


WELCOME TO IMPACT



**NORTH
OF TYNE**

**COMBINED
AUTHORITY**

ISSUE 3 | January 2024

Welcome to the latest North of Tyne Combined Authority schools' update. The team here at North of Tyne are excited to share some of the work that's been going on in partnership with schools across Newcastle, Northumberland and North Tyneside.

Over the past few months, it has been fantastic to see some of our pilot work expand its reach, new projects launch, and really start to see the impact across schools and communities. In this edition, we look at how schools have been using a small grants programme to tackle learning disruption, recap on a huge oracy project launch, share an evaluation of the Linking Leaders project, update you on the Baby Box initiative, and invite you to 'Think Differently for Disadvantaged Learners'.

We continue to look forward to further devolution, and the commitment in the North East Mayoral Combined Authority devolution deal to work on education improvement and child poverty priorities across our region.

As always, we encourage you to get in touch if you want to engage in our work, or would like to know more.

Adrian Dougherty, Head of Public Sector Innovation

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Inspire Education Grants Programme

Following on from a successful pilot year, the 2023-24 Inspire Grants programme saw unprecedented demand and funding from across our children and young people's programmes of work has gone out this term to support innovative education projects in 23 schools, ranging from literacy and reading for pleasure initiatives. Here you can see some short films of the projects funded in 2022-23.

- [Spring Gardens Primary School](#)
- [Hareside Primary School](#)
- [Gosforth Park First](#)
- [Bridgewater Community Primary School](#)

If you would like to hear about future grant funding opportunities directly, you can register for our [NTCA Mailing List](#)

Launch of 'Voice North of Tyne'



In November, we were delighted to welcome over 80 teachers and school leaders to the launch of Voice North of

Tyne, the UK's largest fully-funded oracy programme for a group of schools.

Working in partnership with Voice 21, the UK's oracy education charity, Voice North of Tyne will comprise of 100 primary and secondary schools in the North of Tyne, with an estimated 21,000 students standing to benefit from the deliberate and explicit teaching of spoken language (oracy) skills across the region. According to the Department for Education, over a third of all pupils entering reception across NTCA started primary school this September below age-related expectations in early language and communication. These children are more than twice as likely to come from lower-income backgrounds.

Voice North of Tyne will increase access to high-quality oracy education for all children across the North of Tyne, equipping them with the oracy skills they need for success in school and in life. With 100 schools set to become Voice 21 Oracy Schools, teachers and leaders across the North of Tyne Combined Authority will receive high-quality professional development and support from Voice 21 to equip them with the knowledge and skills to embed oracy into their classrooms, curricula and wider school life. The work will be focused largely in schools in areas of high deprivation and those schools experiencing poor transport links in order to ensure that no student is prevented from developing the oracy skills they need to thrive both in school and beyond.

Each school will join our growing national network of over 1000+ schools across the UK who are eager to share their expertise across different schooling contexts. They will also join local oracy hubs where



nearby schools can collaborate and share best practice.

The project has attracted considerable interest and even featured on BBC Look North!



North of Tyne KATS (Kids Action Thru Science)

Since the start of May, KATS has delivered 8 projects across the North of Tyne catchment, and further projects are planned in Northumberland. Schools have explored climate change themes (water/air/plastic pollution, non-renewable, renewable energy) aligning with The Mayor's commitment to green energy.

Children have visited the Tynemouth Aquarium, The Boiler House (Newcastle Uni), BBC Newcastle Studios, and Life Science Centre. Feedback on the project:



"The project has been wonderful and truly inspirational" **(Teacher)**

"Best project I have ever been in. Can we do it again and again?" **(Student)**

"I am going to get a job in marine biology and change the way things are going" **(Student)**



Linking Leaders

Our popular Linking Leaders programme has gone from strength to strength and a total of 48 schools have been involved in the project across the North of Tyne region over three cohorts of Senior Leaders and three cohorts of Middle Leaders.

The Linking Leaders programme is a collaborative initiative designed to facilitate professional development and knowledge exchange amongst educational leaders. It is funded by North of Tyne Combined Authority and delivered by a partnership of Newcastle Research School and School Improvement Teams in Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland.

The programme is built around the principles of peer evaluation. Participating schools are supported to conduct a school-to-school review of an element of curriculum provision. The year long project provides schools with the opportunity to attend three full days of professional development exploring the action research model of school improvement as well as effective strategies of curriculum evaluation.



Schools are supported to plan and carry out a school-to-school peer review visit where partnered schools evaluate a chosen element of each other's curriculum.

These elements are designed to provide leaders with opportunities to learn from one another's successes and challenges, fostering a culture of reflective teaching and leadership practices.



"To be validated by another professional was really valuable and I think it's been a big boost to staff's confidence. It has had a big impact on the way me and my deputy work. We now have time to consider the things that we've learned without distractions." **Head Teacher**

You can read an evaluation of the project [here](#)

Baby Box Launch

As well as working with schools and school-aged children and families, our programmes are also beginning to expand out to support families with children under 5. This month we launched our first project within pillar 4 'the critical 1,001 days' of the child poverty prevention programme.

The Baby Box pilot, which had previously been established in the East of Newcastle, will now be expanded across the North of Tyne. The Children's Foundation Baby Boxes, which have a unique focus on baby development, are packed with developmentally stimulating books and toys with a focus on laughing, playing, reading, singing and counting. They will now be making their way out to the homes

of 750 families welcoming their first child, through established pathways of support in each of our local authorities.

Another of our projects which has featured on regional news and in sector press. You can find out more about the Baby Box itself [here](#).

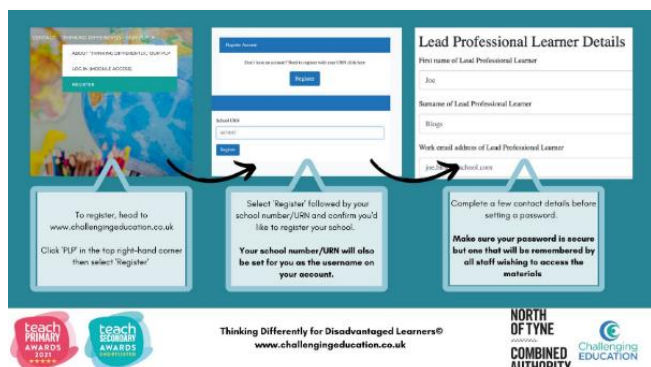




Thinking differently for disadvantaged learners

ALL NTCA SCHOOLS now have fully-funded access to 'Thinking Differently for Disadvantaged Learners' which is a web-based bank of professional learning resources that can be used independently by staff, or as part of your planned professional learning programme.

Log in now following this guidance, using your schools' URN. You can register your school to use this resource [here](#).



Raising the attainment of disadvantaged youngsters (RADY)

If one of your school development priorities is closing the attainment gap, this support can help you to catalyse this ambition, helping your school to become equitable in all aspects of the education you provide and making sure that those learners who need it most, get the extra that helps them to get there.

Over 20 North of Tyne schools have begun their RADY journey this term and your school could be joining them. You can find out more about the tiers of fully-funded support available [here](#). Sign up

[here](#) to secure your space. Sign [here](#) to secure your space. **Please note**, there is limited capacity on this programme for 23/24

Fully Funded Poverty-proofing©

Our ambition is for the North of Tyne to be a truly inclusive place for children and young people to thrive, that's why we are building on the work of our constituent authorities to help our schools to [poverty-proof the school day](#). If your school would benefit from a fully-funded poverty audit and staff training this academic year, please contact us [here](#) to register your interest.

Fully funded family learning and afterschool clubs

As part of our child poverty prevention programme, we have funded support for your most vulnerable pupils and families. If your school community would benefit from family learning courses, or afterschool clubs this academic year, please contact us [here](#) to register your interest.

North of Tyne Schools Mental Health Award

We are working in collaboration with the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools to offer completion of the School Mental Health Award for **free**, and **60 schools** from all phases have started their award journey.

The Mental Health Award for Schools provides a framework for educational institutions to evidence policies and initiatives that work towards improving emotional health and wellbeing for both staff and pupils.



[Read more about the award](#)

[Book your school onto the award](#)



“In September 2023 Marden Bridge Middle School began to embark on the Carnegie Mental Health Award in conjunction with North of Tyne Combined Authority and Leeds Beckett University. We started by auditing our current systems around supporting mental health and wellbeing with all stakeholders. After an initial coaching session, we set to work evaluating our current practices. The award allows you to use an evidence based framework to develop a whole school approach towards mental health, in order to make positive changes. Screening tools have been used to identify areas for development and a wellbeing working party established to help drive change from within. In such a short space of time we are already seeing the positive impact of changes made, on staff and pupils and look forward to continuing to develop our pathways with parents, carers and external services in the new year.” SENCo, Marden Bridge Middle School

An online briefing will be held at 4pm on February 8th. [Click here to book your free place.](#)

Do you want your school to be ‘climate friendly’ and help resolve, rather than intensify the climate crisis?

Every year [Oases North East](#) helps hundreds of schools to learn about and engage with climate action and they’ve been doing so for over 20 years, they’ve

used experience and guidance from schools across the country, to create, Climate Friendly Schools. Find out more [here](#)

Contact our Children and Young People’s Team

Joanna Unthank – Senior Programme Manager, Child Poverty Prevention
joanna.unthank@northoftyne-ca.gov.uk

Andrew Garrad – Senior Programme Manager, Education Improvement
andrew.garrad@northoftyne-ca.gov.uk

Jade Coulson – Programme Officer,
jade.coulson@northoftyne-ca.gov.uk