

Connected

February 2015 | **ISSUE 6**

Welcome to the February 2015 edition of connect-ed.

NAU continues its record breaking start to 2015 with 58% of our people now having accessed NAU this academic year. That's over 2,000 of you taking ownership of your learning and making connections across our family of schools. Keep reading to find out about what's new this month and find the opportunities that we're adding just for you. We are also impressed with the significant contributions that we have received from you to support the development of others within the Nord Anglia Education family.

Stat-alicious

Last month:

- 700 members were active on NAU
 - That's over 30,000 pages viewed
 - More than 500 introductory courses completed
- .. and 400 members taking part in online or face-to-face course events

The three most active schools on NAU were...

The British International School of Charlotte, British School of Chicago and British International School Boston, all in North America this month. Can you make your region the most active next month?

Our most active participant was Martin Griffiths from Collège Champittet and you can see a quote from him below.

IN THIS ISSUE

Stat-alicious

Spotlight on

Researchers' corner

Have the confidence to have a go...

NAU where next?

Webinars this month

Teaching exchange pilot programme

Case studies on NAU

Study courses

Communities - collaborate and share

Leadership programmes

Teaching Fellows

Curriculum Corner



Spotlight on...



"The course, High Performance Secondary English-Cohort 3, run by Clare Leech, was an intriguing opportunity to participate in an International forum without the need for air travel and see where we as teachers, in a global world, could share, debate and discuss examples of good practice. There was a range of excellent, stimulating material supplied by Clare and her feedback was always helpful, well judged and perceptive. Receiving positive feedback on my own contributions was rewarding of course but the forum and research materials also encouraged us to reflect on our teaching for learning processes and consider new approaches. I was also re-introduced to Ken Robinson and Shifhappens and discovered several new blogs. I think the course helped keep my appetite for teaching fresh and that my students will benefit in multiple ways."

Martin Griffiths, English teacher at Collège Champittet and the most active member on NAU last month.



Researchers' corner

This month's highlighted research paper: What makes great teaching? by Coe et al from the Sutton Trust.

Key questions covered in this review of over 200 pieces of research are:

- What makes great teaching?
- What kinds of frameworks or tools could help to capture it?
- How could this promote better learning?

Also included in the report summary are ten interesting points about how to improve teaching and learning, developing skills and good practice. Go to the Research community to read the full summary. We've picked out our top three to get you started:

- The best bets for teacher learning are those that involve teachers working alongside other teachers focusing on their practice in the classroom.
- Observations and feedback for professional learning should be a separate process to appraisals or performance management.
- There must also be genuine challenge for teachers if they are to change behaviour, something that can be provided by school heads or external peers
- Teachers should be properly trained as observers

Do you agree? Let us know in the Research community discussion - join in and have your say.

Bernadetta Brzyska, Research and Data Manager, Education Department.



Have the **confidence** to have a go...

"I have been really impressed by the high quality posts made by our staff on the community forums. From the discussions I have had with many of you across our schools, it can be quite daunting and scary to post comments on an online forum and teachers, by their very nature can become quite anxious if they feel others are judging them.

I know that there are many of you out there with considerable skills and talents. By having the opportunity to read about the great things you are doing in your settings and allowing others that same opportunity, we are growing a wealth of significant expertise and can draw upon ideas from colleagues throughout the world.

So go on, give it a go this month. Find a community forum in a subject or age phase which you feel confident in and add a comment. You could just post a 'well done' to somebody else for their idea and this could make their day."

Nicola Morris, Assistant Director for Nord Anglia University



NAU **where next?**

At NAU we're constantly looking at how we better meet your professional development needs. We've looked at what the research says, how others are taking forward professional learning and spoken to many of you. On the back of that we've developed a vision and a set of actions to deliver it.

We've set up a community on NAU for your input so now, we'd like to hear your views on what we have come up with. How do you think think NAU can better meet your needs? Go online to the NAU communities section, join the discussion and tell us what you think.

We've already put one of the ideas into action and added suggested activities into the right hand panel of some of the pages. It updates as you use the site so you'll be able to see what you've already done on NAU and what else you might like to try.

Joanna Lay, Programme Manager for Nord Anglia University

Webinars this month

We have a fantastic programme of webinars offering high quality subject specific learning opportunities led by expert teachers from across our family of schools. Here's this month's offering:

Research	6 February	Making effective use of research
Maths	12 February	Teaching with technologies
Geography	18 February	Working towards accreditation: Geographical Association Quality marks
Science	24 February	Revision ideas for iGCSE
Leadership	27 February	Leverage Leadership online seminar with Sarah Cobb <i>(book your place online)</i>

We'll also be delivering an online Primary writing seminar with Oxford University Press author James Clements in March - you can sign up to take part on the webinar or Seminar series pages of NAU and there'll be more details in the next newsletter too.

And from next month we'll also be adding new webinars to the programme from our two new teaching fellows, look out for more details coming soon... and find out more about our new fellows below.

Details of how to join the webinars can be found on NAU on the webinars page and in the related subject community areas. All our webinars are recorded and archived online so that you can watch them again and again - or, just at another time if you can't make the live event.



Teacher exchange pilot programme

Last term, Mark Howe initiated a new pilot programme for a teacher exchange in the China region. Here, Mark talks about the aims of the programme:

“After discussions with schools leaders whom I line manage, I wanted to explore the possibility of establishing a teacher exchange programme, to provide a further (low cost, high-impact) CPD opportunity for staff that are keen to use the opportunities provided by Nord Anglia Education and NAU. After suggesting my proposal and discussing it with the Education Department, the pilot of this project is currently running in four of our schools in the China region.

The aims of the pilot are to:

- provide a quality CPD experience for all NAE staff, particularly those staff that have moved considerably beyond ‘Middle Leaders’ CPD programmes but are not able to successfully apply for the ‘Senior Leaders Programme’.
- increase networks between teachers and schools within NAE.
- provide a different type of CPD experience than is currently offered.
- help share and develop best practice between NAE schools.
- provide a low-cost, high impact CPD opportunity for NAE staff and schools.
- provide schools with an opportunity not only to learn from each other but also to gain valuable feedback on some of their own practices and policies, to assist with school improvement.

If successful, we hope to expand this idea to the whole NAE group in 2015-16 to further develop our teachers and leaders as well as to increase the opportunities for sharing of best practice across NAE.”

To take part in the pilot or just to find out more, visit the Teacher Exchange Programme pages in the Case Study section of NAU.



Case studies on NAU

Our new case studies section is proving very popular and we have two brand new ones to highlight for you this month:

Firstly, from The British International School Shanghai, Puxi, Year 3 teachers Michelle Gill, Emma Wakeline and Adam Webb have created a case study looking at implementing High Performance Learning (HPL) principles to their curriculum.

“At the end of term 1 we had a discussion as a year group about how we could develop HPL in the Year 3 curriculum. We felt that the children in our classes had become more familiar with the vocabulary of the Advanced Cognitive Performance Characteristics (ACPs) but that we would like to see them choosing which ACPs they need to complete a task and using these skills automatically.

To develop this we have decided to focus on embedding focus ACPs for Year 3 into our curriculum for term 2. As stated in the ‘Teaching for High Performance Learning’ document, we need to ‘set up tasks and opportunities that actively and systematically encourage the development’ of ACPs. We have planned the curriculum for term 2 with opportunities to develop these skills. We also plan to discretely teach these skills so that children can apply them to other areas of the curriculum.”

The first few weeks of materials are online now and they will also be adding more to the case study over the course of this term.

Secondly, Therese Andrews, Head of Middle School at the British International School of Boston and NAU Teaching Fellow for Geography has submitted a case study looking at values and student behaviour.

“Eight values, attitudes and attributes were introduced to Middle School students at the British International School of Boston in September 2014. Rubrics for improvement were provided and students were asked to reflect on how their behavior matched with the rubric on a weekly basis.

Less than three months after their introduction, data was collected via an online survey and a small sample of interviews to investigate whether the introduction of these values, attitudes and attributes had a positive impact on developing good students.”

Find out more and see Therese’s conclusions online.

To read the full case studies, post in the discussion and find more go to the case study section on NAU. Or have you been inspired to tell everyone what you’ve been doing? Want to add your own case study? Then contact Joanna Lay (joanna.lay@nordanglia.com).

Study courses

New for this term there are three brand new study courses which started in January - Geography, Maths and World Languages. There’s also another cohort of the Science course too. Good luck to everyone who has signed up and is taking part.

Want to join them? Go online to reserve your place on the cohorts which start later this year.

BREAKING NEWS

We’ll soon be revealing details of new study course subjects which will be available later this year.

Communities - collaborate and share

Communities are your opportunity to get to know colleagues from across the Nord Anglia Education family and network. They are your areas to talk about the topics, issues and events that are relevant to you - there are over 50 to choose from...so there must be one that's right for you!

Since our last newsletter we have two new community managers:



Mark Johnson
for Aspiring Leaders



David Ardley
for Design

They will be there to promote sharing of good practice and engagement across our schools, so why not go online to say hello and get involved today? If you want to go a step further and lead a community area please contact Joanna Lay (joanna.lay@nordanglia.com).



This month's highlighted community is the Marketing, Admissions and Communications (MAC) community managed by Mel Ireland, Northbridge International School Cambodia.

"By launching this community for all of our Admissions and Marketing teams within our 31 schools we can strengthen our links with each other, share best practice and also initiatives that are working well within your school to drive enquiries and enrolment.

The community page has two areas for input.

- **discussion** – a place to add a thought or ask for feedback
- **resources** – a place to share, for example, something that is helping drive the identity of your school.

Let's work together to become an elite team of Admissions and Marketing Directors. If you are unsure about posting anything, please feel free to run it by me first: Melanie_ireland@nisc.edu.kh."

Leadership programmes

Emma Pickering is currently taking part in cohort 3 of the Middle Leadership programme and has shared what it's like to take part:

"Despite having previous leadership roles, including leading on government initiatives in England, I have never undergone any rigorous leadership training. The Switzerland MLP residential made me realise we are all at different points along the path of leadership, however we are part of a supportive learning community. The residential challenged me in many ways, but I was made to feel safe by the group to take risks. I am looking forward to further experiences to develop my existing leadership skills, as the course progresses and beyond. So far one of the biggest hurdles has been balancing the course materials, my roles in school, and taking time to relax. Since reading 'How centered leaders achieve extraordinary results,' I have made steps to manage my own energy levels. After all how can I lead a well-being committee as part of my role in school, without taking care of my own well-being?"

Middle and Senior Leadership programme participants: we've added a progress bar to your course area so can see which activities you've completed and what you still need to do.

Looking for leadership CPD? - We're currently building an aspiring leaders community on NAU, contact Mark Johnson (mark.johnson@britishschool.org.cn) if you are interested in joining the community.

Teaching Fellows



Therese Andrews, Teaching Fellow for Geography

“Through collaboration with the Geographical Association over the last few years, I know how beneficial it is to have an accessible and supportive community when working in an international school. Therefore, I was extremely excited by the prospect of becoming a Teaching Fellow for Nord Anglia University and helping to develop a dynamic and collaborative community of Geographers throughout the group.

With support from English Teaching Fellow Clare Leech and the Education Department, the experience so far has been incredibly rewarding and an amazing professional development opportunity. The Geography teachers across the family have been extremely supportive and eager to participate in webinars and forum discussions which all contribute to improvements in teaching and learning in our schools.

So far there have been three webinars, and we were lucky to have the Chief Executive of the Geographical Association join the first one discussing the removal of National Curriculum levels. Additionally, this month the first cohort of participants began the High Performance Learning for Geography Study Course and I look forward to seeing the learning journey they take as the course progresses.

As the year progresses, the monthly webinars will continue and I hope to further develop our links with the Geographical Association to enable schools to become accredited with a Quality Mark. There are separate awards for Primary and Secondary Schools so if you are a Primary School teacher who is interested in leading on this in your school, then I would love to hear from you!”

Therese Andrews, Teaching Fellow for Geography (t.andrews@wclschools.org)

New Teaching Fellows



We're also delighted to introduce our two new Teaching Fellows Rebecca Kirkby and Tristian Cook.

“I’m Becky your new Teaching Fellow for Primary. I am currently Acting Deputy and year 5/6 phase leader at The British International School Bratislava. I have worked in Bratislava for almost three years. Before taking this position, I worked in Primary Schools in the UK under a variety of leadership roles including: Lead Assessment Teacher; Assistant Head, KS2 Leader and Lead Music Teacher. After 12 years teaching in the UK however, I decided to try international teaching and love it! As Primary Teaching fellow, I aim to raise the profile of our Primary schools within Nord Anglia Education. I hope to get feedback from you as to what training and collaboration would be useful. I will be working with the Primary Community managers to make links between schools, roles and subject areas. I need your help to do this so please engage, comment and share.”



“I’m Tristian Cook, Teaching Fellow for Physical Education. I am Director of Sport at The British International School Bratislava and I have been teaching for almost 10 years, working in a number of British state schools before culminating in this role in Bratislava. It allowed me to learn my trade, gain experience of teaching all forms of academic PE and grow in responsibility through the years. I am passionate about sport, and really believe there is ‘a sport for all’ – as long as students are encouraged, engaged and open to alternative activities. I hope to offer ideas that have evolved from my faculty and learn from all those other excellent practitioners throughout our schools.”

So get in touch via the PE community forum with your ideas.



Curriculum Corner Music and Mathematics

“This month, with the exciting announcement of the Global Orchestra for Nord Anglia Education students, I thought I would spend a little time on the subject of Music and Mathematics. . . is there a connection between the two? Can one be used to help you get better in the other? How are these two subjects related?”

It has been said that music is a part of mathematics. . . way back in ancient Greece, in the times of Pythagoras, then Plato and then Aristotle, the “religion” of mathematics was invented. At the time many Pythagoreans (followers of this new religion) believed that mathematical structures were mystical. They had elaborate rituals and, among other things, believed that the numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4 were divine and therefore sacred.

Further, ancient Greek mathematics education was divided into 4 key areas. . . number theory, geometry, music and astronomy. . . these were the quadrivium of mathematics.

Pythagoras did all sorts of experiments (for the scientists out there!) hitting different weighted hammers on bells, blowing into pipes, hitting vases filled with water and plucking different lengths of stretched strings to discover that musical note intervals (such as octaves, 4ths and 5ths) were related by simple fractions. So, for example, halving the length of a string or using a hammer that was twice as heavy affected the sound created in a common pattern.

However, although the relationship between mathematics and music remained for many centuries thereafter with prominent mathematicians (such as Descartes and Mersenne) also writing on music theory. . . the connectedness between the two “disciplines” seems to have been forgotten (or at least undervalued) in schools.

Recently, however, there has been a swathe of research pointing to the link between music and mathematics. . . and particularly the positive effects of music on mathematics performance. Shaw and Rauscher found that college students who listened to 10 minutes of Mozart every day seemed to improve in their ability to perform spatial reasoning tasks; Gardiner and Brown found that first graders who were given music instruction emphasising rhythm and pitch for 6 months scored significantly better in mathematics than those that did not! And German researchers, using magnetic brain imaging technology, found that the auditory cortex of the brain was up to 25% larger in musicians!

So what do you think about music and mathematics? Do you use music in your lessons to help children with mathematics tasks or other activities? Have you noticed any differences in students who are musicians? Perhaps you have developed some lessons in your school linking mathematics and music? I'd love to hear them. . . why not post on NAU and tell others what you are doing? Perhaps we can do some leading edge action research of our own to find out more about this possible link?

Mark Orrow-Whiting, Director of Curriculum and Student Performance

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Visit www.naeuniversity.com and enter your Nord Anglia University account details. If you don't have an account, contact Joanna Lay (joanna.lay@nordanglia.com.)