

In this issue

- All the latest regional and national education news
- Details of the latest Community Cohesion debate taking place in the North East
- Information on how your school could win between £20,000 and £50,000 in the 2010 People's Millions scheme
- Head to Head with Karen Norton, Head Teacher of Junction Farm Primary School in Eaglescliffe, Stockton

Focus on... *IAG, raising aspirations and social mobility*

We're starting with a scary statistic this week - the top ten jobs that are in demand in 2010 did not even exist in 2004! As the North East's economy changes so does the world of work, the opportunities available to young people and the skills needed to access these opportunities. The 21st Century Schools White Paper says there is both a moral and economic imperative to ensure that every young person turns 18 with the knowledge, skills and qualifications to give them the best chance of success in adult life in the 21st century.

In addition, in recent months there has been lots of academic, policy and media discussion about how schools can support social mobility and enable all young people in our region, regardless of their background, to have access to good careers. SCHOOLS NorthEast is developing a programme of work connected to the region's business and other agencies to support schools in these areas, but for now here are some tools which might help to inform and inspire your students:

- The Talent and Enterprise Taskforce have produced a presentation which looks at the way that Britain fits into the changing world, and it could give students an idea of the skills that will be needed to get ahead with the introduction of a completely new generation of jobs. The presentation can be viewed by clicking [here](#)
- The Government's new IAG strategy can be downloaded in full by clicking [here](#)
- To access a comprehensive resource pack designed to help schools meet the challenges of the IAG strategy and deliver the new legislative targets set out in the White Paper click [here](#)
- North East Labour Market Intelligence about current trends in employment, sectors and localities can be found by clicking [here](#)
- The Joseph Rowntree Foundation have produced a report looking at how affluence and disadvantage influence educational attainment, which you can read [here](#)
- The Sutton Trust have produced 'The Mobility Manifesto', a report looking at cost-effective ways to achieve greater social mobility through education, which you can read [here](#)

In the news

Regional news

Darlington

- [League asks for children to design new logo](#) (Northern Echo)
- ['Barbaric council's school places policy is all wrong' - councillor](#) (Northern Echo)
- [School science projects celebrate achievements](#) (Northern Echo)

Durham

- [Tidy Ted helps tackle litter](#) (Durham County Council)

Gateshead

- [Rebuild for Heworth Grange Comprehensive School](#) (Evening Chronicle)

Hartlepool

- [Top marks for primary school](#) (Hartlepool Borough Council)

Newcastle

- [Newcastle teenagers complete Coast to Coast challenge](#) (Evening Chronicle)

Northumberland

- [School tuning up for ceilidh](#) (Morpeth Herald)
- [School workshop is write-on](#) (Morpeth Herald)
- [Ponteland school is top of the class](#) (Morpeth Herald)
- [Teachers swap notes with African friends](#) (Morpeth Herald)
- [Readers bring books to life](#) (Morpeth Herald)
- [Talented pupils dish up a feast](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Opposition grows to media centre](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Berwick schools support Sport Relief](#) (Berwick Advertiser)
- [Youths cause disorder at school's building site](#) (News Post Leader)
- [Sweet sound of success for Saints](#) (Morpeth Herald)
- [Children get in their stride](#) (Morpeth Herald)

Sunderland

- [Temp staff cost schools £2.7m](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Badge design packs a punch](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Academy 360 'model' school for learning](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Electoral college – sixth-formers see candidates' debate](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Learning the drill](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Pupils go back to the blitz](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Doctor Who in Sunderland](#) (Sunderland Echo)

Teesside

- [Spotlight on Teesside schools](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Ofsted report slams 'failing' Thornaby secondary school](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Conyers School pupils pull in the cash for Sport Relief](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Yarm School celebrate A* results](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Pupils in protest over Stockton school merger plan](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [All our own work](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [New identity for Norton Academy](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Beverley School Head Teacher up for award](#) (Evening Gazette)

North Tyneside

- [Crooner Jason Isaacs visits his old school](#) (Evening Chronicle)

- [Whitley Bay High School rated one of the best by inspectors](#) (Evening Chronicle)
- [Swinging into action](#) (North Tyneside Council)
- [Leading the way in Diploma delivery](#) (North Tyneside Council)
- [Whitley Bay High is 'outstanding' across the board](#) (North Tyneside Council)
- [Royal visit for Beacon Hill Special School](#) (North Tyneside Council)

South Tyneside

- [Pupils have the write stuff](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Pupils on route to good health](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Two becomes one as schools team up as the first South Tyneside trust school](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [School goes medieval for the day](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [Pupils' park visit is trip back in time](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [700 kids regularly play truant from South Tyneside schools](#) (Shields Gazette)
- [School team gets a £400 kit boost](#) (Shields Gazette)

National education news

Tory A-level reforms

Michael Gove has this week introduced Conservative plans to overhaul the A-level system, returning to a more traditional system with exams taken at the end of two years of study, rather than broken down into smaller modules and AS-levels. His comments were in response to a Tory-commissioned review which criticised an 'obsession' with targets in the current system. The review, led by former Imperial College Rector Sir Richard Sykes, also said that schools should not enter students into exams at 16 just to improve their league table standings, and that universities should have a bigger role in forming exam content.

- [Tories call for A-level reforms to 'restore confidence'](#) (BBC News)
- [A-levels face radical shake-up under Tory Government](#) (Guardian)
- [Tories signal return of traditional A-levels](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Conservatives want to return to traditional A-level](#) (Guardian)
- [Tories want traditional A-level to 'restore confidence'](#) (BBC News)

Appeals against exam grades

Ofqual have revealed this week that teachers and parents launched 13% more appeals against A-level and GCSE results this year compared with the last. There had been 504 appeals on re-marked papers, compared with 445 last year. However, just 48 resulted in a grade change, compared with 42 last year. The number of parents and teachers making inquiries over GCSE marks, the first step of an appeal, has risen from 87,142 to 96,411, while the number of inquiries over A-level marks fell slightly from 69,788 to 68,463.

- [Increase in appeals against GCSE and A-level marks](#) (Guardian)
- [Increase in appeals against A-level results](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [160,000 GCSE and A-level papers re-marked as grades queried](#) (Times)

Truancy rates at record high

DCSF figures released this week have shown that the truancy level in England has risen slightly and is now at the highest level ever recorded. An average of 67,290 pupils missed school without authorisation during the 2008-09 academic year, which is almost 2,000 more than the previous year.

This equates to 1.05% of all half-days missed, up from 1.01% in 2007-08. The figures show that truancy is rising fastest in primary schools, although the number of 'persistent absentees' has fallen.

- [Truancy in England reaches record high](#) (BBC News)
- [Truancy rate at record high](#) (Guardian)
- [Truancy hits record high under Labour](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Truancy hits record levels](#) (Independent)
- [Truancy on rise as school cracks down](#) (Independent)
- [Family holidays push school truancy to record level](#) (Times)
- Click [here](#) to view the truancy statistics in full.

Violence against teachers in schools

A quarter of school staff have suffered violence at the hands of a pupil and a third have been confronted by aggressive parents, according to the Association of Teachers and Lecturers. The results of a survey of 1,000 of their members shows that 64 had been physically harmed by a student, while 40% had considered leaving the profession because of bad behaviour. Physical attacks on both teachers and other pupils are far more common in primary schools, with 50% of teachers reporting pupils being physically aggressive compared with 20% of their secondary colleagues.

- [Teachers reveal toll of violence against them in schools](#) (Guardian)
- [Primary pupils more likely to be aggressive, teachers report](#) (Times)
- [Teachers need more protection from violent pupils](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Quarter of teachers 'facing violence at school'](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Primary teachers 'most at risk of assault'](#) (Independent)

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

Events and opportunities

Future Leaders 2010 – The Great North Schools Employability Boot Camp

SCHOOLS NorthEast has once again teamed up with CBI North East for the Future Leaders programme, an annual scheme that identifies the region's next leaders of industry.

This year, we have set the forty 'Future Leaders' a challenge - split into four teams, they have been asked to produce a proposal for a one-day event called **The Great North Schools Employability Boot Camp**, to develop the soft skills of approximately 200 Year 9 students. Later this week they will present their proposals to a panel of expert judges including students from All Saints School in Newcastle.

Community Cohesion discussion in Newcastle

Following the well-attended, practitioner-led discussion of Community Cohesion in primary schools held at Hotspur Primary School in Newcastle last November, Social Capital Forum have announced a similar event to discuss the subject in secondary schools in June.

The seminar will feature a presentation by Adrian Gray, Divisional Manager with responsibility for Community Cohesion at Ofsted, as well as representatives from the host school, which will be confirmed shortly. To register your interest in the event, please contact Charlotte Branch at hs.hcsevents@northumbria.ac.uk.

Boom! North East Engineering Show 2010

Boom! North East Engineering Show is a free event for secondary school pupils from the North East, aiming to inspire and inform about the diverse range of rewarding career options available in engineering.

The event will be held at the Metro Radio Arena in Newcastle from 14 to 16 July, and will feature a fast-moving theatre style performance including Honda's humanoid robot, ASIMO, and a huge exhibition with companies like Nissan showcasing the technology of the future. For full information, visit www.boomnortheast.co.uk or call (0191) 240 7008.

Durham 'Liberating Leaders' conference 2010

Now in its second year, Durham Education Development Service will be holding their International Leadership Conference on Thursday 1 and Friday 2 July 2010 at the Durham Radisson Hotel.

The conference is aimed at Head Teachers and senior leaders from primary, secondary and special schools, and will feature speakers including Baroness Estelle Morris, Vanessa Wiseman (DCSF London Challenge Advisor) and Sir Ranulph Fiennes. For more information and to book a place, click [here](#).

North Tyneside Council short story competition 2010

This year's North Tyneside Council short story competition will be launched later this week, with book tokens awarded to the winners and runners-up. If your pupils are up-and-coming authors they may be interested in entering the 10-years and under or 11 to 16-year-old categories.

The stories need to be 750 words in length and the closing date for entries is 14 August. For further information or to request an application form, contact (0191) 200 6968.

Grants and funding

British Council funding for school linking visits

Funding of up to £1000 is available for teachers and Head Teachers to visit a partner school in any country to set up a curriculum based partnership or to develop an existing link. Travel, board and lodging costs can be funded, with a maximum of £500 per person available for visits in Europe, and £1000 for visits further afield.

Click [here](#) for full information on eligibility and how to apply.

The People's Millions

Applications are now open for the 2010 People's Millions scheme, which will see between £20,000 and £50,000 awarded to five projects in the North East later this year. The funding is available to schools, local authorities and health bodies, and is to be used on projects that benefit the wider community.

The deadline for applications is 14 May 2010, for full information and to download the application form visit www.peoplesmillions.org.uk.

Resources and ideas

Shakespeare's Birthday resources

April 23 and 24 will see the official celebration of William Shakespeare's 446th birthday, and TES have produced a range of resources to use in school to commemorate the date. Resources include a scheme of work for Key Stage 2 pupils studying Macbeth, a booklet to support Key Stage 4 pupils

producing coursework around Romeo and Juliet and a PowerPoint and worksheet about using the internet to find out about Shakespeare.

Click [here](#) to access the full list of resources and activities.

Real Cool Futures

Real Cool Futures is the Eden Project's careers web resource for secondary pupils, designed to inspire 14 to 19-year-olds to think about their future. The site invites students to think about their potential working life, and how they can use their talents and skills to make a positive impact on the planet.

As well as a range of teaching resources and case studies, the site is also running a competition to win an all expenses paid trip to the Eden Project in Cornwall for an entire class and their teacher, including transport, accommodation, food and drink, and payment of one day's supply cover at school. Just go to www.realcoolfutures.com/teachers-careers.php for full information and to enter the competition.

Head to Head

This week we spoke to Karen Norton, Head Teacher of Junction Farm Primary School in Eaglescliffe, Stockton. She told us about a group of imaginative 8-year-olds, the realities of budget setting and the success of the school football team.

This week was... Full, busy and varied, just as I like it. Never a minute to get bored!!!!

The two best things that happened at school last week were firstly a multi-agency meeting about a child with medical needs, and how representatives from health, education and parents could successfully work together for the good of the child. Secondly our school took part in the Everybody Writes Project. It was fantastic to see all the children in school fired up to write about a mysterious key that had been dug up on our school field by the caretaker. The imaginative ideas that came from the children were amazing, for example The Magic Key from Oxford Reading tree books that takes you on magic adventures, the key to Narnia, the key to unlocking secrets – oh to be 8 years old again.

The biggest disappointment at school last week was setting the budget and realising we had so little spare cash that that all our plans for developing the school are going to take such a long time in reality.

The funniest thing that happened in school last week was when a reception child who has medicine at 2pm each day was taking rather a long time for something which should take a minute at most. When I investigated to find out what the holdup was, the child replied: "Well I am not going to be quick am I, they are tidying up back in class!"

One thing that would have made my job easier last week was someone to take charge of my paperwork, which seems to be breeding and multiplying at an astonishing rate on the corner of my desk.

Top of my to-do list for this week is to order our new whole school reading scheme so that we can capitalise on the 20% discount offer before the end of March. Every little saving counts.

My heroes of last week were my Year 3 / 4 football team who, after years of trying, successfully won the cluster competition and were rewarded with medals and huge smiles.

My villain of last week was the budget!!! Even more money added on to petrol, I don't know about everyone else but the amount of travelling I have to do for school from one meeting to the next costs an absolute fortune in petrol money. Time to look for a small, cheap car I think.

How do you manage the ever-growing needs of pupils with an ever-diminishing budget?

Careful evidence put forward to the Local Authority Special Needs Department to ensure that each child who requires extra support actually receives it. I have also made a number of my TA's level 4s so that they can cover for short term absence of teachers, therefore reducing what was a growing demand for supply costs meaning I have that money to use in other budget areas.

Question for next week's head: After being a Head for a year and a half, I am still asking myself the question – do you actually know what you are doing? How long will it take until I can answer YES!?

Star pupils...

This term has seen some fantastic achievements for North East schools, and even though this is the last week before Easter there hasn't been any let up!

- Firstly, congratulations to Whitley Bay High School which has been rated as Outstanding across all 31 inspection report categories by Ofsted, and is the first secondary school in England to achieve a clean sweep of the top grades in this academic year. Click [here](#) to view the report in full.
- Congratulations must also go to a group of pupils from Northern Counties School in Jesmond who have completed a gruelling 147 mile Coast to Coast bike ride, which is particularly impressive as all 10 members of the group are deaf, including Rema Rokib who is also blind.
- Finally, six pupils from Yarm School who were among the first in the country to be awarded the new A* grade in their A-level maths exams by scoring above 90% in the tests.

Could try harder... *practical science lessons*

Science teachers are carrying out fewer practical lessons because of the demands of the curriculum, tests and badly behaved pupils, according to an online poll carried out by the Science Learning Centres, with 96% of the 1,339 science teachers who were questioned in the poll saying they had to drop plans to conduct an experiment in class. 69% said this was due to an already full curriculum, 41% said they had to spend their time focusing on testing while 28% said their plans had changed because of poor pupil behaviour.

- [‘Too few’ practical experiments in science lessons](#) (BBC News)
- [Teachers timed out on science experiments](#) (Guardian)
- [Traditional science experiments ‘disappearing’ from schools](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Science practicals on back burner, claim teachers](#) (TES)

And finally...

An ATL survey has found this week that buying the best end-of-term gift for the teacher has become a real competition among parents, with designer handbags, a brace of pheasant and even tickets to a Test match among the presents that have been received in recent years. The survey revealed that 47% of the teachers asked received at least two presents a year from pupils, with primary staff almost three times more likely to get a gift than secondary. The majority of the presents were perceived to cost under £5, but one in 100 teachers guessed that on average they were worth more than £20.

- [Booze, bags, bangles... Teachers report rise in gifted students](#) (Guardian)
- [Present-giving to teachers ‘getting out of hand’, union survey finds](#) (Times)

- [Presents for teachers 'becoming too commercial'](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [How an apple for teacher became Test tickets](#) (Independent)
- [Please Sir, forget the apple, have a villa](#) (Sunday Times)

Have a great Easter!