Tax Facts: HMRC’s student tax education programme

General Features



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HMRC’s tax education programme aims to help students aged between 8 and 17 to understand how tax works.

by Emma Porter

Image



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I have worked for HMRC for 15 years and for the last four years I have been the Lead Tax Facts coordinator for the Merseyside region. Tax Facts is HMRC's flagship tax education programme which aims to provide students aged from 8 to 17 with an everyday understanding of tax and why it is so important. The programme, which was launched in 2015, is delivered by teachers and HMRC ambassadors using material developed by HMRC, alongside a team of educational experts to help students understand their tax responsibilities.

My role is to support, drive and organise the programme in our region. This involves facilitating training and providing advice to colleagues to enable them to deliver this fantastic material to students from areas across the city. I liaise with schools across the four Boroughs of Liverpool, Knowsley, Sefton and Wirral, building relationships with them to ensure effective and successful delivery.

To date, the Tax Facts programme has been viewed more than 295,000 times on YouTube (October 2022 figures) and the resources have been available on the TES website since April 2019. The programme has secured the Young Money and the Association for Citizenship Teaching Quality Marks for educational quality and accuracy, and also won the Best Free Educational Resource Award at the 2016 Education Resources Awards, and the Institute for Continuous Improvement in Public Services 2017 Education Award.

The training and guidance classroom material relaunched in October 2022, containing up to date videos and images which enhance both the learning and engagement of students. The lesson plans are designed to give the students some practical knowledge of the world of tax and the role which HMRC plays within our local communities.

The team I lead is based in our new regional city centre location, India Buildings, and we have a team of volunteers across many different business streams delivering the product. The Merseyside contingent has delivered the programme to more than 25,000 students to date.

During the sessions, students are encouraged to recognise what it is to be a responsible citizen and how contributing towards the essential services we all need benefits everyone. We do this using an interactive presentation and engaging activities, such as: finding out what your tax pays for; starting your first job; and

being the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the day. By the end of the sessions the students can:

- explain why the government needs to collect money ‘taxes’;
- describe how taxes pay for things we all need and use; and
- identify the work HMRC does and the important role it plays.

The programme has been developed to cover further sessions on starting your first job, the hidden economy and working for yourself.

All material is available in Welsh and is accessible for all. Our sessions are free and are facilitated by experienced Tax Facts ambassadors. Having subject matter experts deliver the programme is a win/win for all parties. HMRC is providing a valuable service to our local communities by building positive relationships with our future customers, and the students have a better grasp of the material from having a visitor deliver the material and our friendly and enthusiastic staff provide a positive human face to our organisation.

The relationships I have built with schools in Merseyside have strengthened over time. Teachers and headteachers will contact me on an annual basis asking for us to return to deliver the programme time and time again. This also increases our presence in the local community and promotes HMRC as an excellent and inspirational employer.

‘The content was really useful and caters well for different year groups. The children were very curious and asked lots of meaningful questions, which provided real value to their learning. Teachers would highly recommend this product to other schools across the region.’

Head teacher Mrs G Murphy
St Anne’s Catholic Primary School

‘The sessions were extremely well delivered; children were engaged and were interested through the whole session. At the end of the session, the children understood and could explain the importance of tax and how tax money is used. Excellent group activities which enhanced the students learning.’

KS2 Lead

If you would like to find out more about the programme or make a booking, please contact us at: hmrc.taxeducation@hmrc.gov.uk