
LIGHThouse

APRIL 2023

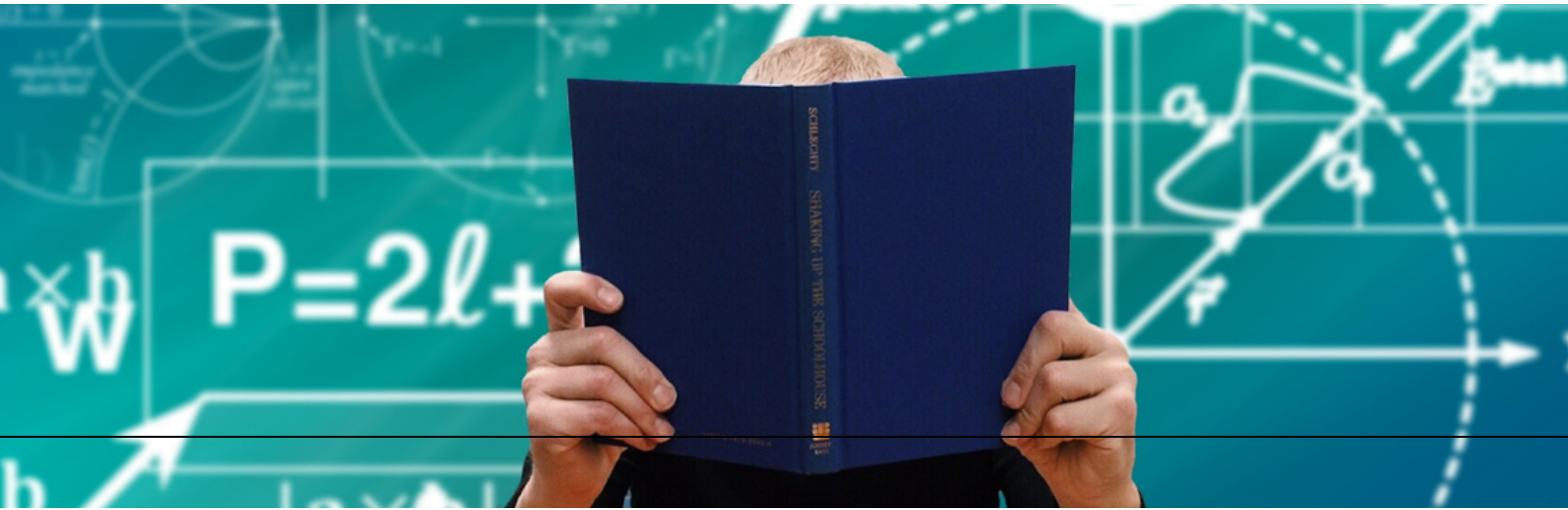
ISSUE 29



“ENABLING EVERYONE IN OUR COMMUNITIES TO LET THEIR LIGHT SHINE.”

LIGHTHOUSE

WELCOME TO THE SPRING EDITION OF LIGHTHOUSE



Why Rishi's plan for maths doesn't add up

The Prime Minister has set out his plans for all school pupils in England to study maths until 18. On the face of it, this sounds like a really great idea, as success in maths at school is linked very strongly with higher earning power later on in life. However, once you start to look at the detail and logistics, it doesn't really add up.

Few would argue that maths isn't one of the two most crucial areas we teach in schools. Numeracy is vital to success in later life and actually has a stronger impact on long term earnings than literacy. However, there are some very significant issues which need to be overcome to increase the impact of maths on life chances, especially for children from more disadvantaged backgrounds.

Fundamentally, the first problem to overcome is what children should actually be taught in maths lessons. The key skill that the Prime Minister referred to, and that many industries are looking for, is numeracy, rather than the broader content of maths which is on the school curriculum.

However, much of the time on the GCSE maths syllabus is devoted to maths which goes well beyond numeracy. GCSE students spend significant time learning areas of maths such as algebra, geometry and probability. Although these are of course important in relation to some careers, for many of us when we leave school and go on to employment, we never need to use this knowledge in work or in our everyday lives.

I have long argued that maths should be split into two separate qualifications. The first one would be a compulsory numeracy based course. This would allow time to develop and master numeracy skills and the application of maths to everyday life in depth, so that all students can master the life skills required. The second qualification would allow more time for those students who are already confident in their numeracy skills to work on the additional areas of maths and prepare them for careers where they can apply their knowledge and skills.

The next area to reform is the way that we assess and grade knowledge and skills in applying numeracy. Each year, the current system demands that around 175,000 young people have to 'fail' their GCSE maths to maintain 'comparable outcomes' and avoid 'grade inflation'. These students fail by design because of the way the grading system works and are not rewarded for what they can do.

In my opinion, this could be replaced by a system of progressive tests for different levels of numeracy, along the lines of graded music exams. This would create a system which can celebrate achievement when students pass through grades. It would mean that they can take the tests when they are ready and avoid all or nothing exams at the end of Year 11. They could even replace SATS in primary schools and pupils work their way through the levels at their own pace over a number of years.



The final major barrier to Rishi's 'maths to 18' is that we simply don't have enough maths teachers and the supply problems means that this would take a number of years to put right. Although maths is the most popular A level, this would need to be translated into more students taking maths degrees (3 or 4 years) followed many more taking places on maths teacher training courses. The government have missed their recruitment targets for maths teachers for 12 years in a row, despite lowering their target numbers, so this is a huge challenge. Across England, many secondary maths classes are already taught by non-specialist teachers as there are nowhere near enough maths teachers to cover the existing demand, let alone an increase in timetabled maths lessons.

So while schools share the aspiration that our pupils are given more support to develop the numeracy skills they need for life-long success, the key numbers that the Prime Minister needs to work on is finding the significant additional funding needed, along with the curriculum and assessment changes required

Alan Hardie, CEO.

FUTURE FOCUS

CASTLE DEPUTY HEAD SONIA WILKINSON, ALONG WITH CASTLE STUDENTS, TAKE PART IN FANTASTIC INCLUSIVE CAREERS EVENT



Students from Castle School attended this year's Future Focus - focusing on the future for all young people in the North East.

Now in its fifth year, North Tyneside Inclusive Careers Fair - Future Focus was back bigger than ever.

Organised by North Tyneside Learning Trust along with other schools are repeating the event and urging more schools, parents and organisations to attend.

Finding the next steps in education or work can be such a challenge for any young person, but particularly for young people with special educational needs or those who may not be able to access higher education or an apprenticeship. It can be an extremely daunting time for them and their families as they navigate the future.





The aim of the event was to provide as much information as possible to both the young person and their parents about the options and opportunities which are available across the region.

The careers fair was split into 5 main zones:

- Traineeships
- Employment opportunities
- Help and Guidance (aimed specifically at parents and will include information on benefits, access to work etc)
- Enrichment Activities
- Foundation Learning

Castle students made cakes and were serving refreshments. They also visited stalls to look at different careers. Thank you to all who took part.

Join us at the Future Focus inclusive school careers fair

Plan your next steps and come and find out about your options

Thursday 27th April - 10.00am - 3.00pm
The Parks, North Shields NE29 6TL

Employment WE ARE HIRING | Enrichment | Foundation Learning | Traineeships & Apprenticeships | Parent/ Carer Support

Schools or exhibitors book by emailing angie.patterson@ntlearningtrust.org.uk

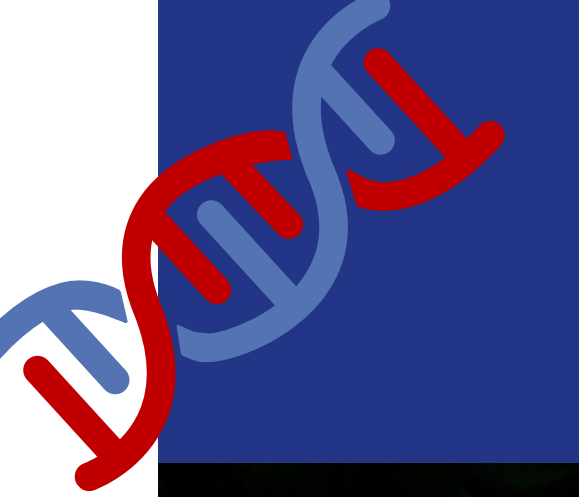
Parents/ carers are welcome anytime.



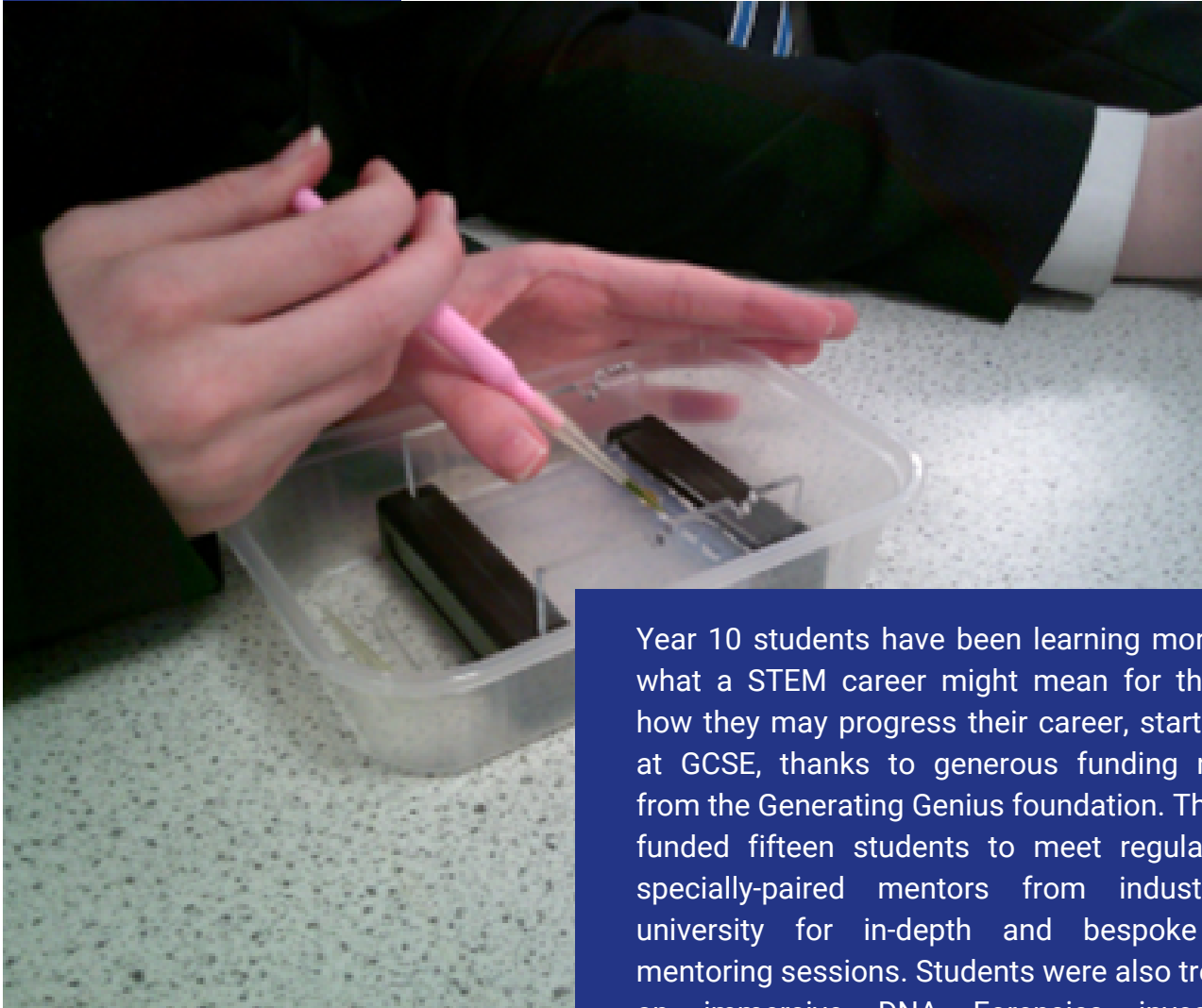
BISHOP HELEN-ANN'S INAUGURATION



Students from Duke's 6th form were invited to work with the Bishop Helen-Ann's team to design a personalised chocolate bar to be distributed during her installation. They incorporated elements from her history including Maori inspired fern designs representing her time as Bishop of Waikato in New Zealand and the Celtic cross representing her journey to Newcastle. The contributing students were invited to the Bishop's installation and have even been given their own bars.



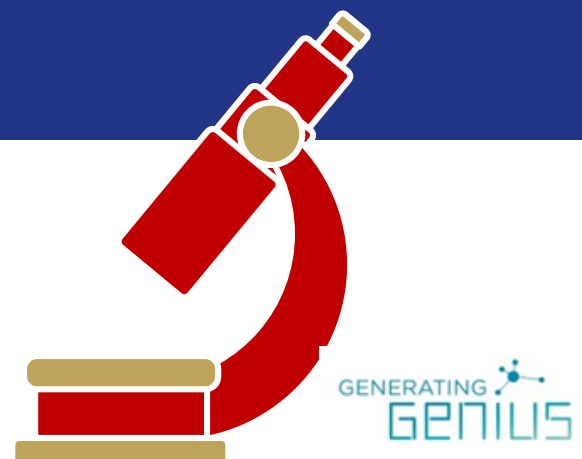
STUDENTS LIKE US GET INTO STEM



Year 10 students have been learning more about what a STEM career might mean for them and how they may progress their career, starting now at GCSE, thanks to generous funding received from the Generating Genius foundation. They have funded fifteen students to meet regularly with specially-paired mentors from industry and university for in-depth and bespoke virtual mentoring sessions. Students were also treated to an immersive DNA Forensics investigation workshop, where they got to run DNA fingerprint analysis, test blood for type, examine pathology reports, and review case notes and scene of crime photos to work out the guilty suspect!



Students pictured are the group of 'graduating' students with Mrs McCready. Each student was awarded a certificate of completion and £15 Amazon vouchers, and will have a follow-up careers workshop at the start of year 11.





SEAN LONGSTAFF JOINS DUKE'S COMPETITION WINNERS

Over the past few weeks, as part of Earth Day 2023, a group of Y8 students have been working on sustainability alongside the Newcastle United Foundation.

The winning idea from the group, was to use old pallets from St James' Park and turn them into bird boxes and bug hotels, with the aim of increasing natural habitats and improving biodiversity. The boxes have been placed along the wildlife corridor between the club's Training Centre and Academy.

Two of the girls involved, Leah Greatrex and Keira Thirtle said that the project was, 'A really good way to learn about the environment.' They added that they were proud of their achievements so far and are looking forward to the final part of the competition held in Manchester in July.

Check out the link below to see the girls with their creations at St James' Park.

<https://www.nufoundation.org.uk/news/sean-longstaff-it-s-important-to-keep-learning-how-we-can-improve-our-environmental-sustainability>

Submission for the competition is 19th May, and the girls travel to Manchester to see who has won on the 6th July.

INVESTOR IN CAREERS QUALITY AWARD



WE ARE GOING FOR IT

CSW 
Investor in Careers

For more information about the Award please visit Quality in Careers (<https://www.qualityincareers.org.uk/>) or please contact Mrs D Towers, who will be leading the assessment for the Quality in Careers Standard, on danielle.towers@dukes.ncea.org.uk.



Duke's Secondary School was awarded the IiC quality award in Careers Education and Guidance in July 2018. This is a nationally recognised award that demonstrates a school is meeting the highest of standards in preparing its learners for the world of work.

The Trustees and staff of Duke's Secondary School are committed to regaining The Quality in Careers Standard by 31st July 2023.

We have incorporated this reassessment in our current school development plan.

Our aim is to provide an outstanding programme of careers education, information, advice and guidance activities that satisfy national requirements and provide guidance which enables us to address the career development needs of all our students.



National Online Languages Competition Winner

Congratulations to Chloe from Year 7 who won a National Online Languages competition!!! Chloe wrote this beautiful song in Gaelic, about the sadness of the Gaelic language disappearing from Scottish culture, and submitted it to the British Council's 'Festival of Language' competition in February. They were so impressed that Chloe was invited to perform the song at an online event, with only 7 other people throughout the world being among the winners! She was amazing!!! Well done Chloe.





SPRINGTIME AT THOMAS BEWICK

Last term, we have been learning all about Easter in Reception. To end our spring term we had a very noisy 4 legged visitor. We were more impressed than she was!!

We also made some really delicious chocolate nests and learned all about how the microwave works and why our chocolate melted.



**BISHOP'S PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

YEAR 2 VISIT WASHINGTON WETLANDS



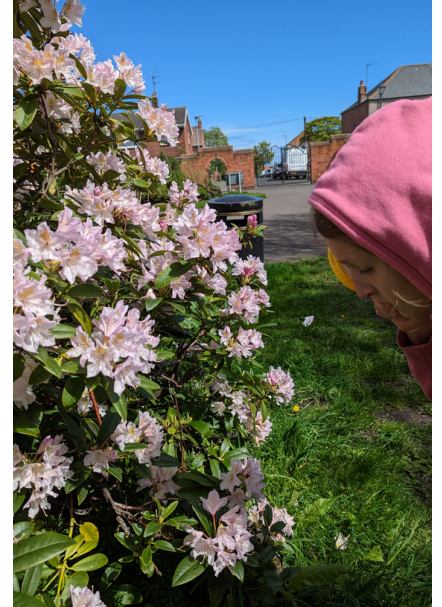
WE SPENT ONE HALF OF THE DAY EXPLORING ALL OF THE FANTASTIC WILDLIFE AT THE CENTRE. WE SAW A HUGE VARIETY OF BIRDS, INCLUDING FLAMINGOS AND CRANES - THE CRANES WERE EVEN TALLER THAN US AND VERY LOUD!

BEFORE WE HAD LUNCH, WE ALL WENT TO WATCH THE OTTERS HAVE THEIRS. WE WERE TOLD MANY INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THEM AND IT WAS FASCINATING TO WATCH THE 'BOSSY' OTTER TAKE THE FOOD FROM THE OTHER TWO. SOME OF US ALSO WATCHED THE FLAMINGOS HAVE THEIR LUNCH. DID YOU KNOW THAT FLAMINGOS ARE ACTUALLY BORN A WHITE-GREY COLOUR? IT IS THE SHRIMPS THAT THEY EAT THAT TURN THEM PINK—THEY REALLY ARE WHAT THEY EAT!

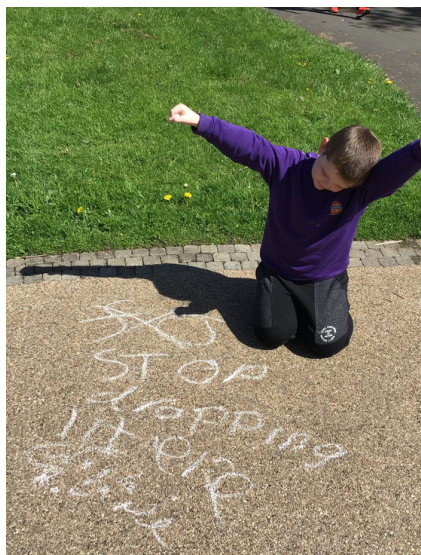
THE OTHER HALF OF THE DAY WAS SPENT LISTENING TO AVA - HALF BIRD HALF GIRL - TELL HER STORY. WE DISCOVERED MORE ABOUT HER FROM THE ANIMALS AROUND THE PARK, LISTENING TO THEIR STORIES ON THE TRANSLATION DEVICE AND COMPLETING DIFFERENT TASKS. ONE OF OUR FAVOURITE TASKS WAS HUNTING FOR MINIBEASTS! WE ALSO ENJOYED MAKING FRIENDS WITH THE TREES.



HIRST PARK DAY



As part of the work they are doing towards their John Muir Environmental Award, a group of Year 4 children had a fantastic day at Hirst Park litter picking and bug hunting. They were blessed with glorious sunshine and really enjoyed doing our bit for our local environment. We even had a call from one of the local residents thanking us for doing a great job keeping the local area litter free.



CORONATION CELEBRATIONS

AT GRACE DARLING



THE DAY

On Friday 5th May 2023 pupils at Grace Darling were invited to come to school wearing their favourite red, white and blue outfit to celebrate King Charles III Coronation. The miserable weather did not dampen the spirits and children enjoyed their picnic lunch and street party together. Throughout lunch our fabulous musicians played traditional music bringing a real sense of pomp and circumstance to the day.

Following lunch the children came together along with the musicians to sing our coronation song and the National Anthem. Throughout the day the children completed a range of coronation activities including making flags, creating water colour stamp designs, traditional garden games and craft activities. Throughout the day staff painted children's faces and an unexpected visit from the ice cream man finished the day on a high note.

TOP SPOT FOR BISHOP'S



After a slightly extended football league season, which began in October with almost 20 teams, Bishops Primary team finished top of the ENSFA U11 7-a-side league in early May. Darras Hall finished in second place, just above St.Aidan's Primary. Bishops scoresheet was fantastic with only 1 loss and 1 draw throughout the season, which is an amazing achievement.

Another notable win for NCEAT was the inclusion of our own five local schools into this league, which is the first time in Academy history. Thomas Bewick, Bishops, Grace Darling, James Knott and William Leech were all represented in the league by teams with both boys and girls.



WILLIAM LEECH

Roots and Shoots

THE WILLIAM LEECH ROOTS AND SHOOTS PROJECT CONTINUES WITH THE CHILDREN COMPLETING THEIR SECOND VISIT TO ALNWICK GARDENS TO LEARN ABOUT SECRET SUGAR IN FOODS AND WHICH ALTERNATIVES ARE BETTER FOR THEM. THEY ALSO PLANTED THEIR OWN HERBS AND HAD A GO AT SMELLING AND TASTING THE LEAVES AS THEY PLANTED THEM. CHILDREN AND STAFF HAVE CREATED THEIR VERY OWN SCHOOL SCARECROW, NAMED PETER PORTER, TO STAND GUARD OVER THE WILLIAM LEECH VEGGIE PATCH



A little welcome from Warkworth

I am delighted to now be the the headteacher of NCEA Warkworth Primary School. I have thoroughly enjoyed my first few weeks in charge, working with the incredible children and staff to help the school re-invigorate our mission to serve our community wholeheartedly. From moving Collective Worship to the start of the day (and reinstating daily singing!) to having our wonderful Vision Club streamline our values to 'Love, Courage and Peace', it has been my honour to join such a fantastic institution and reaffirm what makes us special.





We have also been building closer links with the Central Team and other trust schools and look forward to the many visitors we have booked in the diary already to see the great work that is going on in our picturesque village school!

In terms of my own background, I was previously Deputy Headteacher in a similar sized Church of England first school in Gosforth, Newcastle. Prior to that, I worked in the west end of the city in a large primary. Whilst my wife, my daughter and I live in Newcastle, I have family nearby and have been enjoying the beautiful commute. Each time I see the castle makes my heart soar.

I look forward to the days, weeks, months and years ahead and am excited to continue to build on what makes the school so amazing in conjunction with the expertise across NCEA.

Mr J Booth, Headteacher

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with the Trust



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