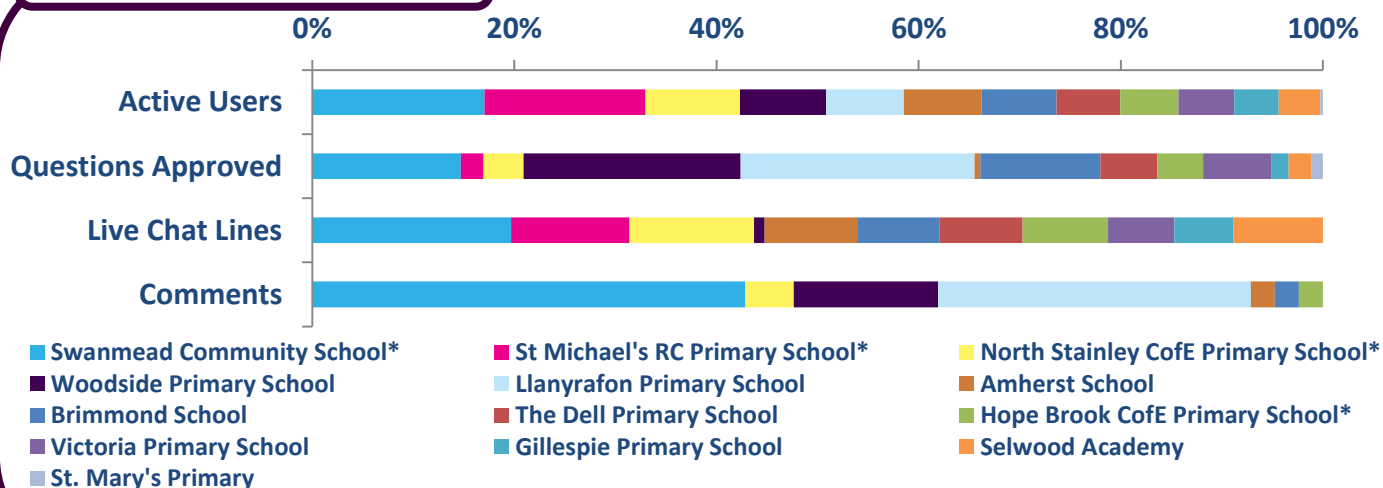


June 2016

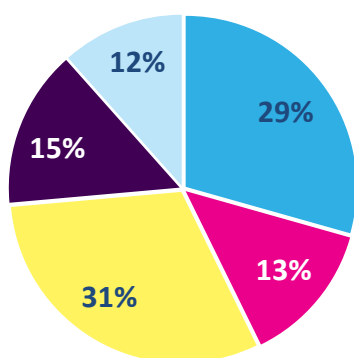
The Mercury Zone was a general Primary School zone funded by the Royal Society of Chemistry, of which Waqar, Melissa and Angus were members. Waqar researches how to find out if someone has an infection by studying their breath, Melissa is an environmental scientist looking at how explosives travel through the ground and the effect the chemicals can have on the environment and Jenni researches how our brains understand the words they hear and read, in order to help children with learning difficulties. Catherine is a cardiac scientist who uses ultrasound to examine people's hearts and Angus is a PhD student who researches what makes stainless steels rust in order to know what we can use them for. The zone received diverse questions, but was quiet compared to the average number of questions in June's event.

School data at a glance

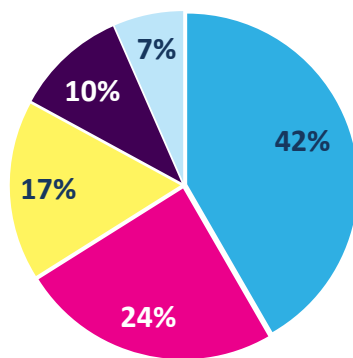


Scientist activity

Answers



Lines of Live Chat



Scientist	Profile views	Position
Angus Cook	705	Winner
Jenni Rodd	515	2nd
Melissa Ladyman	632	3rd
Waqar Ahmed	716	4th
Catherine Rosss	362	5th

Key figures from the Mercury Zone and the averages of the June zones

PAGE VIEWS	MERCURY ZONE	JUNE '16 ZONES AVERAGE
Total zone	16,504	21,638
ASK page	1,245	1,582
CHAT page	1,430	2,737
VOTE page	1,126	1,369

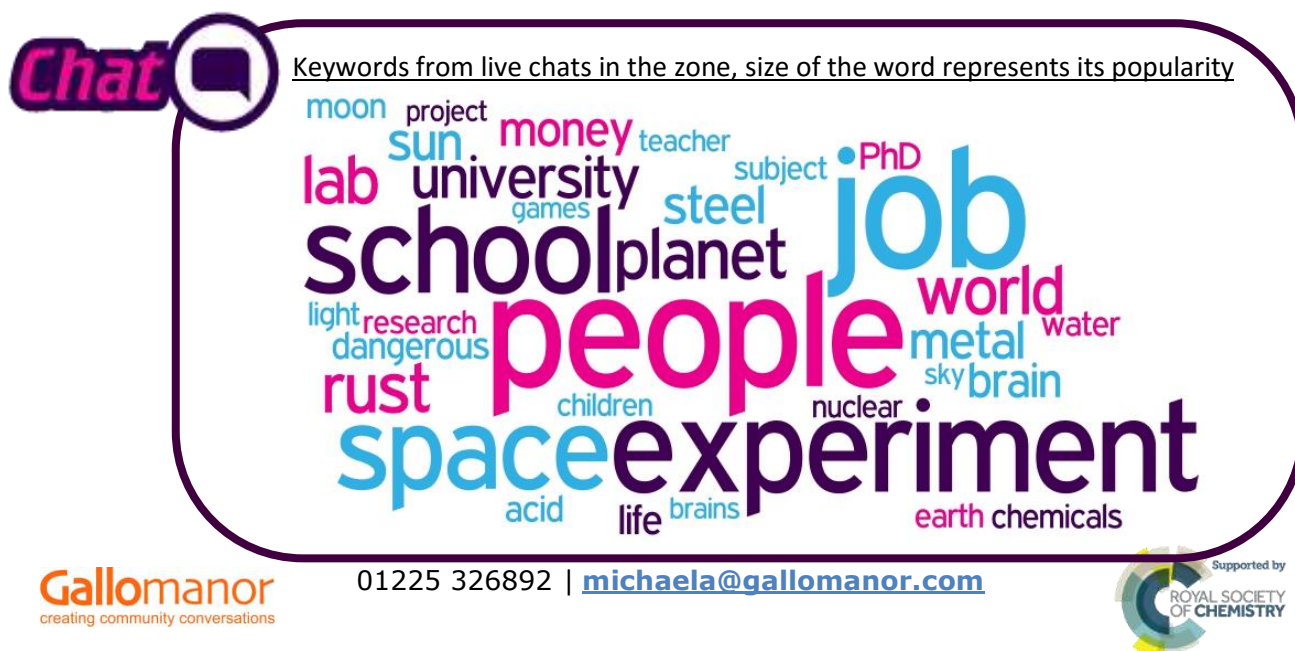
Popular topics

The Mercury Zone had a wide range of questions, with many students asking about space, planets, gravity and the moon. Lots of students asked about the world around them through questions about trees, animals and the human body. Even though this was a general zone, students asked about the element Mercury and its properties.

Average lines per live chat	253	304	329
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The live chats provided an opportunity for the scientists and students to find common interests and there were discussions about sport and games, for example, as well as about what the students want to do when they are older, with the scientists giving them lots of advice and encouragement.

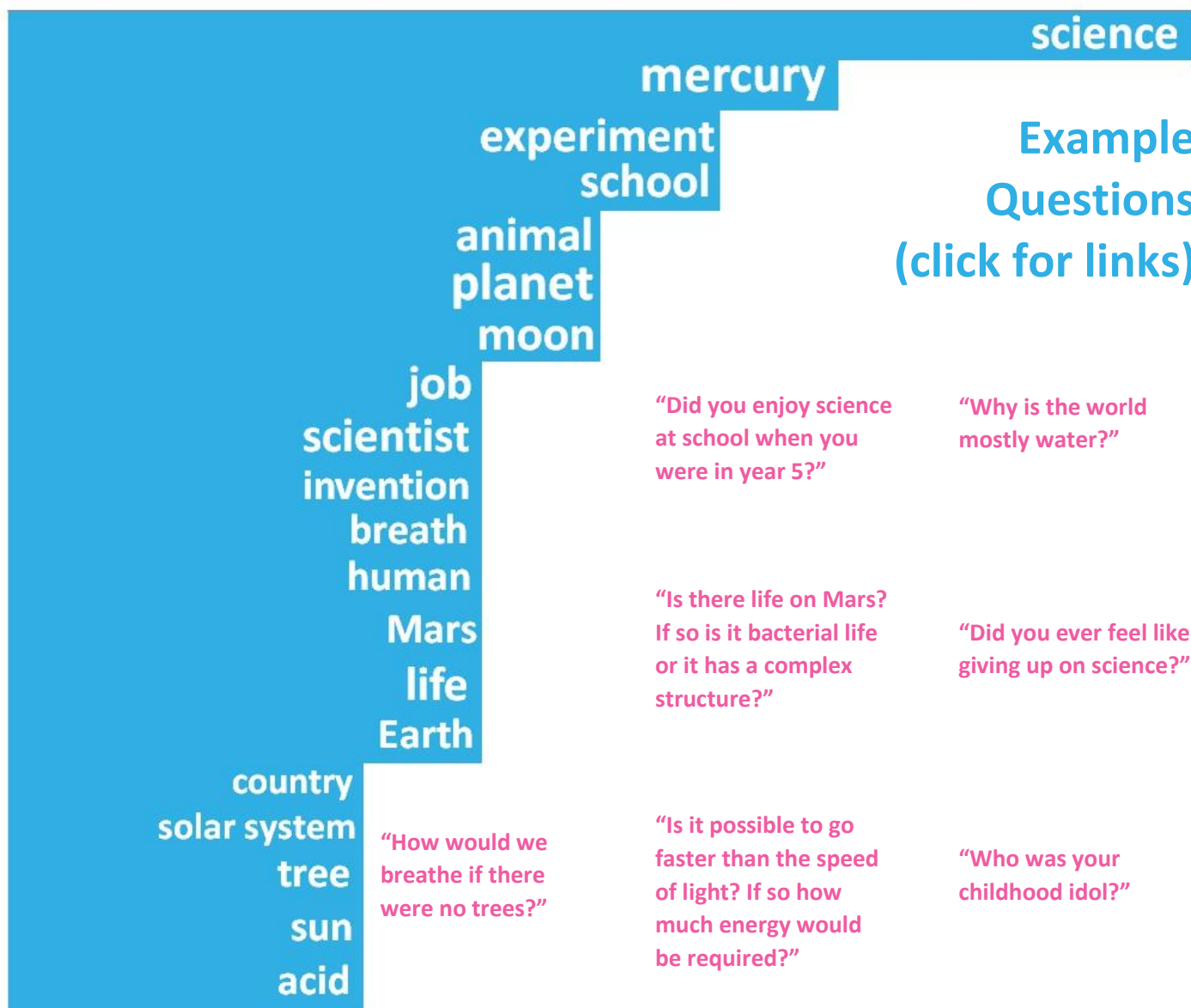
	MERCURY ZONE	JUNE '16 ZONES AVERAGE	IAS 2012-16 AVERAGE
Schools	13	13	10
Students logged in	406	429	364
% of students active in ASK, CHAT or VOTE	90%	89%	85%
Questions asked	409	563	704
Questions approved	177	253	303
Answers given	337	550	554
Comments	67	47	79
Votes	292	327	288
Live chats	20	21	15
Lines of live chat	5,066	6,422	5,049
Average lines per live chat	253	304	329





Keywords of questions approved in the zone, length of bar represents frequency of use

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Example Questions (click for links)

"Did you enjoy science at school when you were in year 5?"

"Why is the world mostly water?"

"Is there life on Mars? If so is it bacterial life or it has a complex structure?"

"Did you ever feel like giving up on science?"

"Is it possible to go faster than the speed of light? If so how much energy would be required?"

"Who was your childhood idol?"

"What things do you like writing about?"

"How is there no gravity in space?"

"What is the moon made of?"

"How long does it take for mercury to change from solid to liquid?"

"Are the lab coats necessary?"

"Why do you like protecting animals?"

"What does a cardiac scientist do?"

"What do you do with the results from the breath sampler?"

Examples of good engagement

Students took the opportunity to ask for advice with their own interests and career paths.

"I would like to be a vet when I'm older do you have any tips to achieve my goal??" – **Student**

"To become a vet you have to do well in science at school, but it's also important that you really care about animals. To get into university it can help if you do volunteer work, maybe walking dogs, or helping at an animal shelter or even helping out at a vet surgery when you're older" – **Melissa, scientist**

"I am volunteering at a local farm at the moment, it is so exciting!" – **Student**

"That sounds great! Keep up the good work." – **Melissa, scientist**

"Thank you very much!" – **Student**

Within the chats students and scientists often found common interests to bond over.

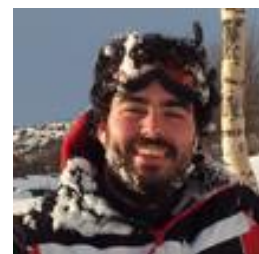
"Do you like skiing?" – **Student**

"Yes, I really like skiing ☺ I did try snowboarding once, but I fell over on the nursery slope and winded myself. I went off it from there" – **Angus, scientist**

"So did I with snowboarding. I'm not very good at snowboarding however skiing is my favourite out of snowboarding ☺" – **Student**

Scientist winner: Angus Cook

Angus' plans for the prize money: *"I'd buy some handheld microscopes for schools to use in science lessons. USB microscopes are a great tool to investigate the world and objects around us. They are able to produce a really high magnification, so you can really see closeup images of all sorts of things, like bugs, trainers, hands, PC screens, you name it! I want to buy some of these USB microscopes for the participating schools to use in their science lessons, and for whatever else they can think of."* Read Angus' **thank you message**.



Student winner: TheToppler 283

For great engagement during the event, this student will receive a gift voucher and a certificate.

Feedback

We're still collecting feedback from teachers, students and scientists but here are a few of the comments made during the event...

"Thank you so much this has been so interesting. I have learnt a lot." – **Student**

"It was more rewarding than other outreach things I have done - the students seemed to be more engaged." – **Scientist**