

COLLEGE TIMES



SSFC TOPS LOCAL LEAGUE TABLES



Stockton Sixth Form College is the best college in the area for securing students' next step in education, according to government league tables.

KS5 Destinations Tables, published annually by the Department for Education, place Stockton Sixth Form at the top of local further education or sixth form college providers for securing 'sustained education destinations' for students – including higher education and further training.

Overall, 80% of college students secure a sustained destination, with almost two thirds successfully achieving a place to study at university. Of that figure, 13% are studying at prestigious Oxbridge and Russell Group universities, with 14% within the top third of institutions nationally.

Joanna Bailey, Principal at Stockton Sixth Form College, said: "It is gratifying that our students can leave college, not only with outstanding results, but with extra-curricular experiences and opportunities which significantly strengthen their chance of successfully securing their next step, as the published data shows.

"We are thrilled to be performing so well in supporting students' success and it is a huge credit to our committed team of both teaching and support staff."

See how we compare against other colleges at www.stocktonsf.ac.uk

EDITOR

CELEBRITIES BACK CAMPAIGN

A number of celebrities have backed a national campaign for sixth forms to receive a rebate on the VAT they spend.

Over the course of the coalition government, sixth forms have been hard hit by spending reductions. On average, sixth forms are receiving over £1000 less per pupil than they did back in 2010. VAT costs amount to, on average, more than £300,000 per college, putting significant strain on 16-19 budgets.

An e-petition was set up by the Sixth Form College Association late last year; so far it has more than 14,000 signatures. Celebrities including Dermot O'Leary and Colin Firth have backed the campaign, putting pressure on the government to act on the issue. Dermot O'Leary said: "I'm supporting the 'Drop the Learning Tax' campaign because I want future sixth form college students to benefit from the sort of education that has served me so well over the years."

To find out more, visit: www.sixthformcolleges.org/drop-learning-tax-campaign

THOMAS CROFT



REFUND THE VAT COSTS OF
SIXTH FORM COLLEGES.

dropthelearningtax.org

STOCKTON'S RESPONSE TO BENEFITS STREET



Love Productions first approached Channel 4 with its idea for Benefits Street in 2012 and the programme has been causing dissension on both sides of the political divide ever since.

Benefits Street has been subject to constant scrutiny about whether it has breached broadcasting rules, and now it has prompted further reaction by sparking a new social movement in our area: Positively Stockton-on-Tees.

The Psst! campaign was designed to increase the sense of worth in Stockton. On Friday 13th March, the 'Loudest Whisper' was heard across college as students showed that even the quietest voices can make a big noise. This enormous game of Chinese Whispers travelling all over the borough aimed to show how the image on our TV screens is not always a reflection of reality, raising crucial funds for Comic Relief at the same time.

With over 250 organisations and hundreds of people taking part, the battle cry of Stockton was distorted beyond belief. If this is what happens when people are taking part in one borough, can you imagine with millions of viewers around the country?

Mike McGrother, Creative Partner for Stockton Borough Council and frontman of the Wildcats of Kilkenny, is the man behind the campaign. On Valentine's Day, he paid a surprise visit to Love Productions to put Stockton's side of the argument across. It was, of course, in the way that a musician does best, busking outside of their London office. He said:

"Stocktonians already have a timeless voice we are deeply proud of. If you would like to truly give us a voice, then why did your production crews not film these and choose to work so secretively?"



Stockton is a great place to live but most of the time we just don't appreciate it. We have one of the UK's top universities; a £6.5 million Olympia sports complex in Tees Barrage, beautiful parks and a thriving sense of community. This campaign has captured the true heart of Stockton: resourceful, resilient and truly remarkable.

STACEY MCMASTER



PUPILS CONSIDER CLINICAL CAREERS

Over 70 pupils from Teesside schools learnt about careers in medicine during a special event hosted by Stockton Sixth Form College.

Pupils from High Tunstall College of Science, Laurence Jackson School, Nunthorpe Academy, Sacred Heart School, St. Patrick's Catholic College and Trinity Catholic College were invited to be part of a unique 'Medical Challenge Day' ran by MCS Projects Ltd.

The day was arranged for Y10 and Y11 pupils with an interest in careers in medicine. Within mixed school teams, the groups completed practical, medical-related challenges around anatomy, cardiology and medical ethics, assisted by Stockton Sixth Form students and medical students from Newcastle University.

In addition to the practical activities, the university students delivered a short presentation about general Medical School entry requirements, including academic expectations, interview processes and admission tests.

Stockton Sixth Form College offers a tailored Pathway to Clinical Science (PaCS) enrichment which aims to boost students' chances of studying medicine at university.

Angeline Keightley, Biology teacher and PaCS coordinator, said:

"It's great to be able to offer local young people an insight as to what it takes to work in clinical science."

EDITOR

COMENIUS TAKES STUDENTS TO MALTA

For the first college Comenius project, Ancient Wisdom, students were asked to write and perform a play based on a legend that represents their country. After trips around the continent meeting our project counterparts from Italy and Germany, we regrouped in Malta to showcase the performance we had worked hard to create over the last two years.

TUESDAY

On the first day, we travelled to the Junior College by coach where the Maltese students put on a presentation to greet the others and gave us a tour of their college.

After a few hours of rehearsals and lunch, we drove to Valetta to visit the Manoel Theatre and had free time to shop before having a meal at a restaurant.

WEDNESDAY

The following day, the coach took us back to the Junior College where the first combined rehearsal of the play took place and technical aspects such as lights and music were considered. It was really interesting to watch and film, and showed how much work the students and teachers had put into the project.

After lunch, the coach took us to the il-Maqluba chapel, which was beautiful.

THURSDAY

When the big day arrived, many of the students were nervous to perform. They got dressed and prepared for their performances and rehearsed scenes while we set up the cameras. The performance took place at 11:00am, with many of the Maltese students as well as their teachers and Principal in the audience. The whole show was a huge success!

Afterwards, there was a formal award ceremony with certificates being given out to all students. We later travelled to Mdina to take part in a treasure hunt which gave every student the chance to interact with others from different countries and cultures for the final time.

We then got the coach back to the hotel to prepare for the legendary characters party which took place at the Junior College giving everyone the chance to say their goodbyes.

FRIDAY

On Friday the 27th we flew back to Manchester airport after saying an emotional farewell to the Maltese and German students who were at the airport at the same time.

A huge amount of time and effort was put into making the performance, including students visiting each of the different countries for meetings over the past two years. Their hard work really paid off.

FAYE DIXON

STUDENT HONOURS CHURCHILL IN PARLIAMENT SERVICE

Stockton Sixth Form College student Nathania Ewruje was invited to deliver a reading at a remembrance service honouring Winston Churchill at the Houses of Parliament in January.

In order to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the former Prime Minister's state funeral, a series of events took place as part of 'Churchill 2015'. The Houses of Parliament hosted a remembrance service and wreath laying ceremony in recognition of Churchill's outstanding contribution to Parliament.

Nathania, who was named Best Speaker in the English-Speaking Union's National Public Speaking Competition for Schools last year and subsequently won the Winston Churchill Cup for Public Speaking, contributed to the service alongside the Speaker of the House of Commons, John Bercow and the Prime Minister, David Cameron.

On the same day, the Havengore vessel, which carried the coffin of Sir Winston, retraced its journey down the Thames, taking the same route at the same time of day as 50 years previously.

EDITOR



FIVE MINUTES WITH... CHRIS KAMARA

James Gregory had a brilliant opportunity to interview Sky Sports reporter Chris Kamara about his football career, working in sports journalism and his views on Middlesbrough's season so far...

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO BECOME A FOOTBALLER?

When I was a kid, growing up in Middlesbrough, I used to watch Boro and Leeds if I could afford it.

WOULD YOU SAY YOU WERE A BETTER MANAGER THAN FOOTBALLER?

No, I was not a better manager. I had 22 years as a player and the honour of playing alongside people like Gordon Strachan and Vinnie Jones whereas I only had two years' experience as a manager.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE OUR STUDENTS WANTING TO FOLLOW IN YOUR FOOTSTEPS?

Take on every piece of work that you are offered, don't turn anything down, work hard at letting people know you are around, and stick with it – never give up!

CAN YOU GIVE US A RUN-DOWN OF A NORMAL SATURDAY WORKING FOR SKY SPORTS?

Wake up and have breakfast. I have to be at the ground for midday when Soccer Saturday begins, but usually pop in to see the 'home' manager for a chat and a cup of tea. I make my way out on to the pitch to chat with the 'away' manager when they arrive and are doing their pitch inspection.



At 2:45pm I touch base with my cameraman and Sky to ensure that all is in order and working ready for kick off. After the match I would normally get away as quickly as possible and head to the Sky studios from which Goals on Sunday is televised live.

I have an early night, since I usually have a very early start each Sunday. I have to go into the studios at 5am to watch the short edits of all the games from the previous day, and to prepare the analysis.

WHERE DO YOU COME UP WITH YOUR COMICAL LINES?

I have no idea where they come from – ha! I am not a fan of pre-prepared comedy in sport – in my opinion it needs to be off the cuff and improvised without preparation.

HAVE YOU EVER HAD ANY EMBARRASSING MOMENTS DURING AN INTERVIEW WHICH YOU'VE MANAGED TO KEEP TO YOURSELF?

Yes, in my usual fashion, I sometimes get the opposing team wrong! The last manager to pick me up on this was Neil Warnock, earlier this season – Crystal Palace were playing Burnley and I asked how he was feeling about facing Leicester!

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU AND JEFF STELLING TO REPRESENT THE REGION ON SUCH A POPULAR SHOW?

Jeff and I will never forget our roots. We are both still amazed at what we are doing, and feel privileged to be in the position we are in.

PEOPLE CONSIDER STEVE GIBSON TO BE ONE OF THE BEST CHAIRMANS IN THE GAME. WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

Steve and I, it's no secret, go way back – we went to school together from the age of 5 to 15. We remain close and have worked together from time to time. One of the best chairmen in the game? No, he is THE best chairman in the game, but then again, I am biased...

FINALLY, HAVE YOU BEEN FOLLOWING MIDDLESBROUGH'S SEASON?

Yes. Aitor Karanka has had a wonderful start to his career as manager of Boro. I am keeping my fingers crossed for Steve – anyone who ploughs over £100million into his home town club deserves success, along with all the faithful supporters.

JAMES GREGORY



PRIMARY CHILDREN COMPLETE 'CODING CLUB'

Fifteen pupils from St. John the Baptist CoE Primary School have completed an eight-week Computer Science project at Stockton Sixth Form College.

The Year 6 group, pictured, visited the college to learn more about new technologies and programming in a specially designed 'coding club'. The group were taught to think logically about the steps involved in simple computer games before building their own, and moved on to a more complicated program simulating the operation of a vending machine, learning about coding constructs such as sequence, selection and looping in the process.

Computer Science was introduced to the national curriculum in September 2014 by Michael Gove, meaning children aged 5 and above are now expected to understand what the former Education Secretary called 'the language of the future' – computer programming.

The coding club children were each presented with a certificate this week as a reward for their hard work and effort during the project.

Kerry Coe, Headteacher at St. John the Baptist CoE Primary School, said: "This is one of many exciting projects we have been involved with and I delighted with how the partnership we have with Stockton Sixth Form is going."

EDITOR