

In this issue

- All the latest regional and national education news
- Information of a £20,000 North East schools giveaway from The Journal
- Details of grants from The Historical Society and the National College
- Double Head to Head with Dave Stainthorpe, Head Teacher of Marden High School, and Stephen Quinlan, Head Teacher of Berwick upon Tweed High School

Focus on... *London 2012 Olympics – Get Set*

With just two years to go until the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games come to the UK, the London 2012 Get Set programme is the perfect way to build excitement in your school, give your pupils the chance to learn about the Olympic and Paralympic Values, and help them to play their part in the 2012 Games. So far over 450 schools and colleges from the North East have registered with Get Set, and it would be great to see as many more of you signing up as possible.

Get Set is the official London 2012 education programme for schools and colleges in the UK, driven by an interactive website featuring a range of flexible resources for 3 to 19-year-olds. The website is largely aimed at young people, offering films, games, activity ideas, and 'the Get Set map' showing the Olympic and Paralympic inspired activities taking place in schools.

The website also contains valuable information for teachers - the Educators section provides case studies and ideas for how Get Set could be used to enhance young people's learning, while the Go Further section looks at resources developed by Olympic and Paralympic sponsors across themes including internationalism, citizenship, sport and PE and culture and creativity.

In addition, the Get Set network, which was launched in September 2009, is a special community of schools and colleges demonstrating a commitment to the Olympic and Paralympic values. Any school or college in the UK can become a member, and access exclusive rewards including the right to use the London 2012 logo, a plaque and certificate, and the chance to enter exclusive competitions and prize draws to get their hands on London 2012 goodies.

To register for the Get Set programme and apply to join the Get Set network, go to www.london2012.com/getset.

In the news

Regional news

Durham

- [Going bananas for bananas at school](#) (Durham Times)

Gateshead

- [Children enjoy the fun on World Book Day](#) (Evening Chronicle)
- [Tyneside school offers Hands of Love to Ugandan orphans](#) (Evening Chronicle)
- [Children try Slumdog Millionaire style of education](#) (Journal)

Hartlepool

- [Parents' anger over school snub](#) (Hartlepool Mail)
- [Sounding out Throston School's talent](#) (Hartlepool Mail)
- [Manor school cook hangs up her apron](#) (Hartlepool Mail)
- [Parents lie to get kids into schools](#) (Hartlepool Mail)

Northumberland

- [Stakeford First School pupils devastated as trip cash stolen](#) (Journal)
- [Minister helps pupils with 'rubbish rockets'](#) (News Post Leader)
- [Ponteland Students teach a thing or two about Fairtrade](#) (Morpeth Herald)

Sunderland

- [Hearty lesson in health care for Pallion infants](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Secondary school of choice letters sent out to thousands of Wearside pupils](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Houghton Kepier School's sixth form dream is over](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Green pupils in French link-up](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [BNP race-row teacher fails to block hearing](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [New blow for BNP teacher Adam Walker](#) (Journal)
- [£16m replacement school likely to be approved in Seaham](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [BNP teacher must face disciplinary charges](#) (TES)

Teesside

- [Saltburn's Huntcliffe School celebrate 1,000 years of history in wall art](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Billingham pupils inspect school building work](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Pupils and staff to tackle tough charity ride](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Joy for parents as school places are allocated](#) (Evening Gazette)

Tyneside

- [Pupil attacked teacher with a chair](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Pupils are on song for good cause](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Meeting on schools' merger](#) (Shields Gazette)

Regionwide news

- [Search for inspirational teachers in North East Schools awards](#) (Journal)
- [Focus on pupils going to primary school](#) (Evening Chronicle)

National education news

More schools judges as failing under new Ofsted framework

An analysis of Ofsted figures has shown this week that between September 2009 and February 2010, the number of schools rated as inadequate doubled to one in 13, while the number rated as outstanding dropped by half to just one in 10 following inspections carried out under the new framework. Just over 2,000 schools were inspected over the five month period, and of those 150 were deemed inadequate.

- [One in 13 schools judged inadequate by Ofsted](#) (Guardian)
- [Ofsted judgements of inadequacy soar in latest data](#) (Guardian)

- [Failing schools 'double' under Ofsted reforms](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Heads angry over surge in school Ofsted failures](#) (Independent)
- [New Ofsted regime: 'Inadequate schools double'](#) (TES)
- [Ofsted's fresh approach leaves Heads 'furious' and union 'aghast'](#) (TES)

Progression of primary pupils

Official Government figures released this week have shown that nearly one in five primary school pupils are failing to make the progress expected of them in English and Maths. The proportion of pupils making the expected level in English is 82%, while the percentage for maths is 81%, although this is a rise of 3% from last year. The data is compiled by comparing children's levels of attainment at seven and 11, using teacher assessments and Sats results.

- [Nearly one in five primary pupils 'not progressing'](#) (BBC News)
- [Fifth of primary school pupils 'failing' in English and Maths](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [One in five primary school children 'not making progress' in maths and English](#) (Daily Mail)
- [Primary pupils 'weak in maths'](#) (Press Association)
- [Labour failing to make grade in basic English](#) (Daily Express)

Increase in Head Teachers sacked over the past year

Statistics revealed at the ASCL annual conference have shown record numbers of Head Teachers were sacked last year for failing to boost their schools' GCSE grades. At least 163 Heads or Deputy Heads were fired in 2009, 75% more than in 2007, and ASCL general Secretary John Dunford said that the figures were likely to increase over the coming years under plans for a new complaints procedure.

- [Sacking of school Head Teachers 'rises by 75%'](#) (Guardian)
- [More Head Teachers 'sacked' for missing GCSE targets](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Stricter inspection regime leads to more sacked heads](#) (Independent)
- ['Record number of heads' sacked](#) (BBC News)
- [Head Teachers vulnerable, says union](#) (Press Association)

Substantial rise in men training to teach

The number of men applying to become teachers has leapt by almost 50% in the past twelve months, with the number of total applicants up by a third. But even with the increase from 7,900 to 11,700, men still made up only 30% of the 38,800 applicants, according to figures released by the TDA. Luke Graham, Head of Recruitment at TDA, said applicants may have been prompted to change direction because their old career was not satisfying enough to justify its insecurity in a recession.

- [50% more men go into teaching](#) (Guardian)
- [50% rise in men applying to be primary teachers](#) (BBC News)
- [Number of men applying to be teachers soars by 49%](#) (Independent)

Click [here](#) for a full round-up of all the past week's education news.

Events and opportunities

Journal Tokens for Schools

The Journal, alongside Barclays Money Skills, is giving away £20,000 to North East schools in this year's Tokens for Schools campaign, with the prize money to be spent on educational projects including school trips, improving school grounds and bringing the school library up to date.

To be included in the scheme, your school will have to register at www.journallive.co.uk/schools by Friday 19 March, then it's up to your pupils, teachers and their friends and families to collect as many tokens as possible from The Journal for the chance to win the top prize for your school!

Tokens will be printed in The Journal from Monday to Saturday from Monday 29 March until Saturday 8 May, with additional bonus tokens appearing on certain days during the campaign, and the competition is open to all maintained schools within the circulation area of The Journal. Good Luck!

Sustainable Schools Events

There are two Sustainable schools events taking place in the North East this month:

- The Family fun science weekend and Doorways to Sustainable Schools event takes place at Alnwick Garden on 13 and 14 March. Teachers and Governors are invited to this weekend which offers advice on how to become a sustainable school. Bring along proof of your employment or involvement with your school to receive a free pass for up to two adults and four children.
- The Tees Valley Sustainable Schools conference takes place at the Middlesbrough Teaching and Learning Centre on Monday 29 March, and aims to give senior management and Governors an insight into the sustainable schools agenda. Speakers include Leszek Ivaskow (Ofsted) and Ian Taylor (DCSF). To book a place email andrea.carling@groundwork.org.uk or call 01287 625 3263.

Schools who are represented at either of the events can enter a free prize draw to win a free trip for 50 pupils and teachers to either Alnwick Garden or Washington Wetland Centre, including transport, by simply completing a feedback form on the day.

2010 Art Fund Prize – vote for The Great North Museum!

Newcastle's Great North Museum one of just 11 nationwide in the running for the 2010 Art Fund Prize for museums and galleries, and they need your help to win! You can vote for the museum at www.artfundprize.org.uk, and if you're not familiar with their exhibitions and the fantastic work done by Tyne and Wear Museums, click [here](#) to look at the website.

Many of you will no doubt have organised school trips to the museum since it reopened after its full refurbishment early last year. As well as spectacular objects from the Ancient Greeks and mummies from Ancient Egypt, a planetarium and a life-size T-Rex dinosaur skeleton, they offer facilitated workshops to schools, and current themes include 'Forensic Investigations', 'Classify This' and '99% Ape: An Introduction to Human Evolution'. To book a trip call (0191) 222 6865 or email greatnorthmuseum@ncl.ac.uk.

New special schools to be set up in South Shields and Hebburn

South Tyneside Council have announced a competition open to anybody who would like to be involved in setting up two new special schools to open in September 2012. A seminar for potential proposers will take place on 22 March to engage and provide networking opportunities, explain the process of school competitions and what is entailed in preparing and submitting a bid to open a school, and to describe sources of information and help.

Proposers might include parent and community groups, private and charitable companies, voluntary groups, and existing schools or groups of schools who wish to set up another school under a shared Trust. If you would like to attend the seminar please contact Jan Tyler on 01287 610404 or email jan@dtw.co.uk, and click [here](#) for more information.

Grants and funding

Historical Association Teacher Bursaries

The Historical Association are offering bursaries of up to £1000 to teachers or small groups of teachers who can demonstrate their ability to further the cause of history in their school or college. Possible proposals could include research into an aspect of teaching and learning, the curriculum or organisation of history in schools that has not been undertaken before, the production of teacher guidance resources or CPD materials or the production of pupil resources.

Applications need to be received by the end of April. For full information, click [here](#).

National College Early Headship Grant

Early Headship Provision (EHP) provides a grant of £1,300 for new Head Teachers to undertake leadership development activities as they embark on this key change in their professional lives, and is available to Head Teachers and acting Head Teachers during their first three years of headship.

The deadline for applications for the grant is 31 March, and you will need your email address, your contact telephone numbers, your school name and address and if you have qualified teacher status you will need to provide your Teacher's Reference Number (also referred to as DfE, DfES number eg 70/12345). For full information and to apply click [here](#), or call 0845 609 0009.

Cash prizes from the ICT Excellence Awards 2010

The ICT Excellence Awards is an awards scheme for schools, local authorities and other organisations supporting schools, aiming to identify and reward whole school excellence in ICT and reward those organisations which support school improvement with ICT. Schools can enter one of four categories: 'best whole-school', 'beyond the school', 'leadership, management and collaboration' and 'learning experience'.

There will be cash prizes awarded to the winning school from each region in each of the four categories. Click [here](#) for full information on the awards and how your school can enter, but remember the deadline for entries is 24 March so you'll have to be quick!

Resources and ideas

Explore Renewables: Carbon Mixer for Schools

The Carbon Mixer for Schools is a free educational package for North East schools drawing on the existing Carbon Mixer commercial tool used by architects, developers and planners. Pupils take on the role of 'carbon Consultant' to a range of demanding clients, and have to experiment with renewable and fossil-fuel energy sources to find the perfect balance between energy demand, output, payback and carbon emissions.

Information about the Carbon Mixer can be found on the Explore Renewables website at www.explorerenewables.co.uk, and if you would like any further information please contact Tom Bradley on (01670) 357685.

FILMCLUB

FILMCLUB is a new scheme which gives pupils and teachers the chance to explore films through after school film clubs, and is completely free for maintained schools to join. It offers young people the chance to watch and learn from over 4000 films, from vintage cinema right through to the latest blockbusters.

It has already received the endorsement of SCHOOLS NorthEast patron Lord Puttnam who said: "I'm a huge fan of this initiative and I'm going to do everything in my power to help it become a success.

Not only can it enrich the quality of our lives, it can help us arrive at a far better understanding of the lives of others”, and Prof Mel Ainscow, who recently delivered a breakfast seminar for SCHOOLS NorthEast members, who said: “I think FILMCLUB is at the heart of the question of what modern schools should be about. It has a role to play helping children do well in their work - but just as importantly, it's about how to live with and understand each other”.

For full information and to sign up to the scheme, go to www.filmclub.org.

Speaking and listening in secondary English online course

Talk is at the heart of learning and progress in English classrooms and across the curriculum. The 'Teaching Speaking and Listening e-learning modules' help secondary English teachers strengthen their teaching of speaking and listening.

This online course consists of three modules: leading improvement, teaching specific objectives and strengthening assessment of speaking and listening. Linked with other publications on speaking and listening, it is full of practical ideas and filmed examples of real lessons. To access this course, visit www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies/ad27/speaking.

Head to Head

We have a double Head to Head this week – first of all we spoke to Dave Stainthorpe, Head Teacher of Marden High School in Cullercoats, North Tyneside. He told us about a visit which has helped to visualise their forthcoming new build, and reinforced just how important the role of a Head Teacher's PA can be!

This week was challenging, frustrating, surprising, enlightening, exhausting and enjoyable – in fairly equal measures - so just like any other week really! With an Ofsted inspection looming in the next month or so, everyone is even more focused than usual on lesson plans, monitoring, reviewing, feedback, marking, leadership, accountability, progress and attainment, achievement, safeguarding, community cohesion, equality and diversity, so perhaps the 'exhausting' aspect of the week just tipped the scales.

The two best things that happened at school last week were firstly, capturing the toilet vandals... life should be a lot better for all the decent children who do not appreciate graffiti, broken plumbing and filth! The second highlight of the week was visiting one of Northumbria University's new state of the art buildings (on the site of the old Manors Cinema) as part of our BSF 'Change Team' programme. This just gave us hint of the fantastic new building that we should have at Marden High in about 4 years time for the little family of schools we are forming.

The biggest disappointment at school last week was discovering that the Diploma steering group had democratically adopted a Maoist approach to distributing the funding we receive. So our successful line now funds those who do not recruit as well... perhaps we will be sent off to the country for re-education soon.

The funniest thing that happened at school last week – To cut a long story short, and to protect the identity of those involved, a conversation overhead at a school gate (not even our school gate!) turned into a series of Chinese whispers which came out the other end as a parent was moving to Russia to become a pole dancer! However, following an investigation I am pleased to report that all is well and that they are actually moving to Cumbria, with no intention of becoming a pole dancer, or any other kind of dancer for that matter.

One thing that would have made my job easier last week would have been if everyone just did what they were asked, when they were asked - or even better, didn't have to be asked in the first place!

Top of my to-do list for this week is complete the Action Plan following our recent Assisted Review.

My hero of last week was my PA in her little silver jeep when she came to rescue a very soaked though me, when I got caught in the most torrential downpour trying to walk to the SCHOOLS NorthEast offices last Friday having just dropped off my car at a garage for a repair. I had misjudged the distance and location of the SCHOOLS NorthEast HQ somewhat and certainly hadn't taken the horrendous weather conditions into account!

My villain of last week was the mechanic at the garage who didn't fix my car the first time I took it in to be repaired!

Question from last week's Head Teacher: "Do you think anyone ever feels that they've got this job totally cracked?" I think anyone who thinks they've got this job totally cracked is actually cracked themselves. I guess the best I can say is I've got it slightly better cracked this week than I did last week, but not nearly as cracked as I'll have it next week.

My question for next week's Head: What is the current rate of increase of accountabilities for Head Teachers?

Secondly we spoke to Stephen Quinlan, Head Teacher of Berwick upon Tweed High School. He told us about his school being named as one of the top five business and enterprise colleges in the country (see 'star pupil' below).

The two best things that happened at school last week were firstly going to see our pupils put on a brilliant performance of 'The Pirates of Penzance' at The Maltings theatre in Berwick and secondly the news we got from the DCSF that Berwick High School was one of the top 5 business and enterprise colleges in England.

The biggest disappointment at school last week was the poor turnout for our Year 9 options evening, in the same week that politicians were falling over themselves to give more power to parents.

The funniest thing that happened at school last week was the response of a 6th form pupil in my General Studies lesson who, when asked to introduce himself and quote a line from a poem, prayer or pop song spontaneously replied with a line from 'Jenny Was a Friend of Mine' by The Killers: "I know my rights, I've been here all day and it's time for me to go."

One thing that would have made my job easier last week would have been an electric storm blocking transmission on mobile phones.

Top of my to-do list for this week is to meet a senior Conservative politician who is visiting the school to talk about school improvement in rural schools. If you read about an innovative Head Teachers' Rural Leadership Allowance in their manifesto, you'll know where it came from.

My hero of last week was nowhere to be seen but Tracey Chapman's lyric from 'Heaven's Here on Earth' comes to mind. "I've seen and met angels wearing the disguise of ordinary people leading ordinary lives."

My villain of last week was any one of the politicians who thought it reasonable to portray the school system as failing in order to peddle moonshine in their manifesto.

Question from last week's Head Teacher: Do you think anyone ever feels that they've got this job totally cracked? By Friday afternoon I usually feel in complete control. By Sunday afternoon, I'm back on the Teachers' Pension Agency lump sum calculator?

My question for next week's head: If you were a politician, what would be your number one priority for schools in your manifesto?

Star pupil... *Berwick upon Tweed High School*

Berwick High School has received praise from two different bodies this week, starting with being named by the DCSF as 'one of the top 5 business and enterprise colleges with 5 A* to C results, including English and mathematics, improved from 2006-09'. Head Teacher Stephen Quinlan also received a letter from the SSAT inviting the school to join the applied learning 'Innovation Group' - limited to just 15 schools nationally - in recognition of their applied learning provision. And on top of all that the pupils still found time to receive a glowing review from the Berwick Advertiser for their performance of *The Pirates of Penzance*, which you can read by clicking [here](#). Congratulations all round!

Could try harder... *parents' homework*

The average British parent cannot answer a typical GCSE question on subjects being studied by their teenage children according to a poll of 500 parents for the online version of Encyclopaedia Britannica. Just under one in five (19.7 percent) gave the correct responses to questions taken from GCSE maths, science, history and geography, with men scoring better than women, getting the right answer an average of 27.2% of the time. Mothers, however, answered just 12.1% correctly. The best scores came from East Anglia, where 31.7% got the answers right, compared with 13.4% in the South-east, and 12.5% in the South-west. Unfortunately though, we came out at the bottom of the pile, with 11.2% in the North. Questions included such puzzlers as: How many chromosomes are there in a body cell? (46, in case you were stumped!)

And finally...

Confusion over words such as 'liminality', 'acculturation' and 'instructivism' could be a thing of the past thanks to a new online dictionary aiming to translate so-called 'edubabble' into plain English. Donald Gillies from Strathclyde University has produced *A Brief Critical Dictionary of Education* to shed some light on arcane words and phrases in education which have left everybody baffled for years. The full dictionary is available at www.dictionaryofeducation.co.uk, but in case you were wondering:

- **Liminality** - a psychological term for the experience of transition where one is on the threshold of a new experience or environment and encounters some uncertainty, disorientation, and a loss of identity.
- **Acculturation** - the process of acquisition of values and customs of the social group into which an individual enters.
- **Instructivism** - an approach to teaching marked by direct communication of the teaching material from the teacher to the learner. The learner is a largely passive recipient of the knowledge which is possessed by the teacher. Instructivism attracts little support as an effective method of teaching/learning.

But I'm sure we all knew that anyway...

Have a great week!