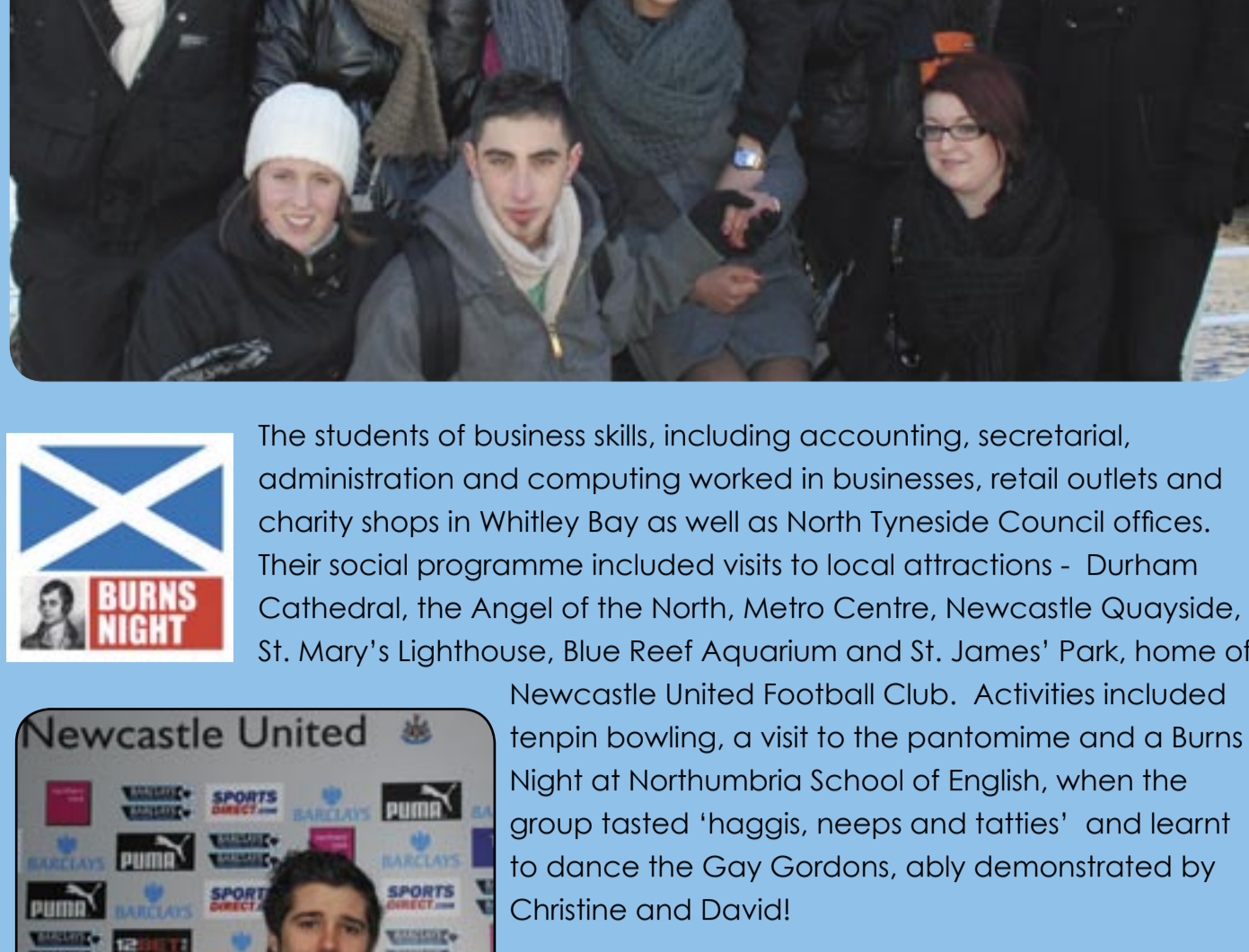


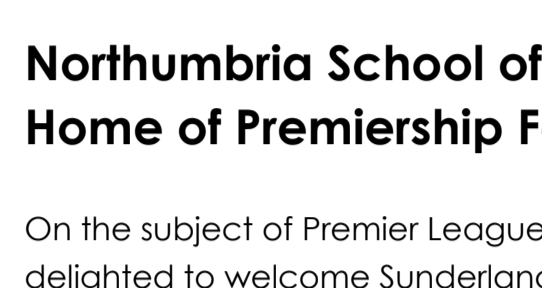


### French Visit a Success

January brought snow to the British Isles and with it a group of 13 students from Sophie Germain High School in Thionville, France, for a month of work experience in Whitley Bay. We were delighted to welcome students Morgane, Tiffany, Sarah, Benjamin, Jordan, Elodie, Anthony, Emilie, Julien, Madolyn, Benoit, Célica and Zahra who stayed with local families and attended English lessons at NSE and took part in sessions at Whitley Bay High School which were also attended by local students preparing for their French A-Levels.



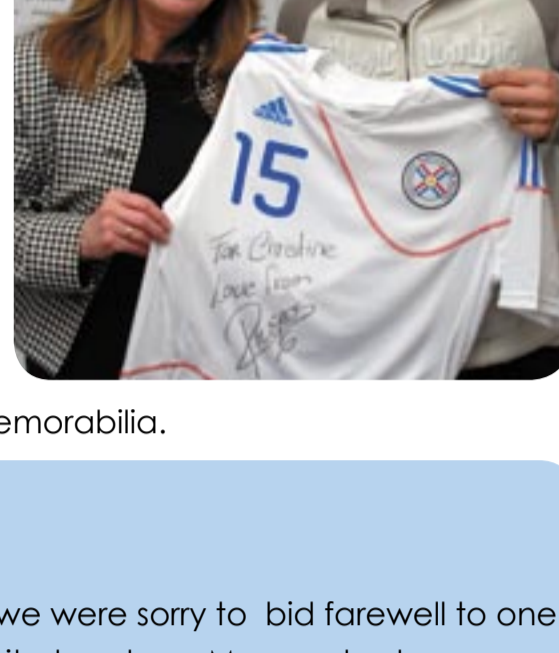
The students of business skills, including accounting, secretarial, administration and computing worked in businesses, retail outlets and charity shops in Whitley Bay as well as North Tyneside Council offices. Their social programme included visits to local attractions - Durham Cathedral, the Angel of the North, Metro Centre, Newcastle Quayside, St. Mary's Lighthouse, Blue Reef Aquarium and St. James' Park, home of Newcastle United Football Club. Activities included tenpin bowling, a visit to the pantomime and a Burns Night at Northumbria School of English, when the group tasted 'haggis, neeps and tatties' and learnt to dance the Gay Gordons, ably demonstrated by Christine and David!



Julien pictured at St. James' Park, home of Newcastle United. 'I loved Whitley Bay and the Geordies are brilliant - friendly, welcoming and helpful. My English improved so much and I definitely want to come back.'

### Northumbria School of English Home of Premiership Football Stars

On the subject of Premier League football, NSE was delighted to welcome Sunderland and Paraguay defender Cristian Riveros for preparation lessons for the Cambridge International ESOL test in January. Cristian is the third Premiership footballer to be taught at NSE, following in the footsteps of Sunderland's Paulo da Silva and Newcastle United's Kazenga LuaLua. Cristian presented Christine with a signed Paraguay shirt which now hangs proudly in our social area along with Paulo da Silva's Sunderland shirt and an array of Newcastle United memorabilia.



### Down Under!



In January we were sorry to bid farewell to one of our favourite teachers, Margaret, who decided to return to Australia. Margaret is a wonderful and inspiring teacher and we wish her well in her new life in Oz.

Margaret is now teaching IELTS skills to Philippino students in Perth, Australia. Students and staff of Northumbria School of English wish her well. We are all keeping in touch on Facebook.

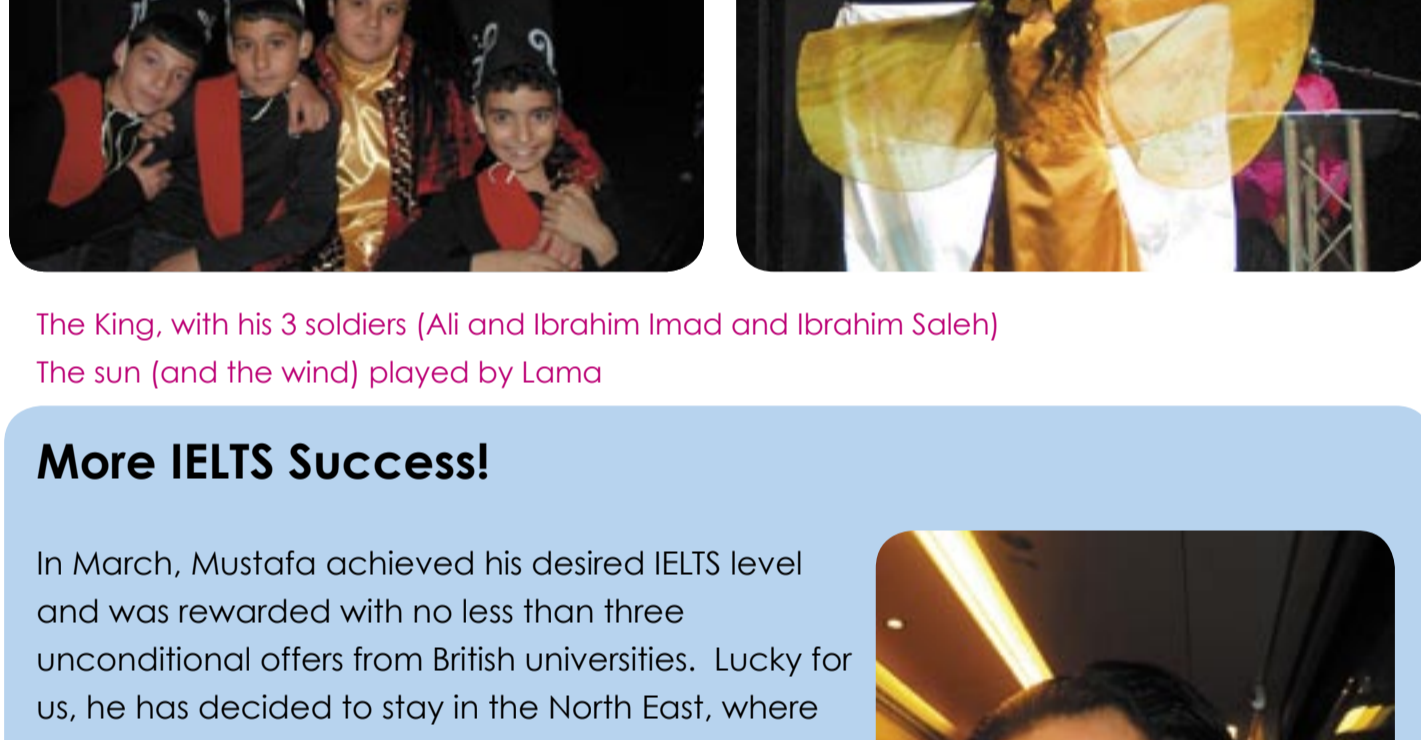
### The Children of Shatila

In February Christine visited Beirut to lend hands-on support to the Shatila project - an ongoing programme intended to improve the lives of 4th generation Palestinian refugees living in a refugee camp on the outskirts of the Lebanese capital through theatre and other performing arts. With the help of the British Council and other agencies, the children performed 'Croak, the King and a Change in the Weather' by Tyneside playwright Peter Mortimer at the city's Monot Theatre. Members of the production team were all from the North East of England and included Christine's daughter, Dorothy, who had been living on the Shatila camp with the team when Christine and son William flew in to get to know the children personally and offer moral support and practical assistance in anticipation of the big event.

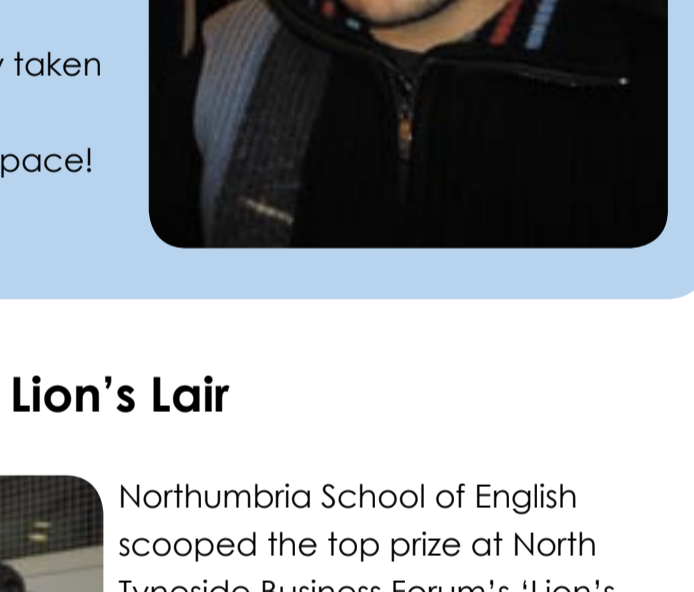
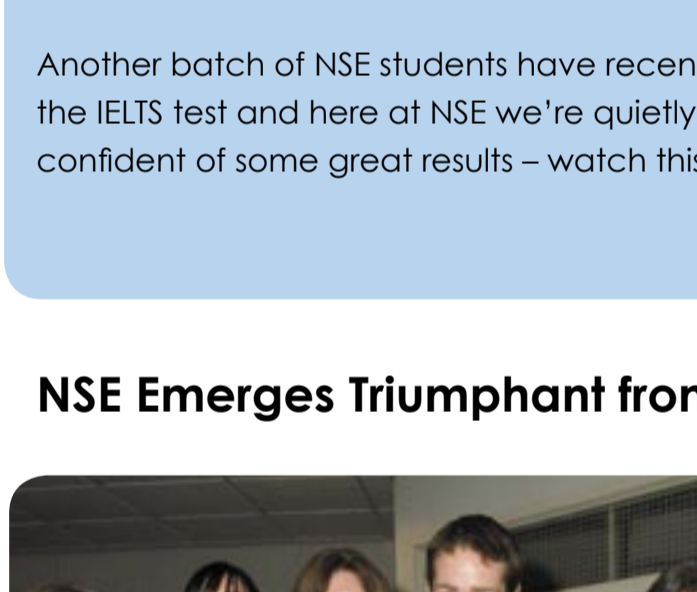


Peter Mortimer being interviewed by Lebanon TV and Dorothy with Maha, one of the teachers.

After their successful and historic performances in East Beirut, the Children of Shatila arrived in Whitley Bay at the beginning of March (when they truly did experience a change in the weather) and began a rigorous programme of rehearsals and productions at top North East venues including The Garage Gateshead and Revales Exchange. Residing here at NSE's 3-star accommodation (see below), the children were also able to enjoy a social programme, which included trips to St Mary's Lighthouse, the Blue Reef Aquarium, Newcastle city centre and a special afternoon of entertainment by local magician Dillinger.



On stage can be seen the girl (Donya), Croak (Bilal), the King (Adel), the Queen (Aya) and the servants (Israa, Nazha and Hanin)

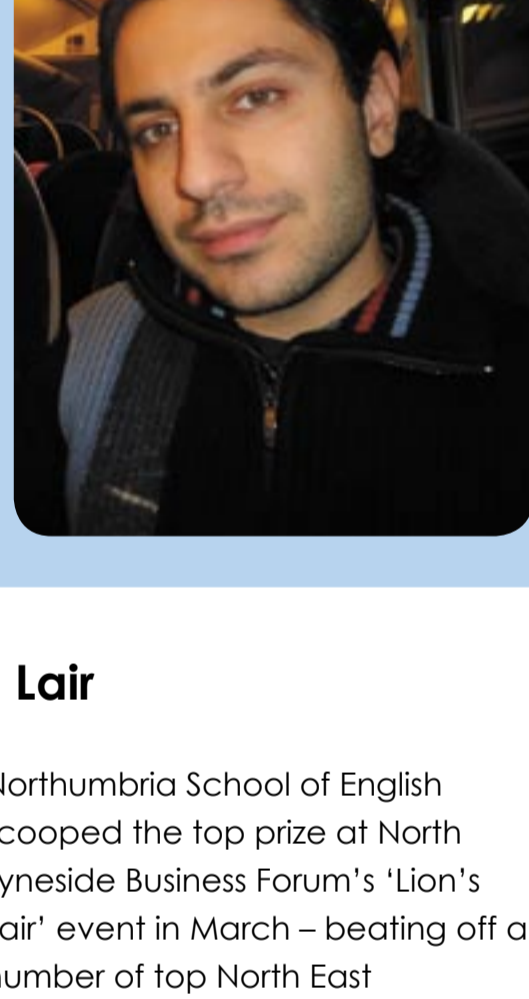


The King, with his 3 soldiers (Ali and Ibrahim Imad and Ibrahim Saleh)

The sun (and the wind) played by Lama

### More IELTS Success!

In March, Mustafa achieved his desired IELTS level and was rewarded with no less than three unconditional offers from British universities. Lucky for us, he has decided to stay in the North East, where he feels very much at home.



He will follow an Academic Skills course with us before embarking on the next phase of his education, a Masters Degree in Computer Network Technology at one of the North's top universities.

Another batch of NSE students have recently taken the IELTS test and here at NSE we're quietly confident of some great results - watch this space!

### NSE Emerges Triumphant from Lion's Lair



Northumbria School of English scooped the top prize at North Tyneside Business Forum's 'Lion's Lair' event in March - beating off a number of top North East businesses in the process. The 'Lion's Lair' contest, based on the format of the popular TV programme 'Dragon's Den', saw NSE Principal Christine Goodwin successfully pitch the virtues, ethos and achievements of the school to a fierce panel of the region's top financial experts and walk away with a prize of £1000 worth of business consultancy. "I was absolutely delighted and completely surprised to win," blushed our dear leader and NSE founder, adding "I'm really hoping that this will give the school a great platform to go forward and expand in the future."

Deputy Mayor Judith Wallace called the event "a fantastic showcase for the diversity of businesses we have here in North Tyneside".

### World Book Night

Early March saw the school welcome Linda Johnson, President of Tynemouth Soroptimists, who distributed copies of Alan Bennett's book *A Life Like Other Peoples* to our students in celebration of World Book Night. Each copy of the book has a unique tracking number and readers are encouraged to register online and subsequently pass the book on when they've finished with it, thus creating the world's largest book club and giving participants the chance to follow the journey of 'their' book as it passes from reader to reader!



Soroptimists International is a progressive and dynamic organisation committed to the promotion of sexual equality, helping women and girls achieve their individual and collective potential and realise their aspirations with the support of a global network of members and international partnerships. Their core values and objectives include:



- Human rights for all
- Global peace and international goodwill
- Advancing women's potential
- Integrity and democratic decision making
- Volunteering, diversity and friendship

For more information visit [www.soroptimistsinternational.org](http://www.soroptimistsinternational.org)

### Highly Trusted Sponsor Status

We're not always blessed with good news here at Northumbria School of English and the minefield of bureaucracy involved in dealing with international clients has once again created another setback for our homely little school. NSE proudly achieved Highly Trusted Sponsor Status with the UK Border Agency following an application in early April. However, on 21st April new regulations were introduced, severely limiting the number of CASs schools are allowed to issue in a given year.

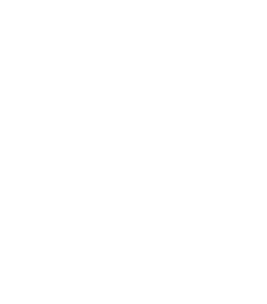
However we remain positive and are determined to keep up the good work by building on our trusted contacts in Italy, Spain, Germany, Ukraine and France and developing new relationships in Turkey, China and South America. In addition we are introducing English Plus courses and Creative Writing weekends led by well-known and published authors.

Since achieving Highly Trusted Sponsor Status, NSE has undergone an unannounced inspection by UK Border Agency and achieved Level 1 in all four inspected areas. The school holds Highly Trusted Sponsor Number 687QBA7U2

### 3-Star Guest Accommodation



As many of our regular friends, colleagues and supporters know, Northumbria School of English also offers 3 star guest accommodation and incidentally, the aforementioned surprise visit from the UK Border Agency was preceded by a similar visit from the accommodation equivalent.



March 3rd saw the well-mannered and unassuming Mr. Wilkinson check into The Northumbria guest accommodation for an overnight stay while on business in the North East. Little did we know that Mr. Wilkinson was a hotel inspector on a secret mission from Visit Britain, but just as in the case of the Border Agency inspection, the good ship Northumbria once again passed with flying colours despite being caught unawares and we're proud to have retained our 3-star status and our cyclists and walkers welcome badges.

