

DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

OUTREACH NEWSLETTER – February 2020

Welcome to the inaugural Chemistry Outreach newsletter! Following our annual Christmas Flash Bang Show for 400 secondary school pupils from around Greater Manchester, our presenters have returned from the break ready to deliver the next round of outreach shows and events.

Polymer Day – in early January, we welcomed Year 9 pupils from Cumbria’s Furness Academy with a visit to the labs making, crosslinking and thermally processing polymers. Making nylon, slime, threads and films of polymer, pupils learned about some applications of polymer science and how all these properties relate simply to the fact that the molecules are really, really long. *“They had an amazing experience and you have really inspired our students – both in the labs and the tour”.*

Solids Liquids & Gases Shows

Our very popular SLG show recently visited Barlow RC High School after a request from Seemab Anser (UoM Chemistry graduate & former Spectroscopy in a Suitcase outreach ambassador), now a science teacher at the school keen to inspire early secondary students and widen their perspectives about education beyond high school.



Thanks also to experienced presenter Dr Seb Cosgrove (former UoM MChem student, now postdoc at MIB) who recently delivered a show at Ladybarn Primary School, Withington – *“It was really fun but also informative. The children absolutely loved it and it definitely left them with a ‘buzz’ surrounding science which we have really been trying to promote recently. Staff were equally as positive about the session and particularly praised the enthusiasm and knowledge that Sebastian showed throughout”.*

Flash Bang Shows with Careers Talks

Our popular Flash Bang Show gets pupils’ attention and enthusiasm, but does not necessarily deliver the message that chemistry can lead to real jobs in the real world. With this in mind, recent shows at Whalley Range High School and Cedar Mount Academy added short talks featuring someone's real chemistry story, how they got to where they are, delivered in an accessible way for high school audiences. Our thanks to recent speakers Frances Taylor (née Bailey), UoM MChem graduate now Senior Chemist at Nanoco Runcorn, and Dr Katherine Hollywood (Senior Experimental Officer at MIB).

Outreach ambassador profile - Radhika Barchha Radia (4th Yr MChem student)



“Since school I have always been enthusiastic about doing cool science experiments. Being an outreach demonstrator is really rewarding as you can usually see the children learn new things from the shows/workshops which they will remember forever, unlike when they are taught straight from a textbook.

Outreach is a great opportunity to see how you can inspire and spark science enthusiasm into young children.”

Photo: Radhika delivering the SLG show at her childhood school, Colegio Hispano Britanico in Lanzarote

UPCOMING EVENTS

We are preparing for a busy month ahead in the run up to [British Science Week](#) with a packed schedule of requests from schools booking Solids Liquids & Gases/Flash Bang Shows.

Dr Kat Presland (RSC NW Education Co-ordinator, based at Chemistry) will be out and about visiting schools in Southport, Manchester & Liverpool delivering [“Spectroscopy in a Suitcase”](#) workshops (paracetamol synthesis, IR/NMR analysis) to students from Year 10 to 13.

RSC Schools’ Analyst North West heat - 30th April 2020

For a fourth year, we will be hosting the Manchester heat of the Schools’ Analyst Competition, an event for first year Sixth Form or equivalent. The competition is an opportunity for students to use analytical equipment not usually available in schools, gain additional practical experience and apply their knowledge of chemistry to solve problems. After hosting the National Final of the competition here last June, there has been a surge of entries for this year’s Manchester heat! Thanks, in advance, to the excellent support provided by the Teaching Labs staff and the volunteer demonstrators who are essential to the successful running of this event.

Looking ahead to the summer, we will have the [Salters’ Festivals](#) for 11-13 year olds (11, 15 & 17 June), the [Synthesis & Spectroscopy Days](#) for visiting Year 12s (22-26 June) and the [UoM Community Festival](#) Flash Bang Show for local families (27 June).

OUTREACH CAPTURE – we need to effectively capture a record of all outreach delivered by the Department. Please help us achieve this by completing an online form for each & every activity you are involved in <https://forms.gle/yisWbCKUJFxFxiNyPA>

Thanks for reading.

Chemistry blog posts about outreach :

Dr Josh Moore (postdoc) – UoM Community Festival Flash Bang Show

<https://www.mub.eps.manchester.ac.uk/uomchemistryblog/2020/01/outreach-community-festival/>

Dr Kat Presland (Alumni / RSC NW Education Co-ordinator) – Spectroscopy in a Suitcase

<https://www.mub.eps.manchester.ac.uk/uomchemistryblog/2019/11/alumni-profile-katayune-presland/>