

SCHOOLS NorthEast weekly update

The future of our region is in school

This week...

Hot on the heels of last week's Labour party conference, the Conservatives are in Manchester to hold what they hope will be their final conference as the opposition party. And just like last week, education is likely to feature prominently in the message being delivered to voters.

Michael Gove said this weekend that "being secretary of state for education is what I'm aiming for, and what I want to do", and he is expected to use his address to the conference to outline further details of his 'schools revolution', based on the Swedish voucher system.

The system will be an extension of the academies system, which would consist of a network of not-for-profit, parent-led schools set up and managed according to certain guidelines, where each pupil would receive £5,000 of state funding.

He went on to say that his policies are aimed at the 'Gateshead mum' – a no-nonsense working class woman, passionate about her kids, believing that they are exactly to sort of people likely to stir themselves into mass action.

However his confident display came in the same week that the architect of the very Swedish model his plans are based on, Anders Hultin, said that this kind of system simply won't work unless the schools are allowed to make a profit.

Who would be your education target audience if you were trying to sway voters? Do you agree with Michael Gove's analysis of the Gateshead mum? Let us know your thoughts by contacting think@schoolsnortheast.com.

SCHOOLS NorthEast EPIC Summit 2009

There are now just a few days left until the inaugural SCHOOLS NorthEast EPIC Summit takes place at Wynyard hall this Thursday.

The timetable for the whole day has now been finalised, and can be downloaded in PDF format by clicking [here](#).

If you haven't yet signed up, the website has been fully updated to include detailed information on everything that will be going on in the Empower, Provoke, Inspire and Connect zones. Visit www.schoolsnortheast.com/summit for more information and to book your place.

News and events

School Food Trust – Million Meals

We are delighted that the School Food Trust is sponsoring the SCHOOLS NorthEast EPIC Summit later this week. This week, we are looking in more detail at the Million Meals campaign, and how your school can benefit from signing up.

The Million Meals campaign has the simple aim to have a million more children eating healthy school lunches by the end of 2010. It focuses on helping schools make the positive, and often very small and simple, changes we know will make a difference to take up. It has been designed to specifically help you and your head teacher to improve the schools meal service and experience.

It costs absolutely nothing to support the initiative – everything is free! As soon as your school signs up on the website (which takes less than a minute) you can immediately access a great range of useful resources, case studies and information to help you make gradual changes to increase your meal take up.

You will have access to great resources, such as:

- Easy to use software that can track meal take up progress
- Eye catching posters for your dining room to help promote school dinners and materials to help increase Free School Meal uptake
- School Council Pack – to help encourage your council to play a greater role with meal service improvements
- Marketing Pack – to help your school engage GCSE pupils to promote healthy eating to whole school
- Over 100 school case studies, highlighting simple tactics that others have done
- Curriculum-based resources to help educate your pupils about healthy eating

Million Meals also gives schools the chance to win **£5000** worth of equipment for their kitchen or dining room each month. The School of the Month initiative rewards the excellent work schools are doing to transform their meal service.

There are now over **5300** schools signed up to the campaign and all are benefiting from the fantastic resources on offer.

Why not sign up to the Million Meals campaign today? Simply go to www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/millionmeals

World Teachers Day

As you may already be aware, today is World Teachers Day, a day to celebrate teachers and the central role they play in guiding children and adults through the lifelong learning process.

This year, World Teachers Day is focusing on the role of teachers within the context of the global financial and economic crisis and the need to invest in teachers now as a means to secure post-crisis regeneration.

To find out more, download resources and share pictures of your World Teachers Day celebrations, visit <http://www.ei-ie.org/worldteachersday2009/>.

Show Racism the Red Card

Show Racism the Red Card are holding a conference at Middlesbrough Football Club on 22 November aimed at empowering teachers to tackle racism and promote race equality in the classroom.

The event is open to anybody working in the field of education, and will run from 10am – 4pm. Click [here](#) for more information or to book your place.

The organisation is also now taking entries for their 2010 schools competition. This annual competition sees pupils creating anti-racist artwork, writing, films and music.

Last year 632 schools took part with an estimated 60,000 pupils producing anti-racist themed work, and a prize-giving ceremony at Villa Park in Birmingham. Being a world cup year, SRTRC are hoping to make next year's even bigger and better. For more information on the competition or to register your school, click [here](#).

National College Events

The National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services are holding two events in the North East in October.

- **An opportunity to explore the distinctive nature of faith school leadership** will take place on 9 October at the RC Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle, and will look at what is unique about leading a faith school and how this can be enhanced.
- **Models of leadership governance – dispelling the myths** will take place on 22 October at Ridley hall, Northumberland, and will explore current models of leadership and governance, exploring possibilities for future development and discuss the challenges and opportunities schools currently face.

Both events are free, but registering is essential. Visit www.nationalcollege.org.uk/events to register or to find out more information.

Chemistry in your Shopping Basket

Chemistry in your Shopping basket is a Newcastle/Northumbria University co-production which is available throughout the year as a science and chemistry awareness and aspiration raising event which can be delivered in schools to individual classes or larger groups.

Co-presented by Anne Willis of Northumbria University and Peter Hoare of Newcastle University, it is an interactive presentation, which can be tailored to any group or range of students from years 1-9, to show that chemistry impacts every aspect of our lives – even when we go shopping!

For further details or to make a booking contact Anne Willis on (0191) 243 7873 or anne.willis@northumbria.ac.uk or Peter Hoare on (0191) 222 8542 or peter.hoare@ncl.ac.uk.

News round-up

In North East news, it has been announced today that Maggie Atkinson is to become children's commissioner, replacing Sir Al Aynsley Green who has held the post since its inception in 2005.

Maggie, current Director of Children's Services for Gateshead, said: "I am excited to be taking on this national challenge, but I shall be very sad to leave both Gateshead and all the many colleagues and friends with whom I have worked since September 2003."

The appointment is expected to be officially confirmed after a meeting of the Children, Schools and Families Select Committee next week.

Nationally, the Labour party conference took place in Brighton last week, and as expected education was an important talking point. Click on the links below to read about the issues that Labour saw as being key in education for the next twelve months.

- [Ed Balls: new crackdown on bad behaviour](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [School budgets will be protected for five years, promises Gordon Brown](#) (Guardian)
- [Ed Balls unveils plans to keep racism out of schools](#) (Guardian)
- [Brown's pledge on school funding](#) (BBC News)
- [Ed Balls 'New laws for excluded pupils'](#) (Times)
- [Labour's party conference is not Brighton breezy](#) (TES)
- [Ed Balls to tell parents: tackle unruly pupils](#) (Guardian)
- [Parents to get discipline warning](#) (BBC News)

Regional News

- [Teacher turned lifesaver nominated as Community Champion](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Normanby Primary School in running for double honours](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Mowden Hall Preparatory School bosses in fee hikes row](#) (Journal)
- [Checks to ease schoolgirl cancer jab fears](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Laptop boost for two special pupils](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [School feted again after second glowing report](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Anger at rise in school fees](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [School heads for new trust status](#) (Hexham Courant)
- [Shiremoor Primary singled out for national Ofsted praise](#) (Journal)
- [Roman Catholic school shake up in Blyth and Bedlington backed by council](#) (Journal)
- [Pupils dress up for anniversary celebration](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Middlesbrough teacher handling 'tache well](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Pupils get a lesson in designing new school](#) (Evening Gazette)
- [Parents fight to stop school from closing](#) (Journal)
- [Youngsters sowing the seeds of gardening success](#) (Sunderland Echo)
- [Rural Whitfield school set to blaze a green trail](#) (Journal)

Other politics news

- [Conservatives may close 200 failing schools](#) (Times)
- [Swedish fee schools creator rejects 'flawed' Tory version](#) (Guardian)
- [We need clever cuts – not slash and burn](#) (Guardian)
- [Horrible Histories author sticks knife in on 'dinosaur' politicians](#) (TES)
- [Role of children's commissioner faces Euro axe](#) (TES)

Exam results

- [Exam chief gives warning over maths and English](#) (Times)
- ['Tougher' AS-level marking makes private schools cry foul](#) (Guardian)
- [A-level pupils hit by 'rigged' grades](#) (Times)
- [Exam boards accused of 'grade fixing'](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Examiners accused of fixing A-level results](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [National Challenge adviser's pupils struggle in GCSEs](#) (TES)

Teachers

- [Pensions pain is a problem you can't ignore](#) (TES)
- [Is the teaching production line out of control?](#) (TES)
- [Staff happy to road-test teaching MOT](#) (TES)
- [Female and ethnically diverse: the ever-changing face of teaching](#) (TES)

Independent school numbers and fees

- [Private school numbers holding up in recession](#) (Independent)
- [Independent school pupil increase](#) (BBC News)
- [Private school fees 'kept down' in recession](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Independent school fees go up 3.4% above inflation](#) (Times)
- [Private schools adapt to survive recession doubt](#) (Guardian)

Primary news

- [Heads' fury at 'injustice' of rejected KS2 appeals](#) (TES)
- [Two schools win right to ditch early years curriculum](#) (Times)

- [Picture books 'being rejected by schools'](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Teachers typecast 'the naughty ones'](#) (TES)
- [Early years budget cuts prompt closure fears](#) (TES)

Cervical cancer injections

- [Schoolgirl dies after being given cervical cancer jab](#) (Times)
- [Schools resume anti-cancer jabs](#) (BBC News)
- [14-year-old schoolgirl dies after being given cervical cancer jab](#) (Daily Telegraph)

Swearing parents

- [Primary school headteacher threatens to ban swearing parents from playground](#) (Daily Mail)
- [Teacher issues swearing warning](#) (BBC News)
- [Headmaster threatens parents with legal action over swearing](#) (Times)
- [Parents stop swearing](#) (TES)

Other parent news

- [Ofsted: schools providing parenting classes](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- ['Pushover parents' blamed for unruly children](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Parents and union protest over sixth-form merger](#) (TES)

Faith schools

- [Jewish faith schools introduce religious observance tests](#) (Guardian)
- [Head of St Paul's, Dr Martin Stephen, attacks 'divisive' faith schools](#) (Times)

Science health and safety

- ['Experiment phobia' cured by internet](#) (TES)
- ['To ensure good results, you don't need to do practicals'](#) (Times)
- [School lab health and safety rules 'could stop future scientists'](#) (Times)

Grammar schools

- [Grammar school applications soar](#) (Daily Telegraph)

School exclusions

- [Special needs exclusions targeted](#) (BBC News)
- [Not wanted in class: the growing exclusions from primary school](#) (Daily Telegraph)

New initiatives

- [Schools revolution needs the profit motive](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Head-sharing like 'lending PM to Rwanda for two days a week', says ex-minister](#) (TES)
- [Radical role-model scheme hits UK](#) (TES)
- [Extra mile project is a runaway success](#) (TES)
- [One-to-one tuition fix needs greater scrutiny](#) (TES)
- [Young engineers' aid](#) (TES)
- [Stop the change, I want to get off](#) (TES)

Other education news

- [School stars 'enjoy good health'](#) (BBC News)
- [School admissions reforms failing](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [School first with rooftop nature reserve](#) (Daily Telegraph)
- [Children denied school trips over teachers' fears of being sued](#) (Guardian)
- [Rogue 'school' exploits laws to hit kids](#) (TES)
- [Deaf pupils summon up TV ghost story](#) (TES)
- [Parkour leaps into sport timetables to curtail copycats](#) (TES)
- [Spare me the conference's PowerPoint pains](#) (TES)
- [Downturn dash to the GTC](#) (TES)
- [Schools weak on 'strong' silence](#) (TES)
- [Schools should be given different targets for attainment](#) (Guardian)
- [Perform with the Halle – and other tips for making your school top of the class](#) (Independent)

Head to Head

This week we were delighted to speak to Helen Clegg, Head Teacher of Shiremoor primary school, which was named last week as one of Ofsted's twenty outstanding primary schools excelling against the odds (See 'star pupil' below for more information). She tells us about their reception class adventure day and a singing Robin Hood!

The two best things that happened at school last week were firstly the children in Reception who had just started school on 30th September happily coming into school for an "Adventure Day", and secondly the number of families who took part in our book week and dressed as time travellers on Friday.

The biggest disappointment at school last week was the company sending the celebratory lunch on Friday not sending my order! Trivial really!

The funniest thing that happened at school last week was Singing Robin Hood, as a child in costume came onto the stage to be told he was not Robin Hood but Peter Pan! Fortunately two Robin Hoods appeared later.

One thing that would have made my job easier last week was more support staff!

Top of my to-do list for this week is to collate all information needed for the full Governors meeting on Tuesday.

My hero of last week was the Year 6 pupil who thought the Adventure Day for Reception children should involve space music and stage lighting in the hall when they used soft play to build a time machine – it worked!

My villain of last week was the woman who was found guilty of child abuse when she was working in a position of trust in a nursery.

What was your greatest achievement during your first year of Headship? It was so long ago I can't remember but I am proud every day of Shiremoor Primary School.

My question for next week's head is... Why do you love your job?

Star pupil... *Shiremoor primary school*

Congratulations to Shiremoor primary school, which was named this week in an Ofsted report as one of twenty schools who are excelling against the odds, showcasing outstanding schools where children in disadvantaged communities reach high standards. The report praised the school's high-quality teaching, lively curriculum and bans on swearing and anti-social behaviour. Head Teacher Helen Clegg said: "I think what they were really impressed with were the children. We've got wonderful children, they are so polite and enthusiastic." The full report is available online by clicking [here](#).

Could try harder... *swearing parents*

Stockport Head Teacher Martin Henderson hit the headlines this week when he announced that he would ban parents from his playground if they insist on swearing. Mr Henderson, Head Teacher at Westmorland Primary School, sent a letter to the parents of all of his pupils saying: "Parents who persist in using foul language will be asked to stay away from the site by myself through the local authority legal team using a banning order."

Opportunities and Resources

What money means

What Money means is a programme run by the Personal Finance Education Group and supported by HSBC, which helps teachers to develop their curriculum to include learning about money. Teachers can control the programme, making it their own and tailoring it to suit the needs of their pupils.

You can register now to view the 'What money means: teaching financial capability' video debate online from 9 October, and to find out more about the programme. Visit www.tes.co.uk/webcasts for more information and to register.

Welcome to teaching new teacher receptions

The General teaching Council for England is inviting NQTs, along with their mentors, to join them and other new teachers at one of their free evening receptions.

The receptions will offer a chance to hear from teachers who were NQTs last year as they share their successes and challenges, find out about research and materials that can support you in your first months in teaching and beyond and discuss your experiences with colleagues.

For more information about the receptions or to book a place visit www.gtce.org.uk/events or call 020 8481 3370.

Prime Minister' Global fellowship

The Prime Minister's Global Fellowship nurtures talent among young people in England and gives them the experience, skills and confidence to succeed in the 21st century global economy.

Each year they send 100 young people to Brazil, China and India for six life-changing weeks. Giving them the opportunity to work with and learn from their peers, teachers and business people, they aim to start new conversations about the social, economic and environmental issues posed by rapid global change.

To find out more or to recommend somebody you think would be the perfect candidate visit www.global-fellowship.org, email info@global-fellowship.org or call 020 7389 4826.

Join the ideas explosion!

There are over £50,000 worth of prizes on offer in the National Science and Engineering Competition, open to pupils aged between 11 and 18 who have a great project or invention.

Prizes include cash awards and trips abroad – plus the prestige of winning a high profile competition for your school and the teachers involved. What's more, the best entrants will showcase their work to around 13,000 students, teachers, journalists and VIPs visiting The Big Bang: UK Young Scientists and Engineers Fair in March 2010.

To enter visit www.nationalsciencecompetition.org but hurry, the closing date for entries is 30 October!

And finally...

Two North East teachers have been doing their bit for charity, and facing up to a whole load of flak from their students, by growing moustaches! Jim Kirby and Mark Tilling, who teach at Gillbrook Technology College, have been cultivating their soup strainers since the start of September to raise money for Everyman, a charity which raises money and awareness of male cancers. Jim says his moustache hero is Magnum P.I., but that his wife isn't too impressed by his new look!

To find out more about growing moustaches for charity go to www.tacheback.co.uk.

Have a great week!