



Case study

Broadening horizons for students in a deprived area



Connecting with the scientists online provided an opportunity to have positive social contact with adults in roles they wouldn't normally have contact with. I was pleasantly surprised with just how excited students were to be getting responses from serious adults about their work.

Vicky Heslop, Year 6 Teacher

Vicky is a teacher at a junior school in a small town with low levels of aspiration and social mobility. Very few young people go on to higher education.

At the junior school, 47.5% of students qualify for Pupil Premium funding and the proportion of free school meals eligible students is over twice the national average.

Vicky and her colleagues were finding it difficult to promote working scientifically skills and to support students in developing an enquiring attitude within the curriculum.

We wanted to provide a broader experience of what science is and to increase student aspirations.

Since taking part in *I'm a Scientist*, Vicky noticed science has become more relevant and attainable for students and how their

aspirations have broadened to include science. She has also found students' perceptions of scientists have changed, with one commenting: "I thought scientists were boring but now I think they're AWESOME!"

The activity demonstrates to students a positive use of technologies like instant messaging, and helps them learn appropriate online etiquette.

In addition to broadening horizons, *I'm a Scientist* helped develop students' oracy skills and the ability to ask appropriate questions. The school previously had issues with inappropriate use of instant messaging, but the *I'm a Scientist* live chat helped Vicky's students learn appropriate online etiquette and was "a great way to demonstrate a positive use of this technology".

Read the full case study: ias.im/96.10834

Register to take part: imascientist.org.uk/teachers