



Lucy



Greg



Emma



David



Anthony



Anna

March 2020

The Antimicrobial Zone was a themed zone for secondary schools, supported by Wellcome and SFAM. There were six scientists taking part in the zone:

- Lucy Kelly is a PhD student finding new ways to kill bacteria that is resistant to antibiotics.
- Greg Heikel, the winner of the Antimicrobial Zone, is a Trainee Clinical Scientist at the NHS, using blood test results to figure out what is making people feel ill.
- Emma Hayhurst works in hospitals to try and work out how to stop the spread of dangerous bacteria through feces.
- David Mark is a PhD student investigating new species of bacteria from soil
- Anthony De Souza is a Healthcare Scientist at Great Ormond Street Hospital, finding out what is causing infections by testing bodily fluids
- Anna Stec is a Clinical Engineer at Lincoln County Hospital, finding ways pharmacists can help us fight microbials.

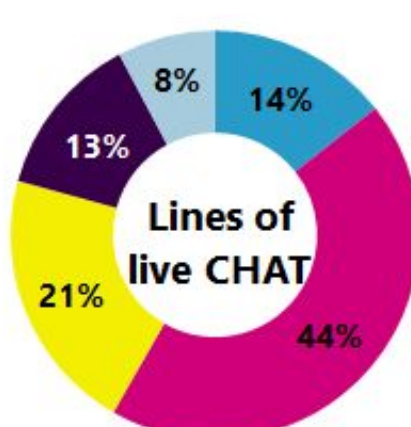
Key figures

This zone had one of the the highest percentages of active students out of all the March 2020 zones. It also highest number of schools, but a lower than average number of students logged in.

Due to the effects of coronavirus, many schools reported a large number of staff and student absences, which had an impact on their participation in the second week. Students could still access the chat from home so we still opened bookings, but there were a lower number of chats than we would normally see, and they were quieter on average.

	ANTIMICROBIAL ZONE	MAR '20 ZONES AVERAGE	2012-20 ZONES AVERAGE
Schools	9	7	10
Students logged in	249	300	385
% of students active in ASK, CHAT, VOTE, or comments	94%	86%	87%
Questions asked	113	251	637
Questions approved	92	154	284
Answers given	238	287	512
Comments	19	27	66
Votes	183	204	301
Live chats	14	14	16
Lines of live chat	3203	4869	5,722
Average lines per chat	229	358	357

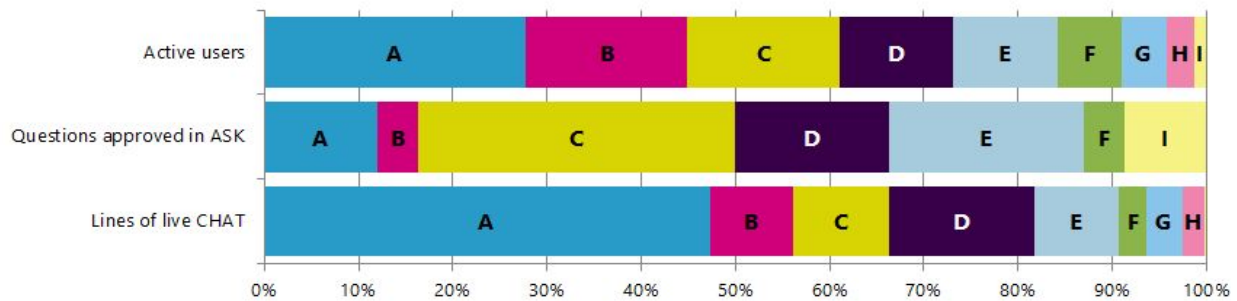
Scientist activity



PLACE

Gregory Heikel	1st
Emma Hayhurst	2nd
Lucy Kelly	3rd
David Mark	4th
Anna Stec	5th
Anthony De Souza	6th

School activity



	YEAR GROUP(S)	CLASSES
A The Deanery CE High School, Wigan	7	4
B Kilkeel High School, Newry (WP/U)	13	4
C Rainham Mark Grammar School, Gillingham (U)	10	2
D Darrick Wood School, Orpington (U)	9	1
E The Manor Academy, Mansfield (WP/U)	9	2
F Aquinas College, Stockport	12	1
G Lymm High School, Lymm	13	1
H Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Ashbourne (U)	12	2
I Guiseley School, Leeds (U)	STEM Club	1

We have found that schools that are more than 30 minutes travel time from their closest Higher Education Institution are less likely to receive visits and benefit from engagement activities. We give priority to underserved (U) and widening participation (WP) schools when allocating places. Find out more about our research at <https://about.imascientist.org.uk/2017/school-engagement-in-stem-enrichment-effect-of-school-location/>

Popular topics

Discussions in the Antimicrobial Zone were on topic with students interested in the scientists work studying bacteria.

They asked Lucy many questions about her research into antibiotic resistance, and Emma's work into superbugs.

Like the other zones, there were alot of questions about coronavirus, asking whether the students should panic, and whether it had affected the scientists job in anyway.

Students also asked about the scientists hobbies outside work, as well as topics such as their favourite food. Many questions were about careers and education; students asked about the scientists' academic journeys and their experiences at school.

Examples of good engagement

Many students used the chats as an opportunity to ask the scientists for advice regarding their own career choices. The scientists gave practical and considerate answers:

3 cake386car: Morning guys, I want to be a marine biologist in the future and was wondering if you guys had any advice or tips for the future or uni life ? [Reply](#)

Emma: @cake386car: Hello! I wanted to be a marine biologist and found because I hadn't done chemistry A level I couldn't get on to most uni courses. So I'd say do chemistry. And look at the unis which do marine biology - plymouth is the big one, it's fab but there are loads of others. And if you can, get into diving/snorkelling and some kind of programme like Seasearch [Reply](#)

3 cake386car: @Emma: I'm already doing my sports diver qualification and have been looking at Bangor and hull, Do you think taking a year in industry would be key if I was to get a job afterwards [Reply](#)

Emma: @cake386car: that's great, that really helps. Bangor and Hull are definitely good places to go. I think a year in industry never does any harm but if you don't do that it doesn't rule anything out, and there will be loads of other opportunities for you at uni. Do you know what kind of job you'd like to have afterwards, yet? [Reply](#)

3 cake386car: @Emma: some of my family live in New Zealand and say that a lot of environmental conservation which would be very interesting, dream is to work on the Great Barrier Reef [Reply](#)

Emma: @cake386car: that sounds fab! It may be that you end up getting interested in research, sometimes there are PhDs available with amazing field trip opportunities. My colleague at work is doing a PhD on sea urchins in Honduras and spends a few months each year out there diving and collecting data for her research. There will be loads of opportunities for you to find out more about this area during uni [Reply](#)

During the event, many of the schools were closing due to the outbreak of COVID-19. Students were very concerned about this, with many questions focussed on this topic. This allowed the scientists to reassure students and refer them to more knowledgeable sources such as WHO. This live chat was previous to COVID-19 being declared as a pandemic on the 11th March 2020:

1 five386web: when will coronavirus end? [Reply](#)

Emma: @five386web: I really don't think anyone can know that. The virus will probably eventually stop infecting so many people, though [Reply](#)

0 hawk386web: @Emma: Would you consider it to be a pandemic yet? [Reply](#)

Emma: @hawk386web: I'm no expert but no, not yet. The leader of the World Health Organisation says not and he probably knows more than most! [Reply](#)



Scientist winner: **Greg Heikel**

Greg's plans for the prize money: *"I plan to set up an event where some school kids who are interested in science or medicine can come in to the lab at the hospital to be shown how things work and do activities to help them understand the kind of things that are done here."*

Read Greg's [thank you message](#)

Student winner: **JaredW**

As the student winner, JaredW will receive a certificate and a gift voucher.

Feedback

We're still collecting feedback from teachers, students and scientists but here are a few of the comments made about March's *I'm a Scientist*...

All our students have thoroughly enjoyed the experience, learned a lot and had something positive to cling to this past week
— **Teacher**

I would highly recommend I'm A Scientists to my colleagues, as I had an incredible experience. The ability for high school students to ask questions (including some real tough ones) directly is a fantastic outreach tool, and I feel privileged to have taken part.
— **Scientist**

I think this is a pretty unique method of science engagement! You get the chance to get to know and help some of the students, particularly in the evening chats!
— **Scientist**

Thank you for answering every question no matter what the challenge!
— **Student**

This has been really useful. Thank you for taking time to answer us! :)
— **Student**

Thank you for giving up the time and answering our questions you have informed us with a lot of cool and amazing information
— **Student**