

CASE STUDY

North Tyneside Learning Trust and the Primary Science Quality Mark programme

North Tyneside Learning Trust (NLT) supports its primary schools to take part in the Primary Science Quality Mark (PSQM) programme. During 2019-21, NLT supported 13 trust schools to take part in PSQM, working with local hub leader Anna Hammill.

PSQM is a yearlong CPD process which helps schools to achieve a quality mark for science, focusing on developing effective, confident science leadership for whole school impact on science teaching and learning. Schools receive PSQM, PSQM GILT or PSQM OUTREACH. The quality mark is valid for three years and can be achieved by all types of schools with primary-aged children, including first, primary, middle and special schools.

PSQM OUTREACH Case Study

WALLESEND JUBILEE PRIMARY SCHOOL, WALLESEND

Wallsend Jubilee Primary School aims to embed a love of lifelong learning in its 300+ pupils through the 6Rs: reflection, resilience, risk-taking, resourcefulness, responsibility and reasoning. The school is part of the North Tyneside Learning Trust (NLT). There is a strong emphasis on STEM with established links to several organisations, such as Nissan and Newcastle University. The school is located near the Rising Sun Country Park which is often used for outdoor activities. Children's science capital is developed in many ways, including events such as NLT's World of Work project, first aid lessons and dedicated weeks focusing on science, sport and health.



The school is a member of a Primary Science Teaching Trust (PSTT) cluster which meets regularly to share good practice in science and develop exciting opportunities for pupils. The science leader, Gemma Robson, delivers CPD and supports other schools through her role as an accredited STEM Lead Facilitator.

Why PSQM?

Science already had a high profile at Wallsend Jubilee Primary and was actively supported by the school's leadership team and link governor. Gemma felt that applying for PSQM would give recognition for her work supporting other schools and to the staff who go 'above and beyond' providing good science teaching experiences for children. She also thought that it would be a useful tool to audit and extend science further and was keen to become aware of wider range of resources and opportunities as part of the PSQM community. The head teacher was fully supportive of Gemma's request to apply for 'PSQM OUTREACH' which recognises established leadership with sustained impact on improving science within the school and also externally in other schools.



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How has PSQM changed science at Wallsend Jubilee Primary?

The biggest impact from PSQM was the way that science was viewed. The vision and principles for good science, drawn up alongside pupils and parents, added to the inclusive nature of the process and allowed all stakeholders to be a part of the PSQM journey. Links between EYFS and Key Stages One & Two were strengthened, with both the science leader and EYFS leader having a full and secure understanding of science progression through school, which was not explicit previously.

Revising the science vision to include opportunities for developing pupils' science capital in every key stage resulted in an enriched curriculum offer. There was a shift in teaching and learning; CPD for science became a priority in the whole school training and monitoring diary. As a result, staff were upskilled, resulting in engaging and fully immersive lessons. Outdoor learning was further improved with the development of an outdoor classroom, timetabled for all classes to use in all weathers. Children are now more involved in science; for example, Year Five/ Six children have helped to run a science club and a parent-pupil science day.

"There is a much more explorative approach to science teaching, where pupils are encouraged to ask their own questions and find things out for themselves, rather than being 'taught the answers' by their teachers. The new outdoor area has gone down a storm, and even our younger pupils, who at the start of our journey were unable to tell me what science was, can now eloquently describe what they have been doing in science!" (Gemma Robson, Science Leader)

"We went on a leaf hunt to see how many different coloured leaves we could find." (Reception child)

How has PSQM changed the science leader Gemma?

The PSQM framework and support from the hub leader helped Gemma to develop existing good practice at Wallsend Jubilee Primary under challenging conditions. Reflecting on the impact of actions at the end of the process made her feel accomplished and proud of what she had achieved in school, with a sense of satisfaction about the impact on the local community; for example, training for junior STEM ambassadors in local schools.

Taking part in PSQM has resulted in significant personal development for Gemma. She was already delivering CPD (for the local authority and STEM Learning) and advising the local STEM Ambassador Hub but during the PSQM process, this has been extended; for example, Gemma became an accredited remote facilitator for STEM Learning and delivered online training at the PSQM teaching and learning festival to share a wealth of ideas with educators nationally.

Gemma has recently received a PSTT Primary Science Teaching Award which recognises her contributions as an inspiring teacher and science leader in developing science at Wallsend Jubilee Primary School and beyond. This will provide Gemma with further opportunities as a Fellow of the PSTT Primary Science Teacher College.

"It is very positive to see passionate STEM leadership and development continuing." (Science link governor)

Gemma's advice

"At first, writing reflections at the end of the PSQM process appeared daunting; however, they were the most useful element of our journey. Once I got going, I found it easy to identify areas of strength that had moved forward which I was then able to share and celebrate with our whole school community."

"Take it one step at a time. The PSQM framework is really useful to help you prioritise the various areas that you need to cover."



Wallsend Jubilee Primary School successfully achieved 'PSQM Outreach' in May 2021.

