself as a 'stand-up mathematician' in a bid to encourage people to get involved in maths.

Now based in the maths department of Queen Mary, University of London, Matt visits schools all over the country performing magic to raise the subject's popularity.

He says: "I show the children how I use maths to do magic. For example, with card tricks, magicians use number processes to keep track of the card. Some tricks use algebra, some use numbers, some geometry."

He also uses maths to analyse The Simpsons: "The show is written by mathematicians," he explains. "I play the episode and point out the mathematical jokes, the numbers in the background and the maths theme throughout. I can engage the kids because The Simpsons is cool. I can also show how, like the writers, studying maths at university can lead to all paths of life, from comedian to accountant."

If you would like more information you can email Matt at [matt@standupmaths.com](mailto:matt@standupmaths.com), or visit his website at [www.standupmaths.com/schools](http://www.standupmaths.com/schools).

Have a great week!