

Our teachers are top of the class!

WE ALL remember our favourite teachers – the ones who inspired us to learn or helped us through a difficult time.

And here in Lincolnshire, we are lucky enough to have more than our fair share of outstanding teachers.

To mark the start of the new school year, *County News* meets some of the teachers who have been honoured in the East Midlands Teaching Awards for really making a difference.

Andy lights up their lives



EXCITING: Andy Bell’s teaching style is an inspiration.

WINNING the Teacher of the Year Award is a great boost for Andy Bell as he becomes deputy head at the new Meadows School in Lincoln.

In his former role as teacher at Metheringham Primary School, Andy was involved in helping the school out of special measures.

The award judges were impressed with his enthusiasm for the job and the relationships he had built with pupils.

He has been a teacher for 10 years and was part of the leadership team responsible for implementing new systems for assessing pupil progress.

Andy believes in leading by example – doing demonstration lessons and working alongside

teachers personally.

He said: “I try to use a variety of styles appropriate for the children in the class – to make it interactive, fun and relevant to their experiences, and to get to know the children as individuals and take an interest in them personally.”

The judges who assessed Andy for his award said: “Anyone who wants to see just how exciting teaching can be, should visit this teacher’s classroom.”

Andy makes time to listen to pupils, and is interested in all aspects of their lives. One parent said: “In three or four months with Mr Bell there was a total change.” Another said: “There was a light switched on for my child’s learning in his class.”

Jim’s special chemistry!

FOR chemistry teacher Jim Baker, gaining a Lifetime Achievement Award is a great way to mark the run-up to his retirement next year.

Deputy head of science Jim, 59, joined Lincoln Christ’s Hospital School in 1970 in his first teaching job and 37 years later he is still there.

In the face of a national problem with encouraging young people to study science, he is proud that the school has a strong track record in chemistry, with 32 pupils opting to study it at A-level in September.

Over the years he has seen a lot

of changes at the school, especially when the former Lincoln School became co-educational in 1974 and doubled in size.

One of the main developments has been the use of computers and Jim has set up his own website – www.jimbakersonlinelearning.co.uk – to help those learning chemistry and other subjects.

This is used by his own pupils and students from as far afield as the USA and Azerbaijan, and it was a user of the site who nominated him.

“It was a nice feeling to win the award,” he said. “I feel that it was in recognition of maintaining high standards over many years.”



LIFETIME AWARD: Jim Baker is as enthusiastic as ever after 37 years’ teaching chemistry.

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Teacher Joanne is the write stuff!

BUDDING writer Joanne Boxall has been recognised for turning her literary talents to the benefit of her pupils.

She has gained the Outstanding New Teacher of the Year Award.

Joanne joined Boston’s Fishtoft School as a supply teacher and stayed. She has now been at the village school for three years and taught years one to six.

She said: “This is a wonderful village school – we are like a little family. That has given me opportunities that may not be open to others, such as teaching such a wide range of children.”

Before entering the profession, Joanne was a teaching assistant and decided to make a career from teaching rather than writing.

However, she uses her flair with language in the classroom, introducing children to a wide vocabulary and encouraging them to be adventurous.

Joanne has thrown herself wholeheartedly into every activity



LITERARY TALENT: Joanne Boxall uses her writing skills to help her pupils with their learning.

at her school. She runs a drama club once a week and has been responsible for the school Christmas productions since her arrival.

She has also reorganised the library and introduced a trolley service and a loan service run by the childrent.



LIFE-CHANGING: Boston’s John Fielding Special School headteacher Sue Morrison.

RAF honour for headteacher Paul

WILLIAM Farr School at Welton has seen a lot of changes since Paul Strong, 61, became its headteacher in 1986.

An outstanding Ofsted report last year, the setting up of a sixth form in 1995 and two Royal visits, including one by the Queen, are just some of the many highlights over the past 21 years.

The total of pupils has nearly doubled and the number of five A*-C grade passes at GCSE is now over 80%, compared with around 30% A-C grade passes at O-level when Mr Strong arrived.

Gaining the award for Secondary School Headteacher of the Year – sponsored by the RAF – has been another success for Mr Strong.

“I feel that it’s an award for the whole school,” he said. “Not only am I very proud to gain this award but I am very touched that it was pupils from my own school that nominated me.

“It’s a privilege to work at this school and I have a fantastic team



FLYING HIGH: William Farr headteacher Paul Strong.

of staff here.”

There are significant links between William Farr School and the RAF, with the school being based on land that formed part of RAF Dunholme Lodge.

In June a memorial plaque to the RAAF aircrew of Dunholme Lodge was unveiled by Australian army veteran Keith Payne VC.

The school also has a memorial and a book of remembrance.

Double award for special school

BOSTON’S John Fielding Special School has won two of the East Midlands Awards.

The Special Needs Teacher of the Year accolade was won by Paula Kirk, while Sue Morrison was Primary School Headteacher of the Year.

Paula gained the award for her compassionate approach. Colleagues praised her ability to keep students focused with activities like climbing, horse riding, sailing and adventure holidays.



COMPASSION: Paula Kirk is the East Midlands Special Needs Teacher of the Year.

Paula, a teacher for 17 years, first got the taste for working with special needs children while doing a Duke of Edinburgh award as a teenager.

She said: “Having a learning disability does not mean they cannot do it. Every child should have the same opportunities – that is my philosophy.”

Sue Morrison has been headteacher for three years. She has upgraded the school’s equipment, acquired a new classroom where students can cook, resurfaced the playground, bought a new minibus and created special quiet rooms for students.

One parent said sending her son to the school had been “life-changing” for both of them. Others praised Sue as an extraordinary person and skilled headteacher.

And there are more!

Other school stars in Lincolnshire who won recognition in the award ceremony included:

- Chris Turner, from Caistor Primary School, received a special distinction in the category for Governor of the Year.
- Wendy Marrs, from the Earl of Dysart Primary School in Grantham, won a commendation for Primary School Teacher of the Year.
- Keith Balich, from Fishtoft School, won a commendation in the category of Primary School Headteacher of the Year.