

The Jon Egging Trust



The sky's the limit: From left, Red Arrow Squadron Leader Martin Higgins with Priory Witham Academy pupils Tristan Hunter and Naomi Sankey; Dr Emma Egging with pilots and pupils; and Dr Egging with pupil Carlos Jurkonis
Pictures: Stuart Wilde



Leading the way: Above, Red Arrows Pilot Ben Plank and, below, Dr Emma Egging



by Mel West
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Schoolchildren from Lincoln have been chosen to pioneer a new national programme set up in memory of Red Arrows pilot Jon Egging.

Ten students from The Priory Witham Academy in Lincoln, aged between 12 and 14, are working with a range of personnel, including air crew from RAF Scampton, RAF Waddington and RAF Cranwell, towards the development of a new vocational qualification devised by the Jon Egging Trust.

Dr Emma Egging, the widow of Flight Lieutenant Egging, is leading the Blue Skies project with the assistance of one of his closest friends and current Red Arrows Synchro Lead pilot, Ben Plank.

Dr Egging and Flight Lieutenant Plank have already met the Year 8 and 9 pupils at their school and accompanied them on their first visit to RAF

My Jon's passion for flying will inspire a generation to come

Scampton, the home of the Red Arrows.

The group of boys and girls watched a practice session by the Reds' Synchro Pair - including Flight Lieutenant Plank - and went on a behind-the-scenes tour.

Mr John Wiles, assistant headmaster at Witham Academy, said: "This scheme is going to bring out and bring on many of the skills which the children will need in later life. "It is an incredible oppor-

tunity for all of them and we are enormously grateful to the Jon Egging Trust for giving us the chance to take part. I think it is going to make a real difference."

Flight Lieutenant Egging died in August, at the age of 33, when his jet crashed at the end of an Arrows display in Bournemouth.

Dr Egging, 32, said: "Before the accident, Jon had become passionate about inspiring young people to take control of

their lives through sharing his love of flying and his enthusiasm for teamwork.

"The trust has been set up to realise his ambition and I am delighted to be working with young people from The Priory Witham Academy to test and develop the programme.

"We see the trust as an 'enabler' which creates partnerships and develops opportunities for young people who may be at risk of under-achieving in the formal education

system. It will link them with inspirational people and environments connected to aviation. The pupils at Witham will be leading the way for the rest of the country."

Flight Lieutenant Plank, 32, a former Harrier pilot in his third and final year with the Arrows, said: "I'm honoured to be part of the trust's work.

'I can't wait to see what else we'll be doing'

Tristan Hunter, 13

"There could be few more fitting tributes to Jon than to help carry through his ambitions to empower young people to be the best they can be."

Witham Academy pupil Tristan Hunter, 13, said: "It's been amazing to meet Ben, and some of the other Red Arrows pilots and I loved watching them fly. I can't wait to see what else we'll be doing over the next few months."

On a mission:

From left, Red Arrows' pilot Ben Plank - Red 6 - with pupils; the Red Arrows put on a display for the Priory Witham Academy youngsters; and pilot Ben Plank briefs pupils on their visit to Scampton



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