



“Engaging the hard to reach...”

Widening the access and participation of disadvantaged groups in education.

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National Association of Headteachers

National President 2018-19

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Good Morning!

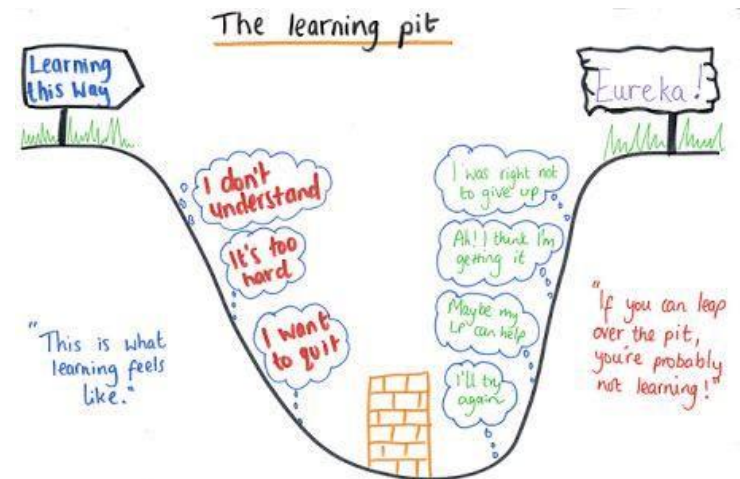
- **Headteacher**
St Nicholas C of E Primary School, Blackpool
2003 to current day
- **Director**
Blackpool Teaching School Alliance and NLE
- **2018-19 National President**
National Association of Headteachers
- **Chair**
Blackpool Local Culture/ Education Partnership
- **Board Member:**
Blackpool Opportunity Area Board
Blackpool School Improvement Board
NAHT National Executive
National Primary Umbrella Group



Universal Access to Education – A 5 point vision

All learners irrespective of parental income:

- achieve their full potential.
- Are engaged in lifelong learning.
- develop a love of learning in itself.
- develop a resilience in learning.
- have their specific needs met.



National Issues challenging our vision - Disadvantage

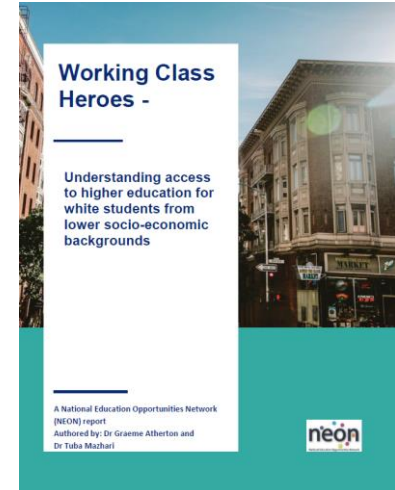
- White working class boys – aspiration, attainment and ambition
“Over 50% of universities admit less than 5% of white students from the low participation neighbourhoods”

How do we break into the cycle to widen access?

- Permanently excluded children - Statistically more likely to go to prison than university. PEX students want to know that someone cares.

How do we embrace these students?

- Headstart /Merlin/ Blackpool Teaching School – Friend for School Y5 -8 programme – potential to be more inclusive going forward? Need creative ideas.
- NEETs how do we work with this group to ensure they benefit from HE?
- Impact of children suffering with mental trauma means that they often don't “fit” with education and have had enough by age 16. Experience of education has to improve at KS3/4.



National Challenges – Funding and Accountability

According to the IFS's: Total school spending per pupil has fallen by 8% in real terms between 2009 and 2018.

When funding is short it's the most vulnerable who take the first hit.

The fact that the new Ofsted framework demands that children from disadvantaged communities make more progress than other children. Always our aim but means that working in a challenging community is “like playing Russian roulette with your career.”
Stephen Tierney.

This framework continues to unwittingly mitigate against schools serving the most challenging communities.

Solutions? Primary Futures

Firing ambition for lifelong learning.

[Redrawing the Balance](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qv8VZVP5csA>

In conclusion...

- **We need a system wide response to the challenges to wider participation**
 - Joined up approach from all sectors all pulling in the same direction
 - Experience of HE in engaging WWC boys is same issue for primary and secondary but potentially young people are switched off before KS5. OA work needs sharing. Blackpool and Hastings doing great stuff but in isolation.
 - International learning? Who is having success with this agenda?
 - Working with business to show benefit of lifelong learning.
- **We need to challenge barriers to widening access:**
 - poverty of ambition,
 - lack of knowledge of HE sector,
 - national funding arrangements,
 - one size fits all view of accountability that mitigates against more deprived communities and takes resource from supporting the most vulnerable
- **Urgent engagement with low take up communities:**
 - PEX/ White working class boys/ Travellers
- Urgent need for multi agency research and remedial action to support families and child development before compulsory schooling.

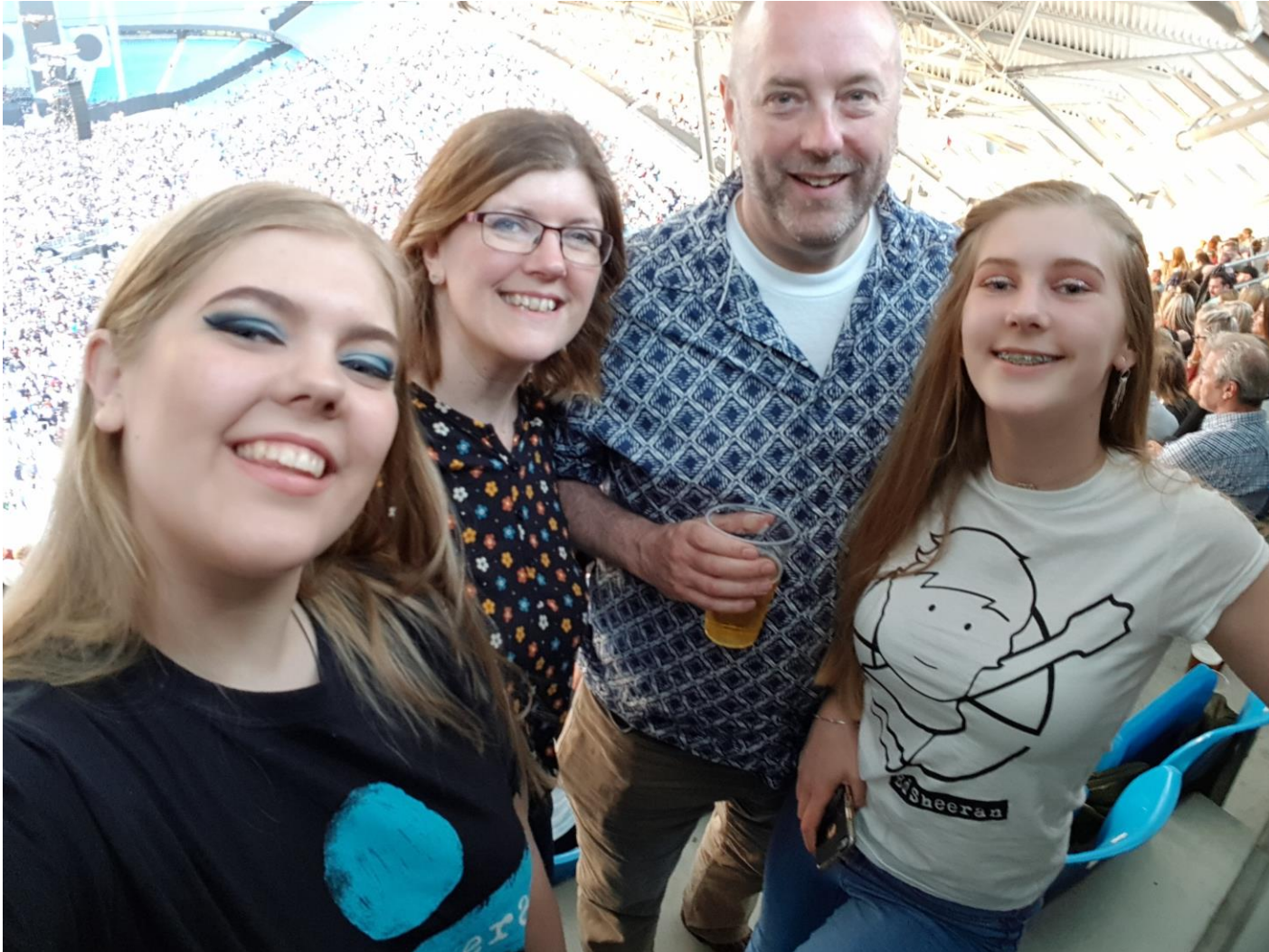
Given many have had enough of education by 16, how do we provide change that and find ways that young people want to learn?

Is our educational system predicated on a narrow gauge of results and tests/exams that don't recognise the totality of what it means to be educated?

Remembering facts is a low level thinking skill but its how our children are tested.

**“The girl refused to step out onto the glassy lake...”
Middle class bias in the education system.**

Two students! HE or not to HE?





Time to think again about what it means to be educated and how we embrace all learners and types of learning.



Thank you for listening...

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