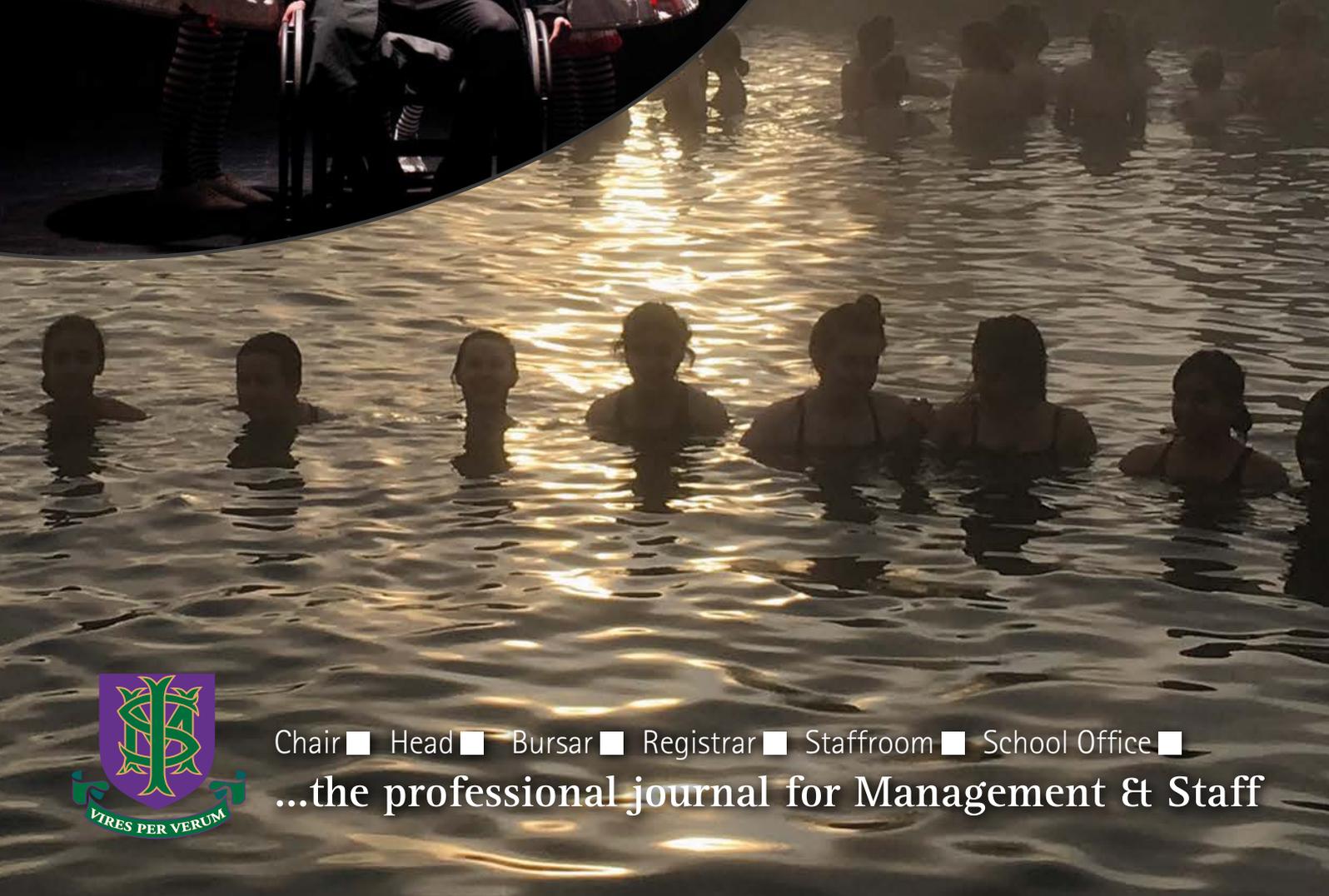


January 2020

# *The Independent Schools Magazine*



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...the professional journal for Management & Staff



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# In this issue...



## Beautiful & powerful 'Amadeus'

Amadeus, the Senior Play at The Leys, Cambridge, Great Hall, was an ambitious tour de force combining powerful acting performances with live period music and beautiful sets and costumes.

Peter Shaffer's Tony Award winning play about Mozart and his jealous rival composer, was perhaps the most ambitious production yet by Cory Pulman-Jones. Now in her fourth year as Director of Performance Drama at The Leys, the former professional stage and screen actress continues to encourage her young performers to aim for ever-greater things.

Music is integral to the play, and this production featured recordings of pieces by Mozart, Salieri and other 18th century composers. Cory went further by incorporating a quartet of musicians on strings, including music teacher Scott Morrison, whose playing was used to great dramatic effect.

### Cover background

## Bathing in a secret lagoon

A group of 21 students from St Margaret's School, Hertfordshire, are back from a trip to Iceland. Crossing the bridge between the Eurasian and North American tectonic plates, the students explored and embraced the true power of water in every way from the country's black beaches and coastal landforms to its magnificent glaciers and were even lucky enough to swim in one of its secret lagoons.

Acting Headmistress, Julie Chatkiewicz, who also joined the students on the trip to Iceland, commented on the experience, "This was a wonderful action-packed opportunity for our pupils to visit a truly awesome part of the world. On our last day we even got the opportunity to experience what a 6.3 magnitude earthquake would feel like before exploring the complete darkness and silence within a lava tube. Memories have certainly been made that will last a lifetime."

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## Mini-historians' Victorian experience

A group of children aged 3 to 5 and their teachers from Yarrells School, Dorset, visited historic Kingston Lacy just before Christmas. Before the party set off by coach, the mini-historians enjoyed some history stories from a Kingston Lacy volunteer who is also connected with Yarrells School. The children enjoyed a

chat and slideshow about life in late Victorian times at Yarrells House and inspected some real Victorian clothing from the school archive collection. Much of the original Yarrells House dates from the same historical period as when Henrietta Bankes and her three children, Viola, Daphne and Ralph, lived there.

Pictured: With the children, and in Victorian dress, are Early Years Practitioners Sophie Kyte and Amie Harrison

## GB call-up for Duathlete Deputy Head

Giggleswick School, Yorkshire, deputy headmaster Anthony Simpson is to represent Great Britain in duathlon in both the European and World Championships later this year.

The maths specialist competed in qualifying races in Derbyshire to earn his place in the sprint duathlon discipline, which involves a 5km run followed by a 20km bike ride and finishing



with another run, this time over 2.5km. He will take part in the 40 to 44-year-old age category in the events in Seville in March and Amsterdam in September 2020.

Said Anthony: "I am delighted and honoured to have earned a place on Team GB for the forthcoming championships, especially as my age group is one of the most competitive."

Anthony joins several Giggleswick colleagues who have international honours to their names, including fellow maths teacher and former national kayak champion Pete Keron and biology teacher James Atkinson, who is fly fishing's reigning English National Rivers Champion. Anthony will also be training with colleague Mark McGoldrick who is preparing for the 2020 fellrunning season after finishing in the top eight in his age group nationally in 2019.

In addition, he follows in the footsteps of former Giggleswick teacher Alastair Scholey, who represented GB in triathlon's European championships in 2011.

## Olympic nomination for coach

The director of swimming at Ellesmere College, Shropshire, is relishing the opportunity of helping Team GB to Olympic success in Tokyo next summer.

Alan Bircher has already achieved a great deal of success in competing and coaching and is just one of eight coaches nominated by the British Olympic Association to accompany the Team GB swimming squad to Japan.

The former World and European silver medalist swam for Team GB from 1997 to 2008 racking up 10 British Championships and two European Cup titles. More recently he has coached World, European and Commonwealth medalists along with multiple national champions and medalists.



He is also playing an integral role in the ongoing success of the Ellesmere College Titans swimming team - which boasts a record unrivalled by any other programme in the country in providing swimmers to represent their country.

Alan will now form part of the select team of eight who will be responsible for ensuring Team GB swimmers will be at peak performance heading into the Olympic Games.

"It's a great honour to be chosen as a coach for Team GB at the Olympics - particularly when you consider how few of us will be going to Tokyo," he said.

## Pupils Launch 2020 Wildlife Charity Calendar

Glenalmond College, Perthshire school is celebrating the exceptional range of wildlife to be found on its grounds in the pages of a 2020 calendar, being sold in aid of the Scottish Wildlife Trust.

The calendar features a dozen wildlife images taken by local photographer, Rosanna Forbes. All of the profits from sales of the calendar will be donated to the Scottish Wildlife Trust.

Among the photographs featured in the pages of the calendar are birds such as a colourful Kingfisher, a Dipper, a Tawny Owl and a Bullfinch. Also captured in the stunning selection of photographs are an inquisitive Bank Vole, a Field Mouse, a Roe Deer and a glorious Red Squirrel.

Scotland is home to 75% of Britain's red squirrels and the staff and pupils of Glenalmond College are proud that the school's 300 acres of grounds are home to a thriving population of the endangered species.

Sasha Baldwin, who coordinates the school's Eco Group, said she hoped the calendars would inspire pupils to take a pride in the wildlife which makes its home in the school grounds, as well as raising money for an important charity.

The calendars are priced at £8 each, or £9.50 including postage and packaging, and can be ordered by emailing [info@glenalmondcollege.co.uk](mailto:info@glenalmondcollege.co.uk) giving contact details or calling 01738 842000.



Pictured: Pupils who are members of Glenalmond's Eco Group, along with the group coordinator Sasha Baldwin, are pictured at Glenalmond with the calendars which are being sold in aid of the Scottish Wildlife Trust

# New ISEB Project Qualification pilots this year

Following the 13+ Conference held last year at Highfield and Brookham Schools, Hampshire, the Chief Administrator of the Independent Schools Examination Board (ISEB) Kate Allen looks at the New ISEB Project Qualification.



ISEB is well known for Common Entrance (CE), which acknowledges and rewards achievement in Years 7 and 8 and equips learners with the knowledge, skills and understanding which they will need as they make the important move to their senior schools.

During the past year ISEB has consulted with prep and senior schools, looking closely at how new subject specifications can ensure that the learning process is a developmental one. This means that our new specifications will emphasise less the acquisition of knowledge and focus more on its application. They will provide a framework for teaching and learning, whilst allowing individual teachers to approach subjects in their own way and have time to explore wider aspects, such as current events or particular areas of interest. In order that new specifications are introduced with full consultation and with time for schools to adjust their teaching, the pace of updating is necessarily steady, which some may find frustrating.

In one area, however, we have been able to move much more rapidly. We are excited to be piloting, during this year, the ISEB Project Qualification with a view to introducing it more widely from September 2020. The ISEB Project Qualification takes its inspiration from the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) which is taken in many senior schools in Year 12.

Those who have introduced the EPQ to their schools have been impressed by the way in which their pupils' interest and enthusiasm is sparked, and the intellectual development and confidence that ensues.

The aim of the new ISEB Project Qualification is to give younger pupils, most likely those in Years 7 and 8, the opportunity to develop the same important skills of independent enquiry and research, within a framework which has been structured and tailored specifically for their age group. Initial reactions from prep schools have been very encouraging, showing that many are keen to adopt this approach in their own schools and that they value the skills their pupils will develop as a result.

The model of learning is based on research evidence that indicates that independent learning works most effectively through a process of guided discovery, in which pupils are taught the skills they need in order to engage in independent learning, provided with scaffolding to help structure their work and, during the process of the research project, are given guidance from a mentor whose questions and comments help to facilitate the process.

Indeed, it is important to understand that the greatest value of the ISEB Project Qualification lies not solely in the final presentation, but in the process which pupils undertake as they

complete their research projects. They will ask and frame a question, review sources, reflect upon their findings and learn to draw and express balanced conclusions.

Projects may be subject related, focused on the creative and performing arts or sport, or arise from PSHE topics or other interests: schools will be able to use the ISEB Project Qualification in lesson times, within or across subjects, as an enrichment activity or however else they see fit. We see this as part of the preparation for lifelong learning which is an important part of prep school provision and something which will give pupils valuable skills to support them in their future studies.

Pupils can carry out their research in a variety of contexts and at different scales. The ISEB Project Qualification syllabus will offer suggestions for incorporating project learning into existing schemes of work by means of small-scale (several lesson) projects as well as providing a structure for an extended 15–20-hour independent project. The ISEB Project Qualification can function as a stand-alone addition to an existing curriculum or be used to augment subjects within the curriculum with a project learning model. Schools will find that it can be flexible to suit their needs.

Research projects have been shown to encourage deeper thinking and greater enjoyment of the learning process by enabling

pupils to connect their schoolwork to their personal interests. The ISEB Project Qualification model offers pupils the freedom to explore a wide variety of project forms, including written reports, presentations, podcasts, videos and creative sketchbook work. The final presentation of the research project might be written, an exhibition, an oral presentation, an interview or even a performance. In whatever form, it will also involve the opportunity for pupils to answer questions about their research and to show the depth of understanding that they have built.

ISEB has been very fortunate to have enlisted the support of Dr John Taylor, of Cranleigh School, whose has brought his expertise to the design of our initial specification. Our first 'pilot' schools have already received their training and we look forward to monitoring their progress during spring and summer 2020.

We are pleased to be introducing the ISEB Project Qualification, to support schools as they seek to develop a wider set of skills that is complementary to those typically developed by means of courses that culminate in written examinations, and thus to help equip pupils for the transition to senior schools.

We look forward to reporting on progress of the pilots and the other developments described here at our Conference on the Importance of Years 7 and 8 to be held at Charterhouse on 28th April 2020.



## Astronomy GCSE for all

Pupils at Burgess Hill Girls, Sussex, were so fascinated by the school's Astronomy club that they asked the organiser, Head of Physics Andy Gillaspay, if he could offer Astronomy as a GCSE course. As a passionate Astronomy graduate, he was happy to oblige: "We study where the universe came from, where it is going, the Big Bang, black holes and supernovas, some of the most fascinating aspects of the universe", he said. "Academically Astronomy has a big link with GCSE and

A Level Physics as well as Engineering and all the other professions that come from it. It is a hugely important and well-respected academic subject."

Twenty two students embarked on the course last September and will take the Astronomy GCSE exam in June 2020. The class is unique in that it is comprised of pupils from the UK and overseas as well as parents and teachers at Burgess Hill Girls.

# Pioneering alternative to GCSEs

St Edward's School, Oxford, has launched an innovative alternative to GCSEs. Warden Stephen Jones (pictured right) believes that there's a growing feeling amongst teaching leaders that the exams are out of date.

From September 2020 students will be required to take one "Pathways" course in broad disciplines such as Applied Science, the Expressive Arts or Design and Entrepreneurship as well as one "Perspectives" course in a humanities subject such as Global Societies or Big Ideas (covering Philosophy and Ethics).

In order to facilitate the pioneering new courses pupils will take just eight GCSEs in core subjects rather than the 11 which most pupils currently take.

The Pathways and Perspectives

Courses will be validated by the University of Buckingham, graded using the same numerical format as GCSEs with nine as the top mark.

Pupils will be continuously assessed on a range of skills, such as their communication, presentations, research projects and team work instead of just sitting exams.

Some pupils will also have the opportunity to spend time at the University of Buckingham and Southampton University's Oceanography Departments. At Buckingham they will learn some preliminary skills relevant to those planning to study Medicine. At Southampton, pupils studying Global Societies and Environments will spend time on board the University's research vessel Callista.

Warden Stephen Jones said: "We believe that we can prepare students better for Sixth Form or degrees. We believe we can do it better our own way. Exam boards have made the flagship assessment too "tick boxy."

"The idea that GCSEs are a bit passé has been around for a while but no one seems to be designing new qualifications. They were invented to be a school leaving certificate but as no one leaves at 16 now we don't need them."

Matthew Albrighton, Deputy Head Academic, said: "Whilst GCSEs in their current form provide foundational knowledge for Sixth Form, they can constrain pupils' curiosity, limit their ambition and prevent them from grappling with big ideas. They do not stretch pupils enough in the full range of skills."



Chairman of the Independent School Council, Barnaby Lenon, added: "It is important that pupils are examined in a wide range of subjects at the age of 16, not least as a way of consolidating what they have learnt up to that point. However, we know that taking 10 GCSEs is neither necessary nor in some respects desirable."

## Fourth girls' boarding house

Cranleigh School, Surrey, has formally opened a new girls' boarding house to enhance its dedicated boarding community. The opening follows a period of new building and refurbishment.

Flight Lieutenant Victoria Turner, a former pupil and one of only a handful of female jet fighter pilots in the UK, unveiled the plaque. She gave a speech on

finding your passion and the girls in Martlet were given a collection of inspirational quotes from other illustrious alumni.

Martlet house is named after the heraldic birds in the top left section of the Cranleigh School crest. All the boarding Houses have been built individually over the School's 155-year history and each has a unique character in its layout, although all share the same busy and nurturing ethos.

Cranleigh now has four girls' houses, Martlet, West, South, and Rhodes and four boys' houses, Cubitt, Loveday, North and East. The equal structure allows houses to be paired with boys and girls sharing activities, social events and House competitions together.



Pictured: Victoria Turner and the Martlet housemistress Rebecca Scott



## New self-contained Lower School

Edge Grove School, Hertfordshire, has announced the relocation of its Lower School into a new, self-contained building to accommodate its younger pupils. The £3.8 million facility provides a contemporary and sustainably designed learning environment within the schools' 48-acre grounds.

With six spacious classrooms for the schools' Year 3 and Year 4 pupils, the building also houses a large bright and airy multi-functional hall, open plan library, pupil and staff toilets, storage facilities, an office for the Head of Lower School and an ancillary meeting room. The new development is part of Edge Grove's 10-year development strategy 'One School, One Vision'.

## Lord Mayor opens school

William Russell, the Lord Mayor of the City of London has officially opened the new home to The Lyceum School on Worship Street.

Children, parents, staff and special guests were invited to watch the unveiling of the newly painted mural on the ground floor by the right honourable the Lord Mayor. The celebrations continued, the Chamber Choir performed the school song, "Four Pillars" for the very first time. Both the mural and the song represent the four core values that form the foundations of the school and are at the heart of everything they do; kindness, creativity, confidence and community.



William Russell (Lord Mayor), Hilary Wyatt (Headmistress), Hilary Russell (Lady Mayoress), Aarif Hassan (Chairman of Dukes Education) with pupils

# Character Education: theories, practices, processes

Late last term the Tony Little Centre for Innovation in Research and Learning (CIRL) at Eton College hosted a joint Character Education conference with BrainCanDo, an educational neuroscience organisation based at Queen Anne's School, Caversham. It was a busy day with more than 140 teachers, educational leaders, and researchers taking part in discussions and panels covering a myriad of topics – all in the stunning and rather inspirational setting of Dorney Lake...

The opening address was given by Jonnie Noakes, Director of the Tony Little Centre at Eton, and Julia Harrington, Headmistress of Queen Anne's and founder and CEO of BrainCanDo. Noakes outlined the current context related to character education and painted a picture of what our young people will face when entering the world of work, where '21st century' skills such as curiosity, adaptability and creativity are what employers are looking for. Harrington then spoke about how rapidly our knowledge of the brain has increased over the past 20-30 years resulting in new insights about brain development across the life-span. Adolescence is a period of opportunity and adaptability when the brain is particularly malleable and those character qualities that are taken into adulthood are forged. Harrington reminded us that educators are in the privileged position to provide the environment and experiences through which those important character qualities develop.

The opening keynote talks for the day were delivered by Bill Lucas, Professor of Learning at the University of Winchester, and Patricia Riddell, Professor of Applied Neuroscience at the University of Reading. Lucas outlined some of the interpretations of the term 'character' and the different frameworks that exist for implementing character education in schools. He challenged us all to ensure that we are clear what we mean by 'character' and those 'attributes', 'skills' or 'competencies' we are seeking to develop through education.

Riddell's talk focused on the role of motivation and how to engender it in pupils. She outlined the mechanisms of motivation and the important role of other people in influencing levels of motivation. The phenomenon of 'social contagion' was explored and implications for classroom teaching discussed.

The first panel discussion was chaired by Julia Harrington, joined

by Professor Lucas, Professor Riddell, Dr Kathy Weston, Dr Iro Konstantinou and Jonnie Noakes. Konstantinou and Noakes shared some of the ways through which Eton College has engaged with research around character education. The first pupil panel of the day included students from the London Academy of Excellence (LAE) and Eton College who shared their experiences of participating in a character education and leadership course.

The third keynote talk was given by Dr Tom Harrison, Senior Lecturer at the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues at the University of Birmingham. He explored the changing digital landscape and the inherent challenges and opportunities this affords young people today. He stressed the importance of teaching 'cyber-wisdom' to enable children and young people to navigate moral complexities and thrive in the digital age.

The second panel discussion explored school and community-wide approaches to character education. Lisa Kerr, Principal of Gordonstoun School, shared findings demonstrating the importance of out-of-classroom activities for character development. Dominic Randolph, Head of Riverdale County School in the US, shared his experiences of working with a New York City independent school to create a robust experiential education programme. He also discussed the work of the Character Lab ([www.characterlab.org](http://www.characterlab.org)). The third talk was given by Peter Hyman,



co-Director of 'Big Education', who proposed a radically different approach to education in which the development of every pupil's 'head', 'heart' and 'hand' is at the core. Hyman stressed the importance of qualities such as 'self-awareness', 'tolerance', 'creativity' and 'aesthetic appreciation' for overall success and fulfilment in life. Finally, Rebecca Tigue, Head of the University of Birmingham School, invited us to imagine a world in which our children developed habits of courage, justice and integrity and called for schools to be a place in which each child learns how to live a virtuous life. Echoing Professor Riddell, Tigue suggested that character virtues can be 'caught' from interactions in our community, 'taught' through educational experiences and reflection, and 'sought' by providing opportunities in which to practise modelling good character.

Finally, there was a pupil panel with a group of students from Queen Anne's School talking (with Ben Stephenson, Director of Sixth Form at the school) about their experiences of leadership in school and outlining a new leadership development programme that is being pioneered this year.

With Ofsted's new inspection framework including the monitoring of how schools develop character, delegates showed a keen interest in the proceedings and were certainly given a great deal of information to go away and digest!



Report courtesy of Dr Amy Fancourt, Director of Research BrainCanDo, pictured above and Dr Iro Konstantinou, Research Associate, Eton College & BrainCanDo, pictured top right

# The End of Discipline Tariffs?

*I will not make the same mistakes as those that go before me.  
I will not make the same mistakes as those that go before me.  
I will not make the same mistakes...*

It does not seem that long ago that pupils would have been sat at desks, staring out of the classroom window at the glorious sunshine and those lucky few playing games on the field, whilst they, the chastised, the put upon, the victims of the unfair and unjust system were forced to write 100 lines for not tucking their shirts in. Indeed, many colleagues will still remember the days, either as new staff or as children, of sitting in fear of the dreaded cane, writes Mike Marie, Deputy Headmaster of Bromsgrove Preparatory School.

Thankfully, those days are very much behind us in education; the recognition that physical admonishment is simply barbaric and given that we adults are by no means a picture of perfection, there is a growing school of thought that questions whether it is fair to constantly hold every child up against some model of unreasonable expectation.

In the highly acclaimed book: 'When the Adult Changes, Everything Changes', written by Paul Dix (a former teacher, founder of Pivotal Education and educational campaigner), teachers are encouraged to recognise that behaviour policies, rewards systems and discipline tariffs / sanction lists are themselves not the answer to effecting positive behaviour in schools. The key has always been and will always be the consistency of adult behaviour and the modelling of positive behaviour. Think about those colleagues who can 'control' their classes with just a raised eyebrow, a cough, a very softly spoken, carefully chosen word. Think about the colleagues whose enthusiasm lights up the staff room in exactly the same way as it lights up the classroom. Now think about our own practice; do we commend positive behaviour or do we instead focus on picking up the negatives? Do we recognise those children who time after time go above and beyond the expected standard? Do we reflect on how we engage pupils, how we speak to them, how we model behavioural expectations?

Those of you who have been inspected recently and have had responsibility for pastoral matters

will no doubt recall the moment when you had to produce your serious sanctions register and discuss how it falls short of/matches/exceeds the expected number for a school of your size. How did that make you feel? It is both accepted and understood that school performance is measured using empirical data – we now use standardised pastoral trackers to help identify pupils who are 'at risk' and might otherwise go under the radar, we have spreadsheets for serious sanctions and incidences of bullying, homophobic and racist behaviour. But what does all of this data do to help form or transform our approach to pupil behaviour? Is it preventative? Reactive? Thinking about the children whose names appeared on your serious sanctions register, what follow up was there after the sanction was served? How were they reintegrated into school life? What learning took place to help (not necessarily ensure as this is the impossible dream) the child to make better choices in the future?

If you looked at your current school's behaviour policy, do you see a framework for how staff and pupils engage cooperatively in bringing about an atmosphere of positive behaviour, kind interactions, consideration and thoughtfulness of others? Or do you see a list of examples of negative behaviour and suggested sanction? What terminology is used to describe a pupil's behaviour – is it linked in to historic traditions? Is it numerical, pointing towards a hierarchy of behaviour? Whatever the system, it is important to ensure that the language that surrounds the application of it centres on how

it serves the purpose of helping children to make good choices. Let's be brutally honest, it is impossible to always make the right decisions so how do we support children when things go wrong – is that part of your behaviour policy?

The Anti-Bullying Alliance published the 'Change Starts With Us' report\* at the beginning of November 2019 to coincide with Anti-Bullying week; the report was based on a survey of over 1000 11-16 year olds and demonstrated statistics that many of us will be familiar with including:

- Nearly a quarter (24%) of respondents had been bullied once a week or more during the last 6 months
- Just over one in ten children (11%) have missed school due to bullying
- Nearly a fifth (19%) of those surveyed have steered clear of friends to avoid being bullied

Arguably the most frightening statistic was that nearly a half (48%) of the children stated that schools need to do more to address bullying. For those of us who conduct our own Anti-Bullying surveys, how does that figure stand up against your own pupils' perceptions? Whether it is through Student Council or Pupil Voice or whichever other named society your school has, do your pupils have a say in how bullying and other forms of negative behaviour is dealt with? A very interesting element of the report was that, "The young people we spoke to were keen on schools providing a supportive framework to help them understand each other. They tended to want to move away



from a 'sanction-based' approach to bullying of punishment and instead preferred a more 'restorative' approach where they looked at the root causes of bullying."

Even our pupils understand that sanctions do not implement the change we want to see in schools, but education can.

So how do we begin the transformation in our schools? How do we encourage a behavioural revolution amongst both pupils and staff, if indeed one is required? Start simply and start with the adults:

- Commit to a culture of not shouting – the cathartic release of yelling at someone is no justification for the fear and humiliation suffered by that person;
- Smile – warmly, engagingly, with purpose; we know that the act of smiling can lift our own mood and that of others;
- Engage with every pupil – a handshake at the entrance to the classroom, a happy "Good morning" in the corridor particularly to those children who try to avoid your gaze might just enthuse their day;
- No public humiliation – names on the board for negatives, a class reward/demerit system shared openly that shows other children just how badly little Alan is doing;
- Reserve judgement and listen to context – all behaviour is language and everyone lies; it is a protective instinct. Don't castigate a child for not being truthful but praise to the hilt for their honesty when it comes.

\*[https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachment/Change%20Starts%20With%20Us%20-%20report%20-%20FINAL\\_0.pdf](https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachment/Change%20Starts%20With%20Us%20-%20report%20-%20FINAL_0.pdf)

# Hygge lessons weekly

Taking tips from the Danes and Norwegians, once a week pupils at Belmont Grosvenor School, Yorkshire, are swapping their shoes for cosy socks and slippers, switching their desks for rugs and cushions on the floor, warming themselves in front of a roaring fire, and embracing the hygge way of living and learning.

Hygge – which roughly translates in Danish as a feeling of well-being, cosiness and contentment with life – has become a hit at the

school. And the Year 4 children who enjoy weekly hygge sessions are the envy of their fellow pupils!

The idea to incorporate hygge in the Harrogate co-educational school's timetable came from teacher Mrs Katie Page, who is also Belmont Grosvenor's special educational needs co-ordinator.

"As a SENCo I am always interested in supporting how children learn best and lots of studies show that children do this when they feel comfortable. Youngsters in

Scandinavian classrooms, and also in Canada where I used to teach, rarely wear shoes and also have flexible seating," said Mrs Page, who started the hygge sessions to coincide with Year 4 pupils learning about Scandinavia.

"Our pupils have learned a lot about geographical location, the climate and the Vikings – and creating a hygge – warm, welcoming and cosy – environment in which to learn has become part of our topic.

"We use cosy blankets and quilts, often play music in the background, and have a roaring fire on the whiteboard too! Pupils bring in cosy socks as it makes them feel happy and I'm relaxed about them lying on the floor while they learn. Teaching like this has encouraged the children to try hard and feel safe in their learning and they are all extremely focussed," she said.

Headmistress Mrs Sophia Ashworth Jones said the hygge lessons with Year 4 had proved a wonderful learning opportunity for the pupils at Belmont Grosvenor.



## Chatsworth announces new acquisition

Chatsworth Schools has announced the acquisition of Highfield Preparatory School, Berkshire. The news follows the acquisition of the London based Beau Peeps nursery in July 2019, Pattison College, a co-educational school for three – sixteen year olds in Coventry in May 2019 and The Village Prep School, a preparatory school for girls aged three – eleven in Hampstead in April 2019.

Commenting on the news, Anita Gleave, Founder and CEO of Chatsworth Schools, said: "I'm delighted to make this announcement and to welcome Highfield Preparatory School to Chatsworth Schools. There are now nine schools and nurseries in the Chatsworth family and we will continue to enable outstanding futures for all our pupils and staff."

## Password Independent Schools' Events 2020 Invitation

We cordially invite Maths and EAL specialists from the independent schools sector to join us for these up-coming Password events for current and prospective clients.

Password is seeking to draw on your experience and expertise to inform the on-going enhancement of our Password Pupil suite of tests.

Both events listed below are being held at the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1 OBE

### Password Pupil (Maths) Benchmarking Workshop

An event aimed at developing a shared understanding of the content and cognitive domain of each of the Password Maths modules as well as generating sample pupil performance descriptors to aid the interpretation of Password Maths scores.

**Date:** Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January from 10.30am to 1.30pm

### Password Pupil Younger Semi-Adaptive (English) Consultation

An event aimed at collaboratively evaluating the pilot version of our semi-adaptive Password Pupil Younger Knowledge test and to feed into the format and content of the Writing component of this new test.

**Date:** Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January from 2.30 – 5.30pm

For more information or to sign up, email: [contact@englishlanguagetesting.co.uk](mailto:contact@englishlanguagetesting.co.uk)

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"Teachers should be there to support their students, but must take a moment to think what that support looks like..."

# Say Yes to the Stress

Times have changed for our young people but that's not to say things have got easier or harder since staff were on the other side of the desk, suggests Dr. Gary M. Glasspool, Head of Teaching and Learning at Churcher's College, Hampshire.



Sure, their lives are different and strange to us adults – digital living and global peer groups – but to say that times are tougher now would be to patronise the difficulties of the past. There is little doubt, however, that the educational landscape has changed, not unrecognisably, a classroom hasn't changed in structure and purpose much over the years but the proliferation of available and new 'knowledge' has. With the few simple clicks it takes to access 'knowledge' it means that students nowadays have to navigate truth, fact and

opinion in a more sophisticated, critical and nuanced way than ever before. Guiding students through these murky waters is an article for another time, but, by way of a starter, we should perhaps focus on the benefits of making an effort, of struggling, and even struggling hard.

Commercial organisations are driven to make young people's lives more engaging, or is it entertaining, through some new piece of hardware or software. The side effect is that students lose an opportunity to experience sufficient levels of challenge. If they don't know something, within two or three taps, Google

tells them or YouTube shows them. This, in itself, is not necessarily a bad thing – I have called upon these tools to help – but the incredible immediacy of response means that our young people have become accustomed to getting the answer too quickly and too easily. Rarely have they been stuck for too long.

The word 'struggle' now carries with it all sorts of negative connotations. What a shame! Struggling and struggling hard through difficult conceptual issues is the mark of a committed student and one who, in the end, will most likely have a better understanding because of the struggle. There is little scientific research needed to validate the concept that determination is the bedrock of success. I do worry however, that students think our constant mantra of 'effort = reward' is hollow and 'just something teachers

say', but that is all the more reason to reinvigorate the message. We should allow students to struggle, to need determination, to see the reward of effort: we should not be too quick to provide the answer. It might be gratifying in the short-term to sense their relief, but until you allow them to 'struggle hard' through problems and come out the other side, they will not be equipping themselves with the skills they'll need in the big wide world.

Teachers should, and always will, be there to support their students, but we must take a moment to think what that support looks like. If a child falls off their bike, we should pick them up, dust them off and give them the confidence and advice to have another go. We shouldn't end up riding the bike for them, or, worse still, show them a YouTube clip of Geraint Thomas!

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## Anti-Bullying Bronze Award

RGS The Grange, one of the two Prep schools of RGS Worcester is celebrating attaining an Anti-Bullying Award in recognition of their work to provide robust and comprehensive Anti-Bullying provision at their school.

The award given by The Anti-Bullying Quality Mark is a national scheme which measures how good schools are at preventing bullying. It challenges schools to set up effective and sustainable anti-bullying policies and strategies and make them part of their everyday life.

Their hard work has been rewarded and after a comprehensive assessment process the school was presented with the award. RGS The Grange is the first independent school in the country to achieve the ABQM-UK Bronze Award because:

'staff, students, parents and Governors demonstrated that anti-bullying is a whole school priority in which they all play an active role. Students are actively involved in the development of anti-bullying in the school. As a result of their work, the school has established a range of approaches to make sure that students feel safe and included.'

Mr Gareth Hughes, Headmaster of RGS The Grange said: "The training of the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors by The Diana Award, an organisation inspired by the work of Diana, Princess of Wales in this area, has proved to be so supportive and successful that RGS Worcester, RGS Springfield and RGS Dodderhill are similarly training their pupils to provide this all-important support for their school communities."

# Maths training hub

Cheadle Hulme School (CHS), Manchester, has become a regional teacher training hub for mathematics.

As the newest member of the National Mathematics and Physics SCITT (School Centred Initial Teacher Training), the school has been recognised as a centre of excellence for the subject.

CHS is now one of eight hubs working with partner schools in their areas to deliver high quality classroom-based maths teacher training. Other independent schools signed up to the scheme include Charterhouse, Bolton School and Dulwich College.

Recruitment onto the pioneering programme will begin this term, for maths trainees to begin in the classroom from September 2020.

SCITT programmes are aimed at both new graduates and career changers and enable a new generation of teachers to benefit from highly practical, school-based training.

The National Mathematics and Physics (NMAP) SCITT is the only school-centred provider delivering dedicated mathematics and physics teacher training. It has been developed in partnership with experts from the Institute of Physics and the Mathematical Association.

Trainees will spend most of their time at CHS, building their confidence and experience, with weekly academic theory sessions to support their development. They will also work for six weeks in a contrasting second school to broaden their experience.

At the end of the one year SCITT programme, trainees will receive Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), including credits towards a Masters qualification.

Neil Smith, head, CHS, said: "We are extremely proud to become a hub for maths teacher training.

As a school, we are committed to developing the next generation of teaching professionals; a cohort who will have expert subject knowledge, be confident in the classroom and able to collaborate with colleagues throughout the school."

Steven Norton, head of maths, said: "This is a great opportunity for colleagues in the maths department to teach and mentor trainees. And it will further strengthen what is already a highly successful department. Maths trainees at CHS will benefit from learning in school from day one alongside subject specialist mentors and practising teachers."

## Tibetan monks visit

Tibetan monks living in exile in South India visited Giggleswick School, Yorkshire, to share their masked dances, traditional music and sacred mantras.

The monks from the Tashi Lhunpo monastery ran a workshop with pupils from Giggleswick Junior School and guests from year five at Lady Lane Park School in Bingley.

The children were treated to a hands-on workshop with the monks, giving them the chance to learn more about Tibetan culture and try their hand at making sand mandalas, prayer flags, butter sculptures and Dukar wheels.



The Tashi Lhunpo Monastery has a long and interesting history, founded by the first Dalai Lama in 1447 and renowned for its Tantric tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. Following the Chinese occupation of Tibet and the Cultural Revolution, the monastery was re-established in exile in a Tibetan refugee settlement in South India.

Head of Giggleswick Junior School, James Mundell, said: "It was a fabulous opportunity and privilege for the children to meet the monks in person and learn about their life and monastic traditions.

"One of the many highlights for the children was writing their names in Tibetan and learning a few words too. The morning ended watching the monks perform their tantric prayers and Mudras – symbolic or ritual gestures – which are used to generate wisdom, compassion and healing powers."

## Linking up with France

Kitebrook Preparatory School, Gloucestershire, has launched a partnership with l'Ecole Elementaire Jean Moulin, a school located near the city of Pau, in South-West France, as part of eTwinning, the digital community for schools in Europe.

As part of the partnership, the two schools will use online tools to develop joint projects so that pupils can share insights into the lifestyle and culture of their own country. The children will also develop their foreign language skills and exchange letters on a regular basis throughout the course of the academic year.

eTwinning is the digital community for schools involving over 500,000 teachers in 43 countries across Europe and beyond, funded by the European Commission as part of the Erasmus+ programme and managed in the UK by the British Council. In the UK over 12,000 schools have been involved in eTwinning.

Kitebrook's European Languages Day saw the launch of the eTwinning project for their Year 6-8 children, who began writing their first letters to their new

correspondents along with many other French activities, including building an Eiffel Tower out of spaghetti and marshmallows, playing boules and taking part in the European-themed bake sale, which raised over £780 for the Macmillan Coffee Morning.

Miss Ruth Hogg, Head of French at Kitebrook Preparatory School, said: "Our pupils are really excited about this new project and getting to know their correspondents. It will be a great opportunity for them to put their knowledge and understanding of the French language into practice and gain a new insight into the culture of France. We have already exchanged treasure boxes with Jean Moulin, containing gifts from our respective regions and opened these as part of our European Day of Languages Celebrations".

eTwinning aims to develop knowledge and understanding of different European cultures and languages and help young people gain skills for their future lives and careers. Through the eTwinning portal, schools and colleges can search for partners in Europe and access online tools to take part in joint projects free of charge.

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# Hello World: Global Education is the Future

Ensuring that young people leave school globally literate as citizens of the world is fast becoming an integral part of the evolving educational journey. But if we are truly to embrace diversity in its widest form, as schools we have a duty to connect our students with the world around them as well as to help them to understand how it relates to them. Whether that means experiencing or immersing oneself in different cultures or understanding different beliefs and sets of values, we need to start looking at how we can educate young people to navigate the global landscape on a much deeper level, says Rose Hardy, headmistress of Haberdashers' Aske's School for Girls – Habs' Girls – in Hertfordshire...



Today, in our digitally led and process driven world, it's easier for people to become siloed. Loneliness and isolation affects many people today, young and older. Reaching out and connecting with other students from around the world opens up new channels for learning and development and can be very powerful in terms of building new relationships, broadening our outlook of the world while helping us to represent our own countries in a more positive way too.

There are, of course, several ways that schools can embrace more opportunities for interaction on a global level. Exchanges between schools are common but are becoming more frequent and important today and we are also seeing some fascinating examples of how technology is helping to facilitate greater global connections in schools, such as Skype lessons being integrated into global classrooms.

**Highlighting common ground**  
Visits from worldwide speakers in school who can share real life experiences can also help students to visualise and empathise what it is like to face barriers and discrimination across different countries. We had a refugee speaking in school recently during a special assembly and her story was very moving indeed. The impact it had on the students was very emotive and powerful as a message. It's interesting to see how scenarios like this resonate and highlight common

ground for young people who sometimes realise they are more closely linked with their global neighbours than they might have otherwise realised.

Young people need to be aware that many people across the world have enormous challenges to overcome and need resilience and a relentless determination to create change. As a sector, education needs to become much more open about global awareness too. Whether that means being more selective about the different music you play before an assembly, or creating more opportunities for international themes and events that students can participate in. We recently held an international poetry day at school and students were asked to read their selected poems in the native language. This was a really powerful exercise in changing perceptions around language and removing some of the stigmas.

Making small changes towards supporting a more global outlook is a good step forward. Holding traditional celebrations linked to the historic event of a certain country or hosting a languages week in school can really help students to feel more involved and enthused about the opportunities a globally-led community can provide. Students usually feel enriched by having a link to another country. In generations past, we would have pen pals and would write to other children from overseas schools; the vehicle has changed but the intention is the

same; to connect, learn, grow and discover.

## Twinned schools?

Schools have to use every opportunity to take learning forward into the 21st Century. That also means more collaboration, both locally and internationally. The problem is, right now there isn't any formal process or structure to link up schools with their overseas counterparts. This is something that needs to change in the future as we look to cultivate a future of acceptance in terms of diversity and culture and also as part of our objective to teach kindness and mutual respect for all. Just as the concept of 'town twinning' in this country, conceived after the Second World War in 1947, was intended to foster friendship and understanding amongst different cultures as an act of peace and reconciliation, the same too could apply to schools.

Why not have 'Twinned Schools'? It seems credible that a system like this that helps to link schools together with other schools from across the globe could have great potential in building mutually beneficial and stronger cross-cultures in a similar way and it would give schools a starting point upon which to develop their global connections.

Global education is becoming an expectation of the future and will resonate with future parent generations to come. Previously the act of boosting global

knowledge meant arranging a nice glamorous overseas trip to an exciting city, visiting a few landmarks and sampling the cuisine before heading home. All perfectly interesting experiences and a useful exercise in independence and building confidence, but we need to go beyond that.

## Global education is not about adventure

Learning more about other schools across the globe helps to equip children with the skills and the confidence they need to take purposeful action to improve their future lives and to positively influence the world they live in. Having a more rounded, global education is also extremely effective in supporting students' academic endeavours and their social and emotional development, not to mention their health and wellbeing as citizens of our diverse world.

Yet, it is important to remember that global education is not about shiny adventures, nor is it about a nice holiday or overseas trip. As schools we need to be venturing much further and looking to develop more sustained and meaningful opportunities to enrich our students' thirst for learning. For global education to become successful as part of the curriculum, it needs to be driven, progressed and followed up. Just as the world continues to evolve, so too does our approach to understanding it. ”

## About Habs Girls' School [www.habsgirls.org.uk](http://www.habsgirls.org.uk)

Founded in 1875, Haberdashers' Aske's School for Girls is a leading independent school for students aged 4 to 18 years. Based in Elstree, Hertfordshire, its current and historic academic results place it amongst the highest ranked independent schools operating in the UK today. Set over 40 acres of stunning countryside and within easy reach of London, the school is committed to the development of each individual child, providing a challenging, friendly learning environment and a positive, stimulating and secure community that welcomes students from a diverse range of backgrounds and cultures. Based on the same campus as Habs Boys' School is able to provide single-sex education, in a co-educational environment, nurturing happy, hardworking pupils and preparing them to become citizens of a global 21st Century.



Zara, King Henry VIII, Malaysia Collection.

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# At the heart of the community

Exeter School, Devon, is the recipient of a UK Heart Safe Award. The school won the award for the Education category of the awards, hosted by Jenny Powell and the Hand on Heart Charity.

The award was made for Exeter School's investment in five defibrillators for school and community use. In the last twelve months, Exeter School has acquired two new defibrillators to add to the three already available across the 25-acre site.

School Nurse Lisa Barlass said she was absolutely delighted Exeter School had been recognised as a heart safe environment.

"We believe it is extremely important to have defibrillators on site; as a very busy and active school, our facilities are used all year round.

"We know that defibrillators save lives and I am proud to work at Exeter School where we provide this service and facility for our school and local community. Thank you for our award."

Operations Manager Craig Stewart said: "We hire our facilities to many public groups and wanted to make sure our life-saving equipment was on hand, should the need arise.

"Two defibrillators are housed in accessible cabinets on the school grounds; one is outside the headmaster's office and the other is on the external wall of the astro turf changing rooms.



There are three more – in the swimming pool reception, sports hall reception and in the medical room. The school is a secure site with CCTV but the cabinets housing the defibrillators are not locked so these can be accessed at all times."

114 members of staff have been trained in the use of a defibrillator – 21 in the past year. The school's first aid training incorporates defibrillator training so all staff who attend this are trained.

In-house defibrillator training delivered by the School Nurse is run during the Health & Safety inset training day, held once a year. Two further qualified members of staff deliver defibrillator training to pupil lifeguards, of whom there are currently 28. This training is refreshed as appropriate in the half termly training sessions for the lifeguards.

Pupils who are involved in the Combined Cadet Force also receive defibrillator training. Around a dozen Upper Sixth (Year 13) pupils in the RAF section undertake training every year. Every year, around 30 Year 10 pupils participating in the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme undergo lifesaving training as part of the Skill section of the Bronze Award. This lifesaving training includes the use of a defibrillator via the Life Saver website which includes

an interactive video <https://life-saver.org.uk>

School Nurse Lisa said: "This school year, as well as training our staff, pupil life guards and Combined Cadet Force pupils, we are also planning to roll out further defibrillator training to even more pupils. We believe the lifelong educational value in making children aware of the presence and operation of defibrillators is priceless."

Exeter City Swimming Club trains daily in the four-lane, 25-metre indoor swimming pool. Over 20 external organisations hire the school's facilities on a weekly basis from archers to hockey and football players to korfballers! There are another dozen who make use of the school's extensive grounds and facilities a few times a year, from musicians wishing to use the Music School to Laser Camp, the holiday childcare provider, which hires the school every Easter, May half term and for four weeks over the summer, to the IPC which provides English language tuition to foreign students.

Clear signage can be found at the site of each defibrillator. Exeter School is a landing site for the Coastguard helicopter and used on occasion for emergencies due to its location next to the Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital.

Pictured (l to r): Lisa Stewart, Bursary and Training Administrator; Lisa Barlass, School Nurse; Matt Saunders, Maintenance Supervisor, with students

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## Principal installed alongside King's and Queen's Scholars

The Principal of King's Ely, John Attwater, and twelve new King's and Queen's Scholars have been officially installed at a service in Ely Cathedral.

The Admission of Scholars' ceremony saw all of King's Ely Senior pupils and the Scholars' proud families coming together in the Cathedral. The Scholars received their distinctive scarlet gowns, the colour traditionally symbolising a Royal foundation.

John Attwater, who took over

as Principal of King's Ely in September this year, was also formally admitted to the Foundation by the Dean of Ely, Mark Bonney during the service, which combined hymns, readings, prayers and an anthem performed by King's Ely's 40-strong Chapel Choir, together with an uplifting sermon from the Bishop of Huntingdon.

King's Scholars (boys) were inaugurated by Henry VIII in 1541 and Queen's Scholars (girls) at the request of Queen

Elizabeth II in 1973. The Scholarships are honorary positions, awarded annually on the basis of students' GCSE results.

Scholars, who are all Year 12 students at King's Ely, become members of the Cathedral Foundation, strengthening the special link between King's Ely and the Cathedral, and they also qualify for other privileges and appointments throughout the year.

## Full STEM ahead

Bedford Girls' School (BGS) welcomed over 100 female students from Mark Rutherford, Goldington Academy and Castle Newnham schools for STEM Ambassador training workshops. Delivered by Neil Atkins of Rubbish Science as part of the schools local Physics Partners partnership, the purpose of the workshops was to challenge and engage students with the world and wonder of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects.

# How to tackle maths anxiety in your school

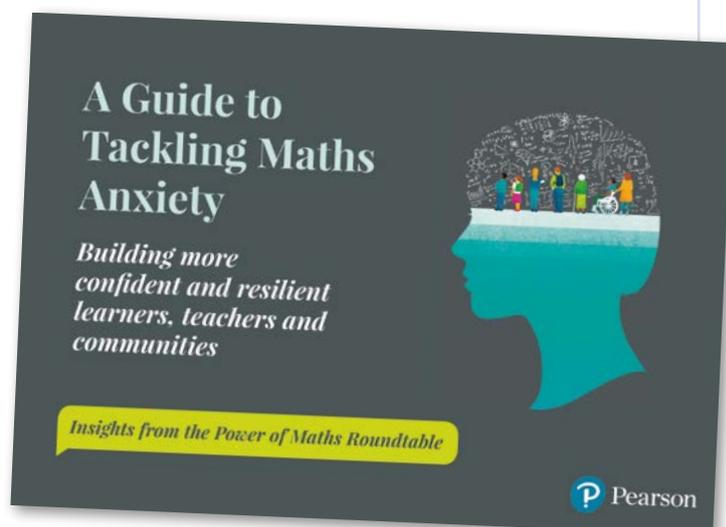
Maths anxiety affects thousands of children, young people and adults in the UK. Seen and felt in classrooms, homes and workplaces across the nation, it is considered a barrier to engagement and progress in maths, as well as life.

Following the #PowerofMaths Roundtable with leading thinkers on maths anxiety, Pearson, has released free guidance for schools on how to overcome this issue and build more confident learners, teachers and communities.

The Guide to Tackling Maths Anxiety highlights recommendations and practical tools, including:

- how to identify and understand maths anxiety in your school
- what teaching approaches and tools can build mathematical resilience
- how to make maths more inclusive by opening doors to industry
- tips to engage parent and carers with the subject more effectively

To build greater mathematical confidence and resilience in your school, read the full guide at: [go.pearson.com/tacklingmathsanxiety](https://go.pearson.com/tacklingmathsanxiety)



## About Pearson:

At Pearson, we believe in the power of maths. It's an integral part of the world around us. That's why everything we do focuses on building skills and confidence in maths so everyone can engage with opportunities, achieve, and progress throughout their lives. As we cannot effect such great change alone, our Power of Maths Roundtable series brings together leading influencers across education, academia, industry and the third sector to discuss and unlock contemporary issues facing mathematics in the UK today.

To join the #PowerOfMaths conversation:

- Visit [go.pearson.com/powerofmaths](https://go.pearson.com/powerofmaths)
- Follow @PearsonSchools on Twitter



## World champ after 7 months!

Porscha Johnson, a Year 10 pupil at Bolton School Girls' Division, has been named the GPC Under 60kg/Under 16 Powerlifting World Champion, despite taking up the sport only seven months ago.

She earned the World Champion title during the half term break while representing Great Britain at an international competition in Slovakia. At 14 years old, she was not only the youngest person on team GB but also the youngest in the whole competition. Nonetheless, she won the gold medal in her class, breaking two World records and two European records along the way.

Porscha's introduction to Powerlifting came in April 2019. She also competes at a National level in Athletics (hurdles) and velodrome cycling and the initial idea behind Powerlifting was to

strengthen her up for these sports. However, after her very first training session at Kaos Strength Gym in Preston, her coach, Rhianon Lovelace, was so impressed with her strength that she asked if she could enter her in the British Qualifier. Her mum agreed, as long as Porscha wanted to take part.

She started weight training two days a week and, just eight weeks later, she entered the British Qualifier at The Strength Factory in Bolton. She not only won her class (Under 56kg/Under 16) but also set three British records: Squat 90kg, Bench Press 40kg and Deadlift a massive 120kg.

Porscha progressed to the British Powerlifting Championships, held in Bristol in August, where she won the Under 56kg/Under 16 category and became a British Champion. In addition, she set two World records in Squat (100kg) and Deadlift (125kg).

After this success, she was invited to represent Great Britain at the GPC World Championships in Slovakia. By the time this competition came, she had moved up a weight category due to natural growth to compete in the Under 60kg/Under 16 class. She went on to win the Gold in her new category and even set new World records in Squat (110.5kg) and Deadlift (128kg).



## National trampolining champion

Will Fothergill, a Year 10 pupil at Bolton School Boys' Division, has become English trampolining champion (13-14 years category) after enjoying recent success at the English trampoline finals in Sheffield where he won gold.

## European youth bouldering champion

Toby Roberts, Year 10 pupil at King Edward's Witley, Surrey, has returned triumphant from the International Federation of Sport Climbing European Youth Championships in Brixen, Italy having been crowned the new European Youth Bouldering Champion in his age category (Male Youth B).

Competing in a field of 50 European competitors, representing 23 countries, the win is even more of an accomplishment given 17 of the top 20 climbers were a year older than Toby. The win has inspired Toby to enter the European Lead Climbing Championships in Russia during October, with his sights firmly fixed on next year's World Youth Championships in China.



Mr Mark Harrison, Director of Co-Curriculum, at King Edward's Witley said, "Toby is a fine example of the role sport can play in shaping individuals, developing emotional resilience and identifying strategies to overcome challenges providing a clear pathway to improved performance and ultimately victory".

## Rugby 'royalty' returns

World Rugby chairman, sporting celebrity and former Ellesmere College student, Sir Bill Beaumont, Rugby World Cup referee Luke Pearce and Judith Phelps, chairman of the Shropshire RFU, were welcomed to the north Shropshire

school for a special Centenary rugby match.

Bill and Judith were special guests and Luke officiated the inaugural North Midlands Rugby Football Union's (NMRFU) Centenary School's Challenge Cup between

Ellesmere College 1st XV and Wrekin College 1st XV with Abraham Darby 1st XV.

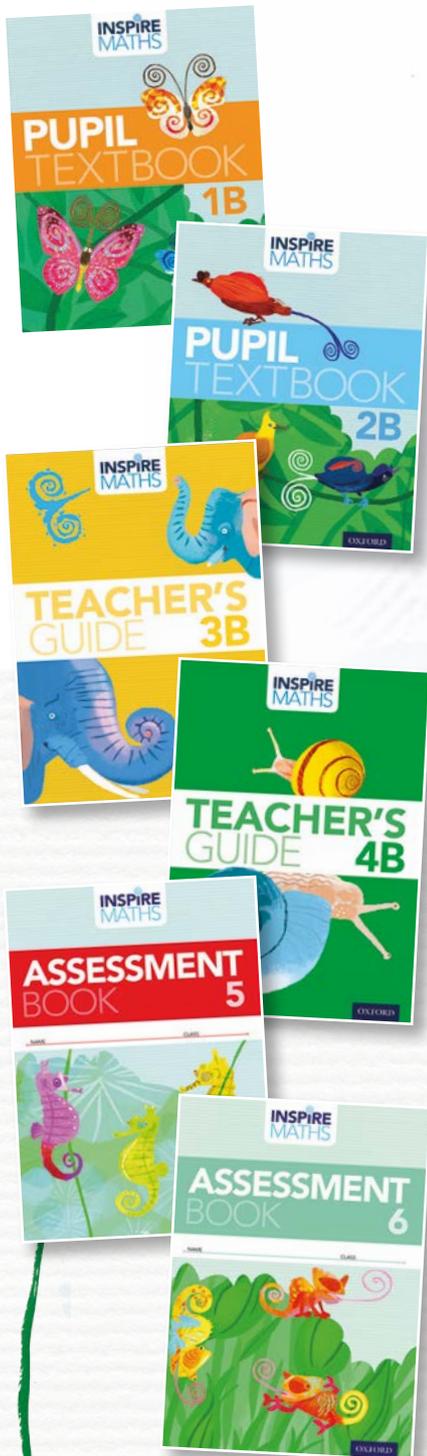
The home team were victorious in the match which ended 35-0, Bill learned to play rugby while at Ellesmere College and went on to

become captain of the England Rugby Union Team, earning 34 caps, chairman of the International Rugby Board and chairman of the Rugby Football Union. He has been chairman of World Rugby since 2016.



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MEGAN ROBINSON, YEAR 3 TEACHER, DRAGON PRE-PREP

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OXFORD

# "Inspirational" event supports tomorrow's entrepreneurs

Schools are being invited to register their interest in an event specifically arranged to develop and support the entrepreneurial skills of their sixth form pupils. The 2020 Bryanston Business Conference will provide pupils from schools and sixth form colleges right across the region with a unique opportunity to feed off the energy and passion of visionary business leaders from many sectors of industry – from fashion and beauty to property and technology.

The annual event has continued to grow in stature and popularity since it was first introduced in 2013. According to the event organiser, Amanda Lovejoy, Development Manager at Bryanston School, Dorset, the conference provides an important opportunity for budding entrepreneurs from schools to develop their business ideas and skills alongside respected and inspirational mentors from the world of industry.

"Far from adopting a conventional format, the Bryanston Business Conference provides pupils with a challenging but exciting hands-on experience to work with highly successful business men and women – as well as

pupils from other schools – to help develop and refine their commercial awareness and innovation skills," says Lovejoy. "It's a very motivational event that is unlike anything else the young participants will have encountered in their coursework and it really does open their eyes to the possibilities and realities of business life."

The 2020 Bryanston Business Conference will be on Friday 19th June. In previous years, mentors have included familiar names from the world of industry, including Julia Hailes MBE, Sebastian Conran, Claire Dresser, Sophie Harley, Justin Urquhart-Stewart, Adam Greenwood, Tom Honey and Alison Kyle. Many previous mentors will be returning for the 2020 business conference at Bryanston alongside other business leaders from a diverse range of industries.

The Conference takes place at Bryanston School and comprises a series of workshops with the mentors working with teams of pupils to develop new ethical business products or services. The event culminates with each mentor's selected team giving a short presentation to all pupils



and mentors, with all attendees then voting for their favourite idea. The three winning teams then receive prize money for their selected charity. The winners at the 2019 Conference raised £500 for Children on the Edge, £250 for Air Ambulance UK and £100 for WasteAid.

"It is a pleasure to have the opportunity of working with tomorrow's visionaries and entrepreneurs," says Adam Greenwood, a technology futurist and regular mentor at the Bryanston Business Conference. "The motivations and refreshingly different approach to business of the next generation really do

provide an indication of the shape of things to come, as they are so mindful of the impact of their ideas on people and the environment. The Conference helps to nurture and encourage such a focused mindset. And our role as mentors is to show what's needed to turn the spark of a good idea into something that really can make a difference while also providing a fulfilling and rewarding career."

Any school keen for their pupils to attend this year's Bryanston Business Conference should register their interest at the earliest opportunity by contacting Amanda Lovejoy at [development@bryanston.co.uk](mailto:development@bryanston.co.uk).

Pictured: Leading jewellery designer, Sophie Harley (third from right), with the winning team of West Country sixth formers at the 2019 Bryanston Business Conference



Former Prime Minister and MP for Maidenhead Theresa May interviewed by students at the event

## Female Leaders initiative

More than 400 pupils from 8 schools across Plymouth gathered at Plymouth College late last term to join an historic walk from the school to the Nancy Astor Statue unveiling on the Hoe.

The event had been coordinated by Plymouth College staff and students who had been preparing for a number of weeks. Said Ann Chubb, History Teacher and organiser: "Lady Astor changed the course of history by becoming the first woman to take her seat in the House of Commons after she was elected MP for Plymouth Sutton in November

1919 and her historic achievement paved the way for the fairer democracy we see in Britain today."

The Nancy Astor unveiling marks the launch of Plymouth College's Future Female Leaders initiative that includes a series of lectures and workshops to celebrate and empower the female leaders of tomorrow. Speakers are already confirmed for 2020 and the initiative promises to be a real success, with some of the city's most influential women imparting their expertise and advice.

## Time for tea

Reception children from Ranby House School, Nottinghamshire, entertained some special visitors just before Christmas as retired residents from Charter Court were hosted at the school for afternoon tea.

The event was organised by Reception teacher Adam Newton who firmly believes in the benefit of bringing the generations together.

"There have been countless studies – all pointing towards a positive impact for both groups," said Adam.

"For children, it helps develop their social skills; teaching them to slow down, to listen and to be patient. For older people, many studies link social interaction with decreased loneliness, as well as incredible physical benefits as well. The sharing of knowledge between these two groups is fascinating to watch and in many ways can teach tolerance and understanding that goes both ways."

Jane Jackson, House Manager at Charter Court, said: "It's such a lovely idea. They were all very keen to meet with the children. Everyone was excited and looking forward to it. We have a range of ages of residents who went along, from those in their 70s up to who one lady who is 94 years old!"

The children of Ranby House were excited to greet their guests, serving cake and biscuits and sharing a board game or two.



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“It gives the children the opportunity to experience challenge and risk-taking in an area that requires minimal maintenance and allows play all year round, whatever the weather.”

“We are really pleased with the equipment and the children are making good use of it already. The customer service has been great and we feel that communication has been good!”



# Why every school needs a mental first-aider

We often hear that today's children are more stressed than previous generations and the number of children seeking help for anxiety and mental health issues has risen sharply. Recent data from the NSPCC's Childline service shows that even those as young as 4 years old are displaying signs of panic attacks, eating disorders, anxiety and depression.



Alicia Eaton, children's emotional wellbeing specialist, discusses what schools can and should do...

In the last three years alone, 120,000 referrals were made by schools seeking professional mental health help with 56% of these referrals coming from primary schools,

Growing up in an environment with worrying news items about the threat of terrorism or climate change, an endless stream of school exams and online social media bullying all contribute to a heightened sense of anxiety. Even when children are having fun playing computer games, their bodies produce an adrenaline rush that never quite gets burned off. It's not surprising that most parents and indeed teachers, will admit to feeling 'lost for words' when it comes to offering solutions or advice for dealing with these feelings of anxiety.

Living with anxiety can have harsh and long-term consequences, and children can 'grow into' their fears rather than out of them. Anxiety can set back a child's emotional growth and hamper performance in every area of their life. It will stop a child from making friends, taking part in social activities, sitting exams

successfully and fulfilling their potential. To make matters worse, those who suffer from anxiety and depression as children, are likely to carry the problems into adulthood.

The good news is that anxiety is a very treatable condition. Enlightened psychologists will now refer to anxiety as something that's often the result of an emotional 'injury' to the mind rather than a 'disorder' – for that word immediately suggests it is part of a long-term problem and something that needs to be endured. In reality, it's now possible to heal an emotional wound rather than leaving it to fester and turn into something much bigger. So just as children acquire bumps and scrapes on the outside of their bodies, we shouldn't be surprised to discover that it's possible to get a few on the inside too.

It makes sense for today's teachers and parents to place learning mental first-aid skills high on the priority list, as being able to instruct children on how to manage feelings of anxiety effectively, will stop them from spiralling out of control.

## Three top tips:

### 1. It's good to talk

Talking about how we feel can be tricky to begin with because it's a fairly abstract concept – how do you describe feeling sad, scared or excited? A child without the appropriate vocabulary skills might use actions instead, which can cause even more problems such as anger or defiance – so it's good to teach children about their emotions from an early age and equip them with an extensive vocabulary to describe these more accurately. Being able to talk about how you feel helps you to feel more in control.

### 2. Breathing techniques

Anxiety or panic attacks create a shortness of breath and can also lead to a pale complexion, tightness in the chest and even fainting. These symptoms will naturally create even more anxiety and so the cycle will continue. "Take a nice deep breath" is often the traditional response to seeing someone who is struggling, but this advice will simply increase the unwanted feelings. Anxiety causes people to hold their breath and it's when we have too much air trapped in our lungs that we feel we can't breathe and start to panic. Teaching children good breathing techniques from an early age will enable them to manage difficult situations more effectively.

### 3. Consider changes to the diet

Certain foods can alter stress and anxiety levels as well as create mood swings – the two biggest culprits being caffeine and sugar, plenty of which can be found in today's energy drinks. The stimulating effects of these create shaky, buzzy feelings that are very similar to anxiety and it's worth considering whether many children are in fact experiencing these rather than suffering from anxiety or experiencing emotional problems. Thought should be given to the types of food and drinks served in school tuck shops and served at lunchtimes.



Alicia Eaton is a children's emotional wellbeing specialist based in Harley Street and author of *First Aid for your Child's Mind* available on Amazon priced £12.99. To find out more go to: [www.aliciaeaton.co.uk](http://www.aliciaeaton.co.uk)

## Are we raising our children in captivity?

Habs Girls, Hertfordshire, hosted its first Pastoral Conference themed around 'Empowering Pastoral Excellence'. Close to 300 delegates attended the event, which attracted interest from across the country and heard headline speaker Professor Tanya Byron, (child & adolescent mental health psychologist and author of *The Skeleton Cupboard*), deliver a thought-provoking speech on how we are 'raising our children in captivity'. Byron, who highlighted a growing decline in 'free range

children', encouraged the audience to remind those children in their care, that failure is an experience and not something to fear.

The Conference included a timetable of workshops and special talks delivered by a line-up of speakers, who engaged with delegates on a variety of topics linked to pastoral wellbeing and the importance of teaching happiness. The Conference agenda also covered some harder-hitting topics such as helping young people to find their own identities



# A culture of openness can create change



A special debate forum for business leaders at The Bonham Hotel in Edinburgh recently was chaired by the Principal of George Heriot's School, Lesley Franklin, who has

been a clear advocate of the need for schools to think and act differently in the development of the mental robustness of the young.

During the forum, Lesley, pictured, spoke about the challenges we face as a society today regarding stress and anxiety levels and also how schools like George Heriot's is rising to the challenge by ensuring the right values are in place for its students.

Speaking alongside four of her students who each spoke with confidence and eloquence on what, until more recently, has been a difficult and taboo topic, Lesley addressed a number of Scottish business leaders who were in attendance about the need to place kindness as the foundation stone to culture.

She explained: "It is important to help develop the mental resilience of students as well as possessing a mind-set that has kindness at its core. This changes the culture and creates a "safe" environment for people to talk and have a voice as well as to fail and grow. Too often environments are driven by a fear factor and a feeling of insecurity. It is important today to ensure that people feel safe in their environment whether at school or at work.

Leaders heard how the approach implemented by George Heriot's

starts with four core pillars, ensuring that the right values are in place and are built on a strong belief in kindness. The school also fosters a culture of speaking out and having the freedom to talk. Mental health education sits within the curriculum and real time is dedicated to it.

Chris Sheppardson, CEO at EP Business in Hospitality, who hosted the event, commented: "It is interesting that schools like George Heriot's are instilling these values within their own communities, especially as many businesses are also asking how they can find the same values in their own talent. The question posed by Lesley is that it does need to be part of your culture and therefore starts with your approach to leadership. One of the features of Lesley's talk that really struck home is the link to honesty and openness within the school, which in turn, creates a greater understanding, compassion and safety in talking about the issue. This was well illustrated by the four students who all spoke about their own experiences."

## GO Parent: Mental Health and Wellbeing conference

Godolphin School, Wiltshire, hosted their first GO Parent conference, Talking Mental Health and Wellbeing, in collaboration with the Magna Learning Partnership. Deputy Head Pastoral, Jenny Price, sought the expertise of professionals from the industry with real, up to date and pertinent messages on a wide range of subjects. The programme offered a formidable array of knowledge and some hard-hitting messages.

Sean Fletcher (pictured) launched the event with his deeply moving talk about his family's struggles with his son's OCD. Two Break Out Sessions followed from Hope Virgo, who spoke passionately of her personal battle with anorexia and Alistair Speers, (Headmaster of Sandroyd Prep School) who spoke about resilience and managing failure. The day continued with sessions on self-harm from Satveer Nijjar, online harms from Dr Claire Hardaker, and Amy Forbes-Robertson from It-happens spoke about sex education. After an amazing lunch, Dr Linda Papadopoulos, a well-known and respected psychologist, spoke

about nurturing young people's wellbeing in the online world and this was followed by another Break Out Session which included a talk from Kevin West from the NSPCC and 'inflating balloons of self-belief' which resulted in a standing ovation for James Shone.

Deputy Head Pastoral, Jenny Price, said 'the message was one of 'let's talk' and bring these topics to the forefront with several of our speakers talking about their own journeys and recovery.' We need the support of our parents and by inviting them to join us for a day dedicated to mental health, we can learn side by side, how to best support our young people'.

Head, Emma Hattersley, said "Our vision at Godolphin is to become a hub for promoting good mental health. Community is important to us and we were privileged to join with the Magna Learning Partnership for the day."

The feedback from the day has been overwhelming and preparations for GO Parent 2020 are well underway.

outside of potentially toxic friendship groups, spotting the signs of substance abuse, how to help students make safer choices around drugs and alcohol, supporting bereaved children and understanding unhealthy coping strategies in young people.

Other speaker topics included how to build resilience and gender inclusion in schools, as well as advising delegates on how to better manage their child's digital wellbeing by taking micro-actions to reduce stress.

# Can different sized minibuses be driven on different licences?

When thinking about minibuses most schools assume their only option is a 17-seat minibus but there are other options available to schools, such as the 9, 12 and 14 seat minibuses from Ford. Having the right licence is always a concern to schools and so we asked Chris Maynard, Managing Director of Castle Minibus to talk us through the licence requirements for different sized vehicles.

'Unfortunately', starts Chris, 'although the law may sometimes seem clear on weights and licences, there are conditions that are open to interpretation. Schools therefore must decide how to interpret them once they understand the risks involved. We have sought expert and legal advice over the years and have distilled that advice into our best practice recommendations; it's the safest way forward where the law is unclear. The most important thing to remember is whatever vehicle is being driven safety, is paramount.

## What the DVSA says about minibuses and licences

There are two types of licence that you can drive a (9-16 passenger seat) minibus on depending on the vehicle weight and the driver's conditions. The Department of Transport's guidance on Section 19 Permits states that drivers with a D1 entitlement, those who passed their test before 1 January 1997 may drive a small bus, not used for hire or reward, of any weight used under the permit. There is no restriction on them receiving payment.

Drivers who passed their car test on or after 1 January 1997, without a D1 entitlement can only drive a small bus if all the following conditions are met:

- they have held a full category B car licence for at least 2 years
- they receive no payment or other consideration for driving other than out-of-pocket expenses
- the vehicle has a maximum gross weight not exceeding 3.5 tonnes, plus up to 750kgs only for specialised equipment for the carriage of disabled passengers to ensure that the payload remains the same. This does not include ramps.
- for drivers aged 70 or over, that they don't have any medical conditions which would

disqualify them from eligibility for a D1 licence

- no trailer is being towed
- where the driver's licence only authorises the driving of vehicles with automatic transmission, that only a vehicle with automatic transmission is used.

## What does this mean for smaller vehicles?

It would appear from the above that a vehicle with a MAM of 3.5 tonnes or under can be driven on a standard B car licence. Therefore, some schools are opting for a smaller minibus that carries less passengers so their staff can drive it on a standard B car licence.

## Are your staff driving for no payment or other consideration?

This question has never been tested in court, but the expert legal advice sought by Castle Minibus and County Councils such as Hertfordshire, has been crystal clear; that teachers and school staff are driving on behalf of their employer and so this is for payment. Looking for favourable recognition such as a promotion by 'volunteering' to drive on school trips could be deemed 'other consideration' too. So, to avoid this grey area, Castle's recommendation is not to allow staff to drive school minibuses that carry more than 8 passengers without a D1 entitlement. Incidentally, this has been the law in the other 27 countries in the European Union since 1997.

## Same licence and safety considerations whatever the size vehicle

It might seem that a smaller minibus would require less consideration in terms of training, which may make some vehicles more attractive to schools wanting to avoid the costs of D1 driver training. However,

this might not be the case depending on your interpretation of 'payment and other consideration' and so there is an element of risk here that should the worst happen your driver will be driving with the wrong licence regardless of the size or weight and the school's insurance would be invalid as well.

Whatever size or weight you're driving the same considerations for your drivers should apply;

**Know your weights:** Driving an overweight vehicle is dangerous whatever licence you hold so make sure you know your MAM and maximum payloads. It's especially important to know your weights if you're driving without a D1 entitlement.

**Check licences:** It is important to regularly check your drivers' licences to see if any new penalty points or additional restrictions have been added.

**Eyesight and medical tests:** Regardless of the entitlement drivers hold on their licences, regular eyesight and medical checks will help reduce risks.

**Continual training:** Those who take a full D1 test complete both a theory and practical test, those with a D1 (101) inherited entitlement and Standard B car licences will also benefit from ongoing training whether MiDAS, online assessments and training, or a practical driving assessment.

Every school should have a robust minibus safety system that includes policies and procedures of minibus and driver management. Those responsible need to ensure they understand the compliance and legal issues surrounding licences and permits so they can make informed decisions on what size minibus is best for their school and what training they require for their staff.

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# Profile

## In conversation with Fiona Miles

**Born:** 1975

**Schools and University**

**Attended:** Nottingham High School for Girls; Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge (BA English Literature); King's College, London (MBBS Medicine)

**First job:**

1994, Housekeeping assistant, BMI Park Hospital, Nottingham

**First management job:**

2001, Senior Tutor for Year 7, Haberdashers' Aske's School for Girls, Elstree

**First job in education:**

1997, English teacher; Haberdashers' Aske's School for Girls, Elstree

**Appointed to current job:**

April 2019

**Favourite piece of music:**

Beethoven Piano Concerto No.5 in E-flat major

**Favourite food:**

Cake in all its forms

**Favourite drink:**

A strong cup of tea

**Favourite holiday destination:**

Switzerland

**Favourite leisure pastime:**

Playing the piano and church organ

**Favourite TV or radio programme/series:**

The Infinite Monkey Cage on Radio 4

**Suggested epitaph:**

Always Learning

**Q** You made the leap up from deputy head to your first headship in April last year. What were the biggest personal and professional challenges you faced in your first term?

**A** *Simply being new has been the greatest challenge: as a new head, you don't have the institutional knowledge, the deeply embedded networks or the innate sense of "how we do things here" to guide you. Fortunately, I have a very patient and supportive team around me, a warm and welcoming student and parent body, and because Loughborough High School is part of a foundation of schools, I have three other experienced heads to turn to when I am in doubt.*

**Q** With the wisdom of hindsight, and in the knowledge that some might be hesitant about such a step, what advice would you offer other deputies about the skillsets they should acquire before applying for a head's position?

**A** *Observe your current head carefully and take every opportunity to stand in for them. I was fortunate to be deputy to a wise and long-standing head who gave me experience of all sorts of situations including deputising at governors' meetings, taking a lead on a major building project and implementing various aspects of whole-school strategy, as well as some of the more difficult decisions that a head has to make. Make friends with your Bursar or Director of Finance and, most importantly, spend some time working out what really matters to you in terms of your vision for education.*

**Q** After graduating in English Literature at Cambridge, you worked for a while as a teacher before re-training as a doctor. Shortly after you qualified, you then returned to teaching. What prompted those career changes?

**A** *My medical training was the most extraordinary, demanding and humbling experience of my life. I entered into it with the fervent belief that medicine was my calling but I gradually came to feel that I had more of an impact on people's lives as a teacher than as a doctor. The relationships that a teacher develops with*

*their students over one or more years can be every bit as meaningful as those of doctor and patient and my belief in the transformative power of a great teacher is a theme that I return to often in staff meetings and assemblies. I'm pleased to say that there have only been a couple of moments as a new head when I have thought wistfully about Friday night in A&E!*

**Q** Do you still find time to teach alongside the many other calls on a head's time?

**A** *Yes, I am currently teaching Year 7 PSHCE and it is a wonderful way to get to know the pupils in the year group. They are a real life-force and have set me straight on a range of topics from Brexit to mobile phones. Later this year, I will be leading some sessions for Years 10-13 on medical law and ethics and I am really looking forward to getting to know the would-be medics across the Loughborough Schools Foundation.*

**Q** The High School was an early adopter of iPads to aid learning. How are you now approaching the new challenges of a world in which AI will play an ever-larger role inside and outside school?

**A** *It has been said that AI is the greatest innovation since the printing press and it certainly presents exciting opportunities to personalise learning. At Loughborough High School, we keep two things in view in our approach to technology: firstly, that teaching and learning dictates its use (not the other way round) and secondly, that the human heart and mind will be just as important, if not more so, in the age of robots.*

**Q** You have introduced mindfulness into the curriculum as part of your efforts to combat mental health difficulties which afflict so many young people in the country as a whole. What steps do you take to ensure that your pastoral team pick up on issues with particular pupils before they develop into serious problems?

**A** *Excellent pastoral care is a top priority at Loughborough High School and one in which all staff have a role, whether they are subject teachers, support staff or members of the pastoral team. We have a very*

# Fiona Miles has been head of Loughborough High School, Leicestershire, since the start of last term. She was previously Senior Deputy Head at Haberdashers' Aske's School for Girls in Hertfordshire.

*strong team of heads of year, all of whom have an impressive knowledge of the pupils in their year group, and they are led by our highly skilled Assistant Head, Pastoral, and Senior Deputy Head. We are committed to ensuring that every student is noticed and valued and this has been a focus for our staff training this year. Many of our staff are Mental Health First Aid trained and we intend to roll this out to all staff in the near future. We also place great value on pupil voice and our student-led Wellbeing Committee meets every three weeks to discuss and implement ideas for enhancing wellbeing within the school community.*

**Q** Research suggests that teachers will experience less stress themselves provided the six cornerstones of sound employment practice are met - namely fair salary; opportunity for personal development; healthy approach to work-life balance; recognition and a sense of purpose; great school culture; meaningful perks and benefit package. Is this right? How does the High School shape up on those benchmarks under your leadership?

**A** *Great people make great schools and I believe that the staff at Loughborough High School are our finest asset. Conversations with my colleagues certainly suggest that they have a high level of job satisfaction along with a strong sense of being part of a wider family. My newly appointed Deputy Head, Academic, is optimising opportunities for staff development and he takes a strong lead on work-life balance, for example discouraging staff from responding to emails at weekends and holidays. We are not complacent, however, and the Foundation is currently engaged in an external review of our working conditions, pay and benefits, the results of which we will know shortly.*

**Q** You are an advocate of life-long learning, and you lead by example with your wish to study for a degree in law. How can such an enthusiasm be imparted to your pupils in such a way that it stays with them for life?

**A** *When I talk to students about their learning, they tell me that there is nothing better than being in a classroom with a teacher who*

*lives and breathes their subject and who communicates with energy and enthusiasm. Keeping subject passion alive is vital and we encourage our staff to undertake further study, participate in action research projects and give talks on areas of special interest. I still have plenty to learn about headship, so the law degree will have to wait for a few years, but I do make a conscious effort to let my students know that I continue to read and learn new things.*

**Q** As a family member of the Loughborough Schools Foundation, the High School is said to gain from a 'cross-pollination of ideas, social and educational interaction with boys and girls from the other schools on campus'. Your teaching career has been exclusively in girls-only settings, which you presumably advocate, so what would your assessment be of the benefits of this interaction?

**A** *Single-sex schools have an incredibly important role to play in the education of young women: we constantly celebrate female endeavour and achievement, no subject is off-limits to girls and when our younger students look up, they see female student leaders and role models. Nonetheless, the world that they will*

*ultimately inhabit will be co-educational and the Foundation offers plenty of opportunities for joint activities, from our combined cadet force to our first class music and drama performances. I really do believe that we offer the best of both worlds in terms of education for girls.*

**Q** Who, or what, inspired you to get into teaching?

**A** *My mum (a primary school teacher), my two fantastic A Level English teachers and Dr Alistair Hunter, my second year anatomy tutor, who explained the mysteries of the circulatory system using an empty Persil box and several feet of rubber hosepipe.*

**Q** As we enter the New Year, what is your key hopes for education in this country during 2020?

**A** *I hope to see a really positive narrative about the teaching profession emerge, so that we can continue to attract the brightest and best to what is undoubtedly the best career in the world.*





## New nursery creates all-through school

New Hall Nursery celebrated its official launch last term with the Bishop of Brentwood, the Rt Rev. Alan Williams, visiting to bless the new building, take a tour of the facilities and to meet New Hall School's newest pupils.

The Nursery comes as an addition to the Essex School's existing Preparatory and Senior Divisions. The new Division opened its doors to pupils in September, marking the establishment of New Hall as the first Catholic all-through school in Essex, offering an educational provision for day students from Nursery to Sixth Form, with boarding available for pupils from Year 3.

"Introducing a new Nursery allows New Hall to offer excellent wraparound care to more families

Pictured: Mrs Jeffrey, Principal, Bishop of Brentwood, Rt. Rev. Alan Williams and Councillor Janette Potter, Deputy Mayor of Chelmsford with New Hall pupils and guests at the official opening New Hall Nursery

and to expand the School's promise to provide the best start in life," said Katherine Jeffrey, Principal. The Nursery offers options for both all year round and term time only care, starting at the age of 1, from 8.00am until 6.00pm with extended day care on offer from 7.30am to 6.30pm.

Constructed by the Stable Company, the Nursery was completed over the summer and provides an inspiring environment for the School's youngest pupils to explore, develop and grow. The ceremony to mark the building's official opening was attended by parents, pupils, School Governors, Scott Green from The Stable Company, Councillor Janette Potter, Deputy Mayor of Chelmsford and Chelmsford City Council representatives.

## Extension completed



The Moat School, London, has undergone a complete extension of its front of house area, the additional space has provided a new English classroom and counselling room as well as additional office spaces.

The new frontage provides a light and inviting area for prospective parents and current pupils.

The space will also start to make room for the expansion of the site and The Moats SpLD specialist sixth form provision it will be offering in September 2020.

## £24m topping out



The highly anticipated Oundle School, Northamptonshire, Sports Centre recently marked a major milestone in its progress with a topping out ceremony.

The event gathered Oundle School representatives including Head Sarah Kerr-Dineen, alongside contractors GRAHAM, to celebrate the progress of the £24m project.

Once complete in Spring, Oundle School Sports Centre will accommodate a 50-metre swimming pool, an eight court sports hall that offers adaptable playing space for a range of sports, as well as the opportunity for whole School assemblies through

the use of retractable seating, a 70-station fitness suite, a dedicated dance studio, and three further multi-purpose rooms. Dual use has been factored into the development to ensure that there will be year-round community and sports club access to the state-of-the-art facilities that span 5,000m<sup>2</sup> of space.

The School has invested considerably in its sporting infrastructure as part of a wider Sports MasterPlan that has also led to the development of a new athletics track, eight additional tennis courts, two new AstroTurf pitches, and six additional netball courts.

## Inspirational building opens



The new state-of-the-art Activity Centre at St George's College, Surrey, has been completed.

The creation of the new facility marks the 150th Anniversary for the Junior School and College, and replaces a 1980s pre-fabricated building with a new 4,000 sq m, three-storey Activity Centre.

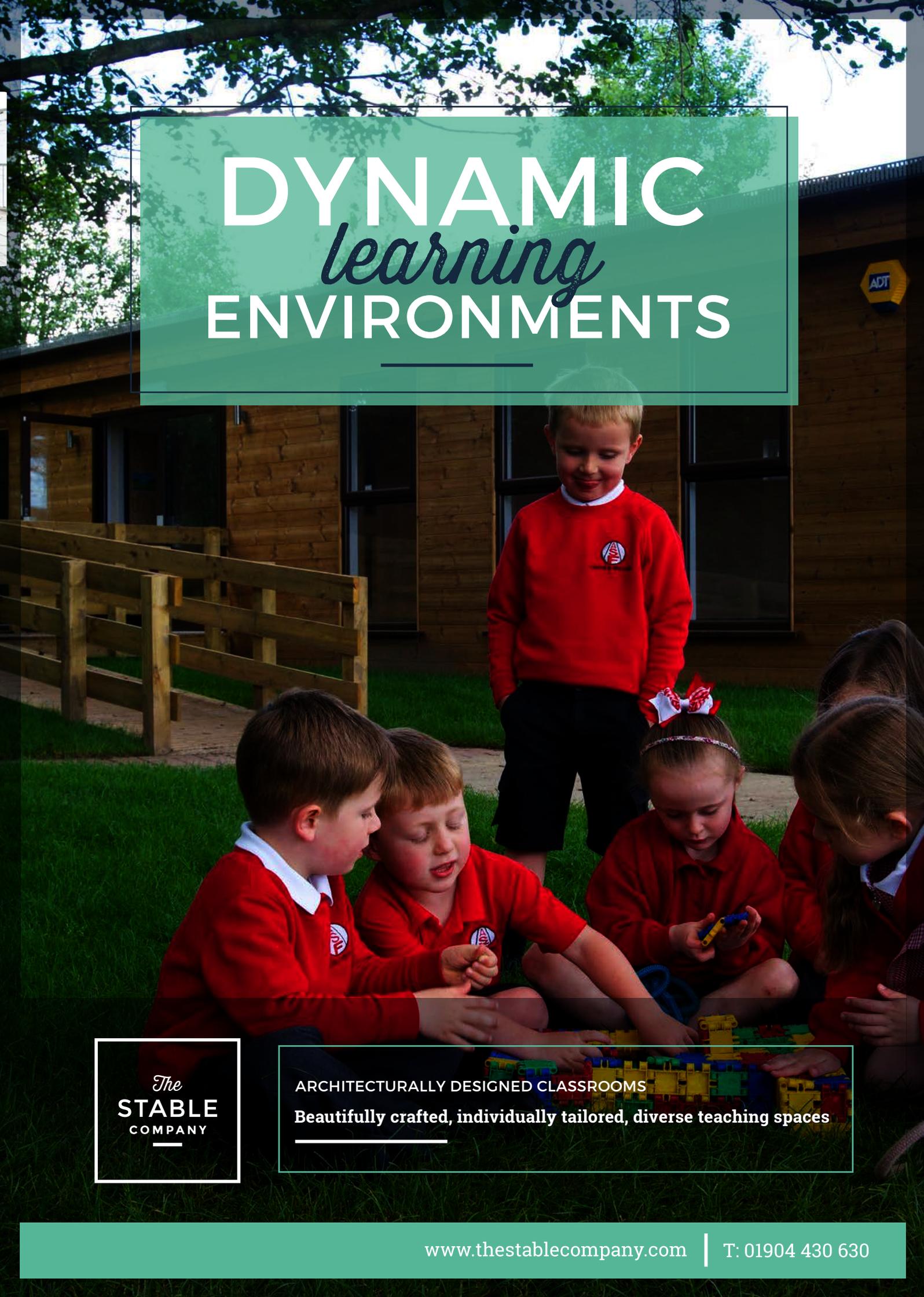
Rachel Owens, Headmistress at St George's College, said: "It was important to have an inspirational building as children really respond to their surroundings. We wanted them to sit up and think 'this is a great space and I can do great things here'."

The project presented a number of challenges. Located on Green Belt land, it was important that the building blend in with the

landscape, while an eight-metre change in level across the site created a disconnection between the main school buildings and the higher-level athletics track.

Architects Scott Brownrigg proposed an Activity Centre that would link the School and the athletics track in an elegant way. Key to achieving this was a processional staircase located at the heart of the building, based on the staircase at Wells Cathedral. This provides a visual connection between all the spaces, to inspire and engage students.

Greg Cole, Bursar at St George's Weybridge, concludes: "Scott Brownrigg understood exactly what we wanted and produced an impressive design that far exceeded our expectations".



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## Eco-conscious pupils take action

Inspired Stockport Grammar Junior School pupils have set up an Eco Committee with the aim of making the whole school more environmentally friendly.

The Eco Committee, which is made up of pupils from across the year groups, started by completing an Environmental Review of the school in order to begin the Eco School journey and provide ideas of areas to focus on. This included topics such as waste, energy and biodiversity.

As well as holding regular meetings, pupils have used their creative flares to design posters about the environment and a selected few were chosen to be printed on banners that are now displayed outside the school.

Earlier in the year, on Clean Air Day, the group set up a stall at the school gates in the morning and by the walkway at lunchtime to

provide information to both pupils and parents about the importance of clean air. They gave stickers to pupils who made a cleaner air pledge.

Stockport Grammar School has already undertaken a number of initiatives to minimise the environmental footprint. These include:

- Installing solar panels on the newer buildings to generate power
- Allotment Club to encourage pupils to grow their own fruit and vegetables
- Sourcing purchases from local suppliers, where available, to minimise transport, particularly for fresh foods
- Using vegeware products in the refectory rather than plastic
- Switching bulbs in the school to efficient LEDs and installing lights that turn themselves off



## 'Big Climate Fightback'

Students at West Buckland School, Devon, from age 3 upwards, have planted 840 'wildlife friendly' trees on the school's campus as part of the 'Big Climate Fightback' launched by the Woodland Trust. The charity is donating free trees to schools and started the hashtag #everytreecounts. The children at West Buckland are hoping that other schools will follow their example.

This is also part of an initiative, started by the school's Ecology and Wildlife Society, which was set up a year ago and which has introduced a number of initiatives to improve the ecology and environment around the campus, something that the students feel very strongly about.

Other initiatives have included planting a wildflower meadow last summer, and removing the use of single use plastic at school.



## Carbon Charter Award

Members of the Royal Hospital School's pupil-led Eco Committee have collected the RHS Gold Carbon Charter Award.

Three RHS pupils gave a presentation on how the school had achieved the Golden Carbon Charter award for a second time and what the school is doing to build on this in the future. The award recognises the school's carbon reduction measures and its work with pupils, staff and the wider community to raise awareness and change behaviours to become more environmentally sustainable.

The Eco Committee has played a large part in educating and encouraging the school to focus on change. Campaigns have included teaching everyone to recycle correctly, conserve heat and electricity in boarding houses as well as a food waste reduction programme. Recently, a campaign illustrating the number of single-use plastic bottles the school got through in a month led to the introduction of stainless-steel refillable bottles for every pupil.

Pictured: Nigel Griffiths, facilities manager with pupils

## Students support Just One Tree



Just One Tree is a non-profit initiative removing CO2 from the atmosphere through reforestation. From Nursery to Sixth Form, students at Burgess Hill Girls, Sussex, showed their support for Just One Tree by raising money to plant trees to combat climate change. The girls wanted to put their own spin on the Just One Tree

day with everyone wearing second-hand, recycled and up-cycled, clothing.

Head Liz Laybourn celebrated the students' protests: "It is heartening to see that tomorrow's women of Burgess Hill Girls are determined to take action, raise awareness and inspire wider behaviour change."

## Fresh approach on sustainability

Pupils at Christ College Brecon have established an initiative to make the school more sustainable in a campaign to reuse, reduce and recycle.

The initiative includes a recycling program, distribution of reusable drinks bottles, and raising awareness of the environmental impacts of the school and how it can become more sustainable.

The pupils have introduced a recycling programme that includes recycling bins in all common rooms, houses at the school and main areas as well as a crisp packet recycling programme with TerraCycle and bins with biodegradable bags for food waste.

Each school house has elected Senior House Representatives who will monitor their house's recycling and ensure all waste is collected.

A points system has also been set up to encourage the whole school to get involved and engage pupils in every house. Every bag of general waste accumulated by each house will be added to a spreadsheet to

monitor the amount of waste going to landfill. At the end of the month the house with the least number of bags of general waste will get points awarded to them.

As well as their recycling program the pupils aim to ensure every pupil at the school has a reusable water bottle provided by Christ College. Pupils from year three to eight were the first to receive reusable bottles with them being rolled out across all year groups and staff at the school.

Curriculum for Life project leader, Liz McLean, who is supporting sixth form pupils with the initiative said: "This is a great initiative and a worthwhile challenge. We are very proud of the Lower Sixth pupils for leading it. They expressed a desire to make the school more sustainable and wanted to make a difference.

"The group agreed on ways to do this and presented these to the school. They are very forward-thinking pupils and are very passionate about ensuring the initiative is implemented."



## Open to Bugs

Maltman's Green School, Buckinghamshire, has installed three huge, new bug hotels on school grounds.

Bugs are having a tough time. With the increased loss of natural habitats, the cracks and crevices that bugs use to shelter, live and breed are being destroyed. A bug hotel offers a great way to recycle a mixture of household/garden materials, and provides all kinds of creepy crawlies with somewhere to live.

This project has been in conjunction with Willmott Dixon who have supplied building

materials and practical expertise for the construction of the bug hotels. All the Maltman's girls have been able to take part – from those in day-care all the way up to Year 6. The girls collected a wide range of natural materials including sheep's wool, bark, twigs, slate, straw, leaves and acorns, to go into their bug hotels – lots for the bugs to explore! The girls enjoyed visiting each bug hotel site to learn more about construction, building materials and biodiversity and enjoyed packing in all their natural materials and watching the hotels grow to two meters tall.



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# Music, Drama & Dance



## West End stars inspire cast

Upper School students from The King Alfred School, North London poured their hearts and souls into a dramatic production of *Les Misérables* this term, culminating in a three-night run in the school's Phoenix Theatre.

In the run up to the show the cast were lucky enough to receive visits from two stars of the West End. A singing masterclass by musical

theatre legend, Maria Friedman was a real treat. The show is sung-through, with no spoken dialog, so her tips for performing musical numbers were a boost for the students. After attending the first night performance she said: "The production was beyond my expectations, great story telling, from the heart, raw and honest, beautifully staged with amazing singing."

They also received a visit from Matt Lucas (see picture) who plays Thénardier in the West End production of *Les Mis*. Matt spent time with the cast, listened in on a rehearsal and gave performance advice ahead of the show. Matt said: "It was so great to meet the students. I was blown away by their talent, passion and commitment."

Lucy Hall, Head of Drama, who directed the production said: "The level of commitment from the cast has been incredible. These are students who are working towards exams and have a lot on their plates but they've thrown themselves into this difficult musical and the passion and talent on the stage spoke for itself. I know I speak for the whole team when I say we couldn't be prouder."

## 'Arabian Nights' weaves its spell

30 pupils from Year 7 to Upper Sixth at The Royal Senior School, Surrey, have just enjoyed success in a 3 night run of 'Arabian Nights'.

This musical introduces Sheherazade, the greatest storyteller of them all. She has a feast of adventures and fantasies

to tell involving genies, villains, heroes and princesses. But she must keep her husband the king entertained with her stories to save her own life and the lives of all the maidens of the land. Will Ali Baba's encounter with the 40 thieves do the trick? Can the story of Aladdin help her live another day? The audience found their answer in a show full of adventure, magic and wonder!

Mr Taylor Gooby, Head of Drama, said: "As ever, I wanted to choose a play that gives as many actors as possible an opportunity to develop a character and make a contribution to the show. *Arabian Nights* contains stories and songs that take us on adventure after adventure and introduces the audience to more characters than any other play I've worked on!"



## Glitz and glamour

Well known fairytale characters were welcomed to St Mary's Senior School, Essex, for 'a tale as old as time' – *Beauty and the Beast*!

For their showcase winter production, students from Years 8-11 and staff from a variety of departments, all worked together to produce this glitz and glamour extravaganza with spectacular

results! Audiences of proud parents, grandparents and siblings along with Lower School pupils and guests from local residential homes were thrilled to see the exploits of Belle, Dame Dolly and the Beast, and happily applauded as the tale unfolded. The show offered a perfect mix of beautiful musical pieces and comedy moments.



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## Sisters to star at World Irish Dance Championships

Two sisters at Bedford Girls' School (BGS) have a spring in their step after qualifying for the World Irish Dance Championships 2020, which take place in Dublin (4th - 12th April 2020).

Ava, 10 and Áine Cunningham, 9, who dance for the Herlihy Burgoine School of Irish Dance in Milton Keynes, qualified for the finals with a winning Ceili team (Under 10) performance at the recent Southern Region of England Finals.

Pictured (l to r): Áine and Ava

Both girls started dancing when they were just four years old and have won a host of regional and national awards.

Mrs Carolyn Howe, Head of the Junior School, said: "BGS and the wider community are extremely proud of Ava and Áine's success. Making it to a prestigious World Championships is the ultimate goal for every competitive dancer and it is even more special that these two sisters get to achieve it together."

## Choir perform at Festival of Light

The Lockers Park Preparatory School in Hertfordshire Chapel Choir sang at Berkhamsted's ever-popular Festival of Light towards the end of last year.



The 20-strong choir, resplendent in choral robes, had been practising hard in the run-up to the event and dazzled audiences with their seasonal set masterminded by the School's Director of Music, Vincent Shaw. This was the fourth year running the local prep school has supported the event.

Headmaster Christopher Wilson comments: "Singing at the Berkhamsted Festival of Light is always a real honour for our pupils who relish the opportunity to perform in front of an audience. The Chapel Choir executed their set brilliantly and set the tone for what is a wonderful local event."

## Challenging drama

Cranleigh School, Surrey, Speech Hall was abuzz with the senior play; the culmination of months of hard work in the form of Mike Bartlett's satirical "what-if" future history play, King Charles III.

Directed by Dominique Chapman, it was a play in equal parts personal and political, as it navigates the stormy waters following the imagined death of Queen Elizabeth II. Her death leaves Charles as acting monarch, and perhaps unsurprisingly, chaos ensues.

This 'neo-Shakespearean' tragedy, written entirely in blank verse, certainly presented a challenge to the students. The swinging rhythms of iambic pentameter

are not easy to master, but the cast tackled it with apparent ease. The dialogue was both clear and engaging.



## In The Heights proves a hit

A cast of 160 Daunstey's School, Wiltshire, pupils, supported by more than 30 technical crew and band members, have delighted sell-out audiences with a challenging, energetic and exciting production of In the Heights.

From the writer of Hamilton and Disney's Moana, Lin-Manuel Miranda's musical tells the story of a vibrant community in New York's Washington Heights neighbourhood.

The show received standing ovations from audiences totalling some 3,000 who watched performances over the five-night run. The cast was made up of pupils from years 7 to 13 and, for some, it was their stage debut.

The School's hi-tech sound and light system brought the musical to life in spectacular fashion, and the band performed the extraordinarily challenging score with great skill, energy and enthusiasm.

Chris Walker, Director of Drama, said; "In The Heights is a show about community. The fast-paced rap, sharp dialogue and belting songs fused with Latin rhythms and culture make for a show that lives long in the memory. We were fortunate to have the wisdom and guidance of Jimmy Norden (who played drums in the original West End cast) and Cleve September (original West End cast member of In The Heights and Hamilton) to help the pupils achieve excellent results.



# Joining forces to stage Les Misérables

Pupils from Bryanston School and The Blandford School have just taken part in one of the most ambitious theatrical productions ever staged by two Dorset schools. The performance of Les Misérables at the Coade Hall at Bryanston saw the combined cast from both schools deliver a performance of professional standard to packed audiences over four consecutive nights.

“This was a challenging but very fulfilling project for everyone involved”, said Duncan Fowler-Watt, Director of Performing Arts at Bryanston. “Organising rehearsals around the very different timetables of both schools was something of a juggling act, but the end result is a credit to everyone involved - from the stage crew and unsung heroes behind the scenes, to the performers who excelled in every way to deliver a truly spectacular show. It has been

wonderful to see how well the students of both schools have worked together in pursuit of the same goal and they should all be very proud of what they have achieved.”

Although Bryanston and The Blandford School have been working together for many years, the performance of Les Misérables was the first combined theatrical production. Both schools are now looking to build on the success of the project and their increasingly close connection. Other recent projects have included a visit to Oxford by sixth formers of both schools and the joint attendance of head pupils to a Leadership Conference at Wellington College. Senior staff at both Bryanston and The Blandford School are currently in discussion regarding a number of new joint initiatives in 2020 covering sport, science, humanities and the arts.



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## A Christmas Carol

The Kingswood School, Bath senior production of 'A Christmas Carol' took place at the end of last term, playing to packed houses every night – including a matinee with over 300 primary school children attending.

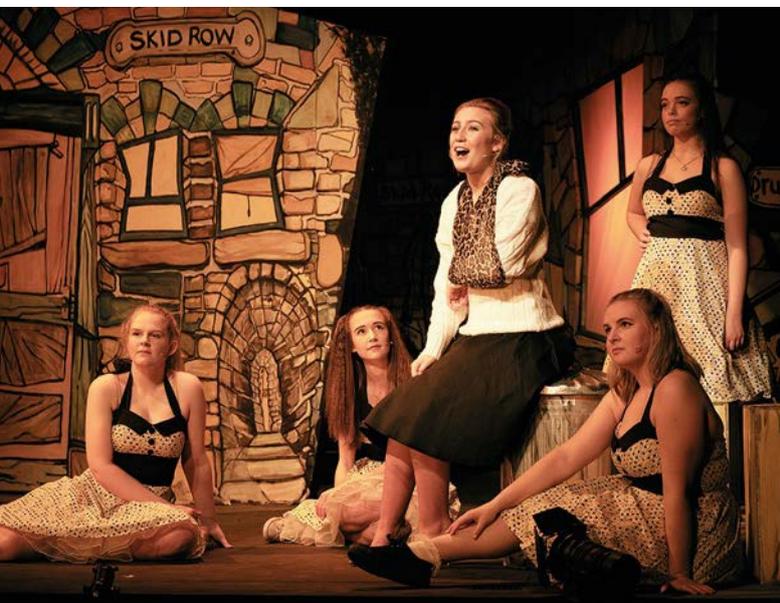
## Little Shop of Horrors

The show must go on – when recent flooding forced King’s High School and Warwick School to cancel a performance of their joint production, Little Shop of Horrors, pupils responded by delivering a rescheduled matinee, which buzzed with all the energy of this colourful and anarchic production. Miss Cat Price, Director of Drama at King’s High School and Mr Mike Perry, Director of Drama at Warwick School both commented: “70 of our talented actors, musicians and technicians brought the charmingly silly Little Shop of Horrors to the Bridge House Theatre. The company worked tirelessly to ensure the tongue-in-cheek narrative of this quirky musical delighted audiences over six shows!

“Double casting the lead roles provided a lovely sense of

supportive competitiveness during rehearsals and led the actors to keep upping their game – the entire company produced awesome performances

Cat Price said “What allowed the performances to flow so smoothly was the incredible set, designed and built by Ian Roberts and painted so skilfully by Wendy Morris – which captured the comic book feel I wanted for this production and enhanced the tremendous efforts of all those on and behind the stage so brilliantly. It was a delight to work with Sam Young (Musical Director) again – his professionalism and talent knows no bounds and the way he guided our students and the band ensured that the performances were of the highest quality. I could not be prouder of what everyone achieved.”



## National Youth Choir Selection

One pupil from The Buchan School and two from King William’s College on the Isle of Man have secured places singing with the National Youth Choirs of Great Britain in 2020.

Having impressed the audition panel, Isaac Kreisky (aged 9), Dominic Sgouraditis (aged 11) and Sebastien Sgouraditis (aged 14) have been selected to attend residential courses in the UK where they will be coached by some of Britain’s leading professionals in vocal training and musicianship. They will also have the opportunity to perform at some of the top concert venues in the country.

Isaac has been singing since the age of four and is currently taught by Sue Mills, Head of Music at The Buchan School. He is a regular member of the Boys’ Choir and The Buchan Chamber Choir and has achieved success in a number of classes at The Guild over the



Pictured: National Brothers Sebastien Sgouraditis and Dominic Sgouraditis have secured places singing with the National Youth Choirs of Great Britain

years, including taking part in the Sheffield Plate competition this year.

Brothers Sebastien and Dominic have been members of St German’s Cathedral Choir for nearly five years and are taught by Ruth Tickle and Dr Litman respectively. They are two extremely talented musicians and between them are also learning the violin, electric guitar and piano. Sebastien is currently studying for his Grade 6 singing, while Dominic will take his Grade 5 exam this term.

Steve Daykin, Director of Music at King William’s College, said: “Choral singing is a particular strength at the Buchan and King William’s College and very much a key part of school life.”



Pictured: National Nine-year-old Isaac Kreisky

## Dire Straits John helps bursary cause

Former Bromsgrove School pupil and founder member of Dire Straits, John Illsley went back to his roots last term for two sell out concerts held at the School's Performing Arts Centre, Routh Hall to support Bromsgrove School Foundation, a registered charity established to promote and advance the School's charitable purposes and philanthropic aims.

The Foundation raises vital funds to provide bursaries for Bromsgrove School and it aims to foster a life-long relationship between the School and its alumni (Old Bromsgrovians), parents and friends.

The musician and front man was interviewed on stage by fellow Old Bromsgrovian and celebrated author Nicholas Evans, who wrote "The Horse Whisperer". John recounted humorous anecdotes of his school days and it is rumoured that his Housemaster at School told him that if he didn't knuckle down and work for his A levels, he would be in dire straits... As a

pupil at Bromsgrove, John joined the School's rock band and it was here that the bass became his instrument of choice. He was Lance Corporal in the CCF and a House Monitor in his final year. Sport figured significantly in John's school career as well - he was on the team for water polo, athletics and gained his rugby colours whilst playing for the 1st XV. He was awarded the 'Green-jacket cup' in 1964, a year after he joined the School.

Nicholas Evans left Bromsgrove School to study law at Oxford University, graduating with first class honours. He then worked as a journalist for three years on the Evening Chronicle in Newcastle-upon-Tyne before moving into television and producing films about US politics and the Middle-East for a weekly current affairs programme called Weekend World. Nicholas wrote and produced a number of films for television and the cinema. In 1993, he met a blacksmith in the far South-

West of England who told him about people who have the gift of healing traumatized horses. Nicholas started work on what was to be his first novel. Published in the autumn of 1995, *The Horse Whisperer* has now sold around fifteen million copies worldwide. It has been the number one bestseller in about 20 countries and has been translated into 36 languages. Since then, Nicholas has written four more novels: *The Loop*, *The Smoke Jumper*, *The Divide* and his latest, *The Brave*.

The first set from John and the band didn't disappoint, with many great classics from Dire Straits' repertoire, including *Brothers in Arms*, *Wild West End*, *Money for Nothing*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Sultans of Swing*.

The second half opened with a further interview by former Dire Straits Manager Paul Cummins who led the audience on a journey of the band's life from their humble beginnings in South London, to playing all over the world to millions of fans.



John Illsley (right) with head Peter Clague

## Nell Gwynn heads to Solihull School

The joyful and riotous comedy *Nell Gwynn* brought laughs aplenty when performed by Solihull School pupils over three nights last month (December).

It is set in London in 1660, when King Charles II exploded onto the scene with a love of all things loud, extravagant and sexy, and at Drury Lane, a young Nell is causing stirrings amongst the theatregoers.

Penned by Olivier Award-winning British playwright, theatre director and screenwriter Jessica Swale, *Nell Gwynn* charts the rise of an unlikely heroine, from her roots in Coal Yard Alley to her success as Britain's most celebrated actress and her hard-won place in the heart of the king.

But at a time when women are considered second-class citizens, can Nell's charm and spirit protect her from the dangers of the court?

Solihull's head of drama, James Hammond, said: "Featuring 20 actors from the upper fifth to the lower sixth, a live band and a radically configured Bushell Hall auditorium, this really was a production not to be missed.

"*Nell Gwynn* has been described as a love letter to theatre itself and the cheerful chaos involved in putting on a play. This was a show filled with fun, joy and huge laughs for the audience."



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## Gala Night for Grand Opening

The Royal Grammar School Worcester held a special Gala Night performance of *Les Misérables* to mark the opening of their new Performing Arts Centre.

The Performing Arts Centre includes a fully operational theatre, two Drama studios, facilities for the actors, a spacious foyer area and state-of-the-art lighting and sound facilities. There is even a green screen for filming. The high quality of the facilities in the Centre was made possible by donations from members of the School community who were able to sponsor seats in the theatre.

The Gala Night was a special event with local dignitaries, parents, alumni, friends and former pupils attending a black-tie pre-show dinner. The Grand Opening was performed by Mrs Rosemary Ham, Chair of Governors when the plans for the Performing Arts Centre were introduced. Mrs Ham is herself a former English and Drama teacher and Head of Department from The Alice Ottley School which merged with RGS Worcester in 2007. She spoke of the importance

of the Creative and Performing Arts for children's development before cutting a ribbon and declaring the Centre open.

The guests then enjoyed a performance of this year's musical and were extremely impressed by the quality of the acting, singing, dancing and music making, all performed by the pupils. A plaque to mark the occasion was unveiled while the Headmaster, John Pitt, thanked everyone who had made the creation of the Performing Arts Centre possible.

The School's Drama pupils gave six performances of the musical in the space of five days. This included a matinée performance which was delivered to an audience of local Primary School and Prep School pupils. After the performance the student actors discussed the play with the children and answered their questions. The Performing Arts Centre will be used for further Drama productions throughout the year, as well as for performances, presentations, conferences and dance events for the community.



## Platinum accolade

Bolton School's Joint Concert Band was recently invited to perform at the National Concert Band Festival (NCBF) heats, held at Newman RC College in Oldham. The young musicians and their conductor Miss Hannah Sherry took this opportunity to play in front of experienced adjudicators and receive valuable feedback.

The group, which is made up of Senior School and Sixth Form pupils from both the Boys' and Girls' Divisions of Bolton School, played 'Into the Clouds', 'How to Train your Dragon' and 'Klezmer Karnival' at the event. They

impressed the adjudicators with all three pieces.

Following the performance, the Band was presented with a Platinum Award: the highest possible accolade. The Platinum Award also comes with an automatic invitation to perform at the Nationals in 2020, which will be held at RNCM in April.

The Music staff in both Divisions are delighted with the Joint Concert Band's achievement, and the young musicians involved are now looking forward to preparing for both the Nationals and the host of school music events throughout the rest of the year.

## Hitting the music charts

A pupil from Hampshire has seen her lyrics hit the UK music charts after working with international artist, Tally Koren, on her new song, 'I am Peace'.

12-year-old Arwen Kitson, who attends the Ringwood Waldorf school situated on the Dorset and Hampshire border, produced a poem as part of a national competition for children aged 7 to 11. Israeli-born Tally was so inspired by the profound words that she used them as part of her latest single.

Tally Koren, who was named best singer-songwriter at the London Fringe Awards in 2011, is also a founding member of the competition Arwen entered and was immediately drawn to her poetic talent. After contacting Arwen's mother, Tally arranged

for Arwen and members of the school's 'Peace Angels' girls' choir to help record her new single.

On working with Arwen and the choir, Tally said: "The recording was such a lovely experience and the girls were in-tune and confident. The whole experience was effortless and with real joy."

Fran Russell, Executive Director at the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship, added: "The journey from winning a poetry competition to having the school choir feature on a new single has been an incredible one for the whole school – but especially Arwen and the choir.

To listen to 'I am Peace', visit iTunes: [music.apple.com/gb/album/i-am-peace-feat-peace-angels-girls-choir-single](https://music.apple.com/gb/album/i-am-peace-feat-peace-angels-girls-choir-single)



# Mathsteasers: A welcome challenge for advanced learners

Mathsteasers are a series of booklets that encourage deep thinking and productive struggle in advanced learners. Created for Years 4–8, Mathsteasers questions follow the 2014 English national curriculum, so they easily fit into your practice as extension material.

Identifying struggling learners and supporting them is an important part of managing your classroom. But what about advanced learners? Just like struggling learners, it's essential to give advanced learners the support they need.

In most classrooms, children who excel at maths are praised and bumped ahead in the curriculum. This is a way of providing them with a greater challenge and keeping them interested. However, these well-intentioned classroom strategies can cause trouble in the future.

## The Problem with Praise

When we tell advanced learners things like “you’re so talented”, and “you did that so quickly” we may actually be doing more harm than good. Advanced learners who’ve never had to struggle to overcome mathematical challenges and are accustomed to praise, start to believe that not struggling at maths is a fundamental part of who they are. So, when they inevitably run into trouble further down the road, it can be a devastating blow to their self-image.

This isn't to say praise is out of the assessment picture, but we need to praise wisely by placing value on effort and perseverance rather than “smarts” or success. Praising tenacity and resilience goes a long way. When pupils are praised on their hard work, they gain a sense of optimism and an awareness that they can learn and grow as they meet new challenges.

## Ready to take your advanced learners further?

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## Embracing Struggle

Maths – No Problem! developed the Mathsteasers series as a classroom resource to address this problem. These booklets of challenging problems make it easier to focus on a pupil's effort and on the process they engage in rather than their ability to achieve.

By taking the emphasis away from simply getting the right answer, Mathsteasers help pupils embrace struggle and develop what Stanford psychologist Carol Dweck calls a ‘growth mindset’.

According to Dweck, children who have a growth mindset see themselves as being able to grow and develop through learning, rather than running up against their natural limitations. They've learned that intelligence isn't fixed. It's built through hard work, deep focus and – most importantly – resilience. Children who embrace a growth mindset see talent as only a starting point, and aren't afraid to push themselves further than they think they're capable of.

When pupils shift their attitudes towards learning, they gain more confidence, start to take risks and reap bigger educational rewards.

## Celebrate Failure

An essential part of this is letting pupils know that it's okay to fail. Children should see failing as a positive opportunity and learn that the real failure is giving up, or not trying at all. Mathsteasers are designed to be extra challenging. They're about giving pupils new walls to hit so that their attitudes toward struggle and failure become positive.

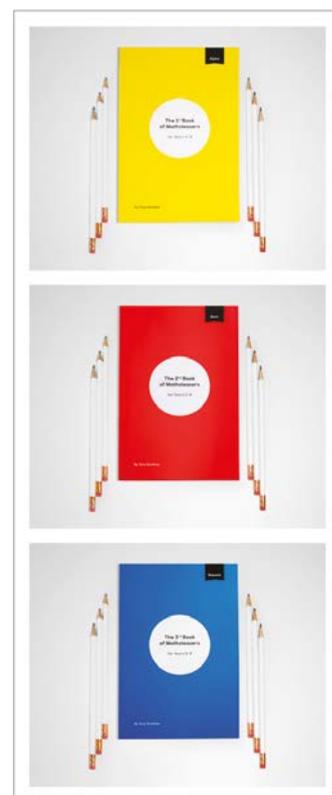
Seeing struggle in a positive light encourages children to go as far as they can with a maths problem, and explain their thinking. It shows them that failing isn't the end of the world, because they have the opportunity to try again, and go further next time.

Mathsteasers are full of challenging questions and are designed to make learners struggle.

But solving the problem is only a small, less important part of it. Teaching with Mathsteasers helps pupils learn to persevere and stretches their conceptual abilities so they can grow as learners. They learn that struggling is all part of the process, it's a productive exercise they can build on lesson after lesson.

## Tools for Success

Perseverance can make or break a pupil's self confidence and even advanced learners need to hone this essential skill. By continuing to challenge pupils you give them the tools to succeed. It may seem counterintuitive, but letting advanced learners struggle and praising them for their tenacity rather than their achievement will ensure they go beyond even their own expectations.



# School staff 'suffer the passive smoking effect' of public sector austerity

During November 2019, over 2,000 members took part in the National Education Union's 2019 independent sector pay & conditions survey. And despite increased pay awards in the state sector, pay austerity for private school staff continues unabated, writes John Richardson, National Official independent sector, National Education Union...

In September 2019, just 3% of independent sector teacher respondents stated that they received a cost of living increase that matched, or bettered, the 2.75% state-maintained teacher award recommended by the School Teachers' Review Body. With just 18% of support staff matching or bettering the lower 2% award received by state sector colleagues. Worse, 28% independent sector teachers and 23% of support staff reported that they received no cost-of-living increase whatsoever.

Many teachers working in the sector have further woe, as employers consider leaving the Teachers' Pension Scheme, due to increased employer contributions. Some 35% of respondents reported that their employer was consulting staff on proposals to leave the Teachers' Pension Scheme.

While pay fails to keep pace with inflation, workload is still on the rise. More than half (60%) of teachers said that it had increased since last year. More than two-thirds (67%) of teacher respondents stated that they worked two or more evenings every week during term time.

And more than a third (34%) reported working every weekend.

And many teachers do not get a proper lunch break to recuperate. Only a third (33%) received the NEU recommended minimum of a 40-minute lunch break; with shockingly more than a quarter (26%) not receiving the statutory minimum of an uninterrupted daily break of 20 minutes.

Many support staff have suffered a double-whammy, with an increasing trend amongst employers towards paying them only during term-time, while at the same time expected to work unpaid hours.

More than half of all support staff respondents (51%) are paid for working term-time only, meaning take-home pay over the year is substantially reduced. This is a significant deterioration from the figure of 39% in the 2018 NEU survey.

Further, more than two-thirds of respondents (71%) said that the demands of the job required them to regularly work extra hours, with just over half (52%) doing so without any remuneration.

Commenting on the survey results, Dr Mary Bousted, Joint General Secretary of the National Education Union, said:

*For the past ten years, staff working in the independent sector have suffered the passive smoking effect of public sector austerity, with pay awards significantly below inflation.*

*Despite increased pay awards in the state sector for the past two years, the majority of independent sector employers have failed to keep pace.*

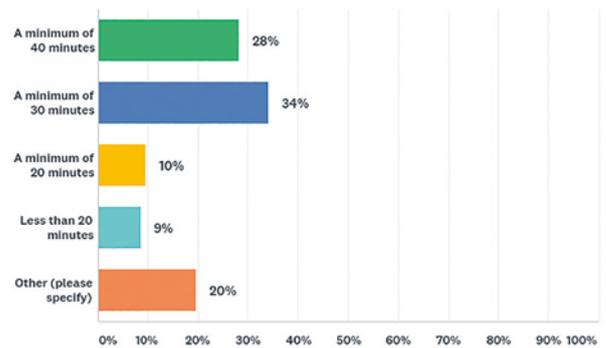
*To add insult to injury, pay and remuneration for staff working in the independent sector is being undermined in other ways.*

*Support staff have witnessed the slow reduction of their paid hours, so that for many term-time-only work is becoming the norm.*

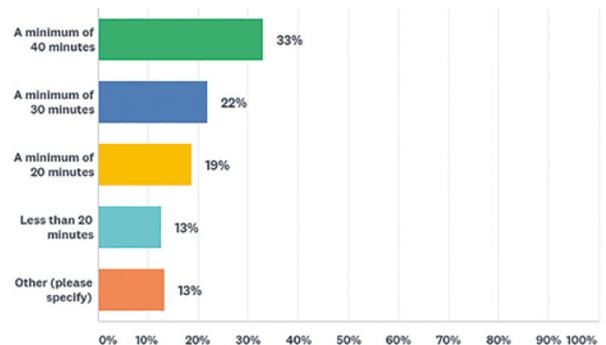
*Many teachers in the sector are faced with a massive hit to their pensions by increasing number of employers proposing to leave the Teachers' Pension scheme.*

*Schools are people businesses. Employers would be well advised to put their staff first.*

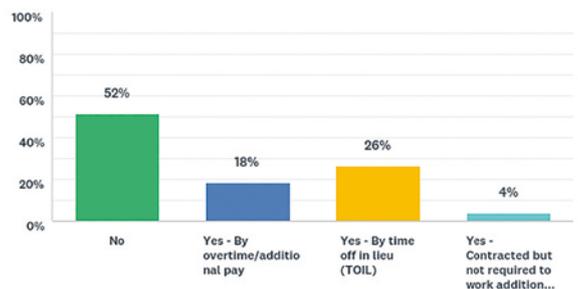
Support staff breaks



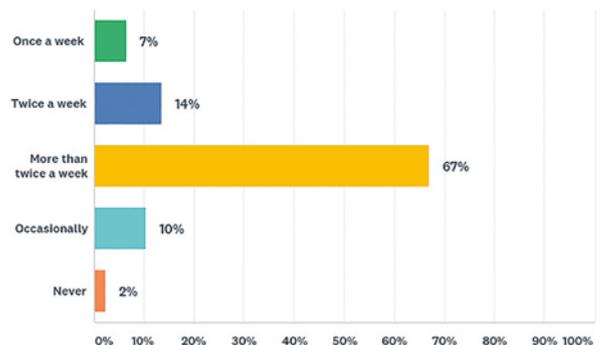
Teachers' breaks



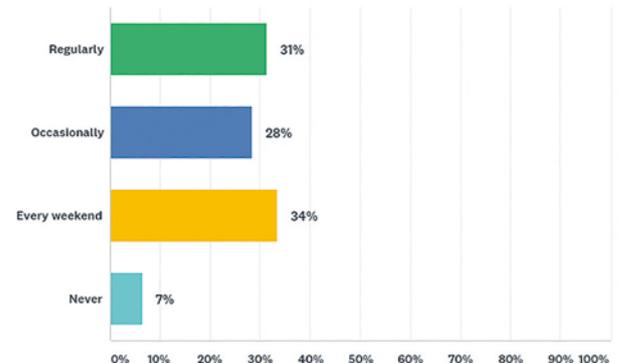
Support staff unpaid overtime



Teachers working evenings



Teachers working weekends





## National success

The artwork of Rossall School, Lancashire, students, Charlie Fern and Andy Zhao has been selected for exhibitions in prestigious London Art Galleries. These include The Royal Overseas League and the RBA's (Royal Society of British Artists) annual show at the Mall Galleries in London.

The Arts Society, Fylde, submitted Old Rossallian, Charlie Fern's clay

apples and A Level student, Andy Zhao's fisherman drawing for consideration for this exhibition. Thousands of pieces of the very best artwork, from schools and colleges across the country were put forward; hundreds of pieces were shortlisted and only 20 were invited to exhibit.

Charlie's work will be displayed alongside that of professional artists and he will be entitled to be called 'RBA Scholar' for the duration of the exhibition. Both pieces of work will also be on show at the Heritage Centre in Lytham for all to see, later in the school year.

Head of Art and Design at Rossall School, Miss Laura Heap congratulated the students on their achievement: "This is a terrific accolade for Charlie and Andy. These are the first pieces Rossall School has had selected for this national, prestigious accolade and we are looking forward to seeing the pieces on display."



## Young artists shine

Three pupils from Ipswich High School, Suffolk, were picked out from more than 150 entries from 11 schools in the annual Anna Airy Award Exhibition.

Staged by the Ipswich Art Society and hosted by the University of Suffolk, Ipswich High School students Louise Batchelor, Isabelle Tucker and Ellie Benfield won three of the four prizes available.

Desmond Brett, senior lecturer in fine art at Norwich University of the Arts, who was one of the judges, said: "The design work was of an excellent standard reflecting the good work being done, especially at Ipswich High School, which is clearly led by material handling and knowledge of design technology processes.

"It was encouraging to see some work that considered other subjects outside the self-image or portrait which looked to political events nationally and globally, and more pan-cultural topics and representation."

The overall Anna Airy Award was presented to Louise Batchelor with her work, 'The Beauty in What is Left Behind'. The judging panel said her "three paintings dealt with a refreshingly unromantic subject of the overlooked spaces behind shops



or houses that are dark, dank and abject".

Meanwhile, Isabelle Tucker, pictured, picked up the Ipswich Art Society Award for excellence in any media for 'Water Butt Bench'.

Judge Dr Susan Barnet, course leader in fine art at the University of Suffolk, said: "Isabelle Tucker's Water Butt Bench was a conceptually playful engagement with the serious subject of water ecology.

"The ambition of this functional sculpture was skilfully realised."

The Key Arts Award for innovation was awarded to Ellie Benfield whose work 'Camouflage Furniture' was described as "a neat concept of making ply furniture that can also be stacked into wall apertures".

## Work shortlisted

Exeter School, Devon, Lower Sixth Former Eleanor Clark's short story, *Insula*, made it to the final five in The BBC Young Writers' Award 2019.

Eleanor attended the award ceremony where she met BBC Radio One's Katie Thistleton and author Kiran Millwood Hargrave of *The Girl of Ink and Stars* - both of whom were judges.

She also attended a workshop on Virginia Woolf delivered by the University of Cambridge and was able to learn more about studying English Literature at university.

Eleanor is interested in pursuing this when she leaves Exeter School and her long-term ambition is to write professionally in some capacity or other.

Eleanor's story is an evocative coming of age story about a young woman who is making a journey away from the safety of the island community where she grew up. It can be listened to online:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/2Cw8SJ3SH3hxMqD2dbmlrdr/the-bbc-young-writers-award-2019-winner-announced>



# Students should reflect on the current state of the world – but also be positive about their futures



*"Last term's GSA Head's Conference didn't disappoint; it never does", says Headmistress of Alderley Edge School for Girls Helen Jeys...*

As always, it provides an opportunity to see old friends and colleagues but also to meet a new generation of GSA Heads; this is invaluable time – and its importance can never be underestimated. However, the conference is about more, even, than this. The carefully considered and stimulating programme always leaves me inspired and reinvigorated to return to my own school with new messages, new areas to consider as well as the knowledge that I am not on my own.

Sue Hincks has been an outstanding President this year and her opening speech left me with much to think about and with several topics to discuss with my own pupils. She asked us to consider what it was about our current world that would shock future generations. What will leave future generations in a state of disbelief about our actions or inactions in our own, current world? We are aware of the damage we are doing to the world in terms of the loss of biodiversity and our apparent disregard for the natural world, but what about the time we do or do not share with our family, increasing levels of debt and the fact that consumers spend more on cosmetics than would be needed to eliminate world hunger? What about the impact of the internet on our abilities to assimilate or

process information and – as was described in a later session – how can we help our young adults to recognise true from 'fake news'? These were sobering questions to consider throughout the conference but are questions on which I plan to encourage my own students to reflect.

These questions further reminded us all at conference about our responsibility as Heads to ensure that we are teaching those key characteristics that will enable our pupils to make a real difference in the world; for them to appreciate compassion and altruism as qualities to which to aspire. Indeed, we were reminded that it is education that can make real differences in our world. This message was reiterated by the inspirational Tracy Edwards who was motivated to become a pioneer in her own context of sailing by asking herself the question, 'why are you being a bystander in your own life?' Her own motivation to change the stereotype regarding female sailors and then to launch 'The Maiden Factor' – which unlocks education for girls across the world – reminds us all of the importance of education in changing young minds, in unlocking potential and in improving the world around us.

It was not surprising, then, that Greta Thunberg was declared the GSA 'Woman of the Year' and this

announcement reflects, certainly from my perspective, how more engaged this generation is with the world around them than when I was a teenager. Ensuring that the message of inspiring young people to be engaged with their surroundings, their community and their world is one that is important to all of us as Heads and one that we should continue to hold dear. It was also, from my perspective, a key message of the conference.

We are, now, at the other side of the election and although we might think that our immediate financial pressures are reduced, we still have to continually weigh up issues that are raised by the increased contributions relating to TPS and the concerns about passing on too many of our costs to our parents. The need to future proof our schools and various options to enable us to do so, were outlined by David Woodgate (Chief Executive of ISBA). He reminded us of the importance of challenging our 'sacred cows'; the changes to TPS are a catalyst for change in our own schools and we have to face the financial threats directly. Do we, in Woodgate's words, have to 'think the unthinkable' and consider mergers, acquisitions and other areas relating to staff consolidations to ensure that our books remain buoyant? Indeed, my strategy day with

Governors in January, will focus on challenging our own assumptions with the aim of keeping my current school financially healthy for the future. What is reassuring, nevertheless, is that – as Richard Harman (Chief Executive of AGBIS) reminded us – ISC census numbers reflect an increase in our numbers and our schools provide a 'compelling offer' to pupils and parents. As we were later reminded, scholarship is at the heart of what we provide. We have to believe in our school and our team and if we can't, then we need to change. We need to believe in the 'transforming power of education' and 'the difference we are making' as educators.

As Heads, we have the ability – with our teams – to encourage our students to reflect on the current state of the world but also for them to be positive about their futures. Chris Willmore, Professor of Sustainability and Law at the University of Bristol, encouraged us to empower our students, to enable them to unleash their creativity so that they can make a positive and real difference to their futures and to the world. So, questions were posed but solutions were suggested too; we have the answers in the pupils we teach. What an inspiring message with which to return to GSA schools!



Truro School, Cornwall, have announced the appointment of Andrew Johnson as Head of Truro School from September 2020.

Andrew, known as Andy, joins Truro School from St Dunstan's College, London. He has been Deputy Head (Academic) there since 2015. Prior to that he was the founding Deputy Head of the London Academy of Excellence, a Sixth Form Free School in Newham, east London. He joined

LAE from Westminster School, where he had worked for eleven years, including as a Housemaster. His teaching career began in Hertfordshire, in Berkhamsted.

Andy was born in Pontypool and grew up in London. He was educated at Westminster School, and took a degree in History at Downing College, Cambridge University, before completing his PGCE in Leeds. History (and the teaching of it) remain a passion, alongside art, music, sport, charitable engagement, travel, and the outdoors.



The Governors at Alderley Edge School for Girls have announced that Mrs Nicola Smillie will be taking up the post of Headmistress at the School in September 2020. Nicola will be the fourth Head to lead the School in its 21-year history since the amalgamation of St Hilary's and Mount Carmel schools in 1999.

Nicola is a Hispanic Studies and French graduate and is currently Headmistress of Saint Martin's

School in Solihull. Nicola is a passionate supporter of girls' education and feels that her philosophy of education is well matched to the ethos at Alderley Edge School for Girls, believing that all girls should be inspired to achieve high academic standards while developing their confidence and self-esteem through proactive and supportive pastoral care. She is an ISI inspector and has enjoyed extensive experience in GSA schools, including Westholme School, Blackburn, and firmly believes that girls' schools are those in which girls excel.



Lisa McDonald will take over as Head of the Edge Grove School, Hertfordshire, following the

departure of Ben Evans to Windlesham School, Sussex, next September.

She is currently Head at The British International School in New York (a sister school to Abercorn School, London) which educates over 300 pupils from the ages of three to sixteen. It teaches the English National Curriculum within the framework of the International Baccalaureate.

Born in Glasgow, Lisa previously gained a Law Degree from Aberdeen University and worked for a top legal firm in Jersey. Pursuing a change in career direction and following a long-term passion to teach, Lisa was awarded a PGCE at Cambridge University and worked in Jersey as a Junior School teacher before rising to the position of Head of Early Years with supplementary senior roles within the State of Jersey. She then moved on to become Assistant Head at The British International School in New York before being appointed the role of Deputy Head of the whole school.



The Council of Governors of The Abbey School in Reading, Berkshire has announced the appointment of Mr William le Fleming as the next Executive Head of the School. He succeeds Mrs Rachel Dent who is to become the new Head of Harrow School in Beijing, China.

Mr le Fleming was educated at Eton and Clare College, Cambridge. He has worked as a journalist, an author and at

Historic Royal Palaces. He was a teacher and then Undermaster at St Paul's School in London before moving to St Paul's Girls School in 2014 to become Deputy Head and Director of the Senior School. His responsibilities there included supporting an ethos of girls' empowerment throughout the curriculum, particularly with regard to enterprise, career and university opportunities. He joins from his role as Executive Head at Fulham School, London. Mr le Fleming is married and has a young daughter.

## Heads Hunted

### Among the upcoming head and principal appointments:

Bruton School for Girls	Somerset
Dover College	Kent
Great Ballard School	Sussex
Northampton High School	Northamptonshire
Ripley Court School	Surrey
St. Joseph's College Preparatory School	Berkshire
Tormead School	Surrey

If you would like mention made of your upcoming head or principal appointment for which applications are sought please let us know – there is no charge for a listing.

News items, contributions, comments and suggestions are always welcomed by the editor.

Please email to:

[mail@independentschoolsmagazine.co.uk](mailto:mail@independentschoolsmagazine.co.uk)



The Chairman and Board of Governors of Bedford Girls' School (BGS) have announced the appointment of Mrs Gemma Gibson as Headmistress from September 2020, when she will succeed Miss Jo MacKenzie.

Mrs Gibson has a wealth of experience in school leadership gained during an international teaching career. She will join Bedford Girls' School from Harrow Hong Kong where

she is currently Deputy Head (Academic). Prior to this, she served as Assistant Head (Teaching and Learning), at North London Collegiate School in South Korea. She was also on the Senior Leadership Teams at both Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School and St Ignatius College, London. Mrs Gibson initially qualified as a solicitor and practised for three years before moving into teaching.

Miss Jo Mackenzie leaves BGS after 10 years as Headmistress to pursue other interests.

## New head at your school?

Please let us have a brief bio and image for inclusion in a future issue. There is no charge.

We'll add them to our complimentary-copy mailing list too.



# NEU Independent Sector Conference 2019

Picture courtesy Rehan Jamil

The timing of the recent NEU annual Independent Schools Conference, coming two days after the publication of the Labour party manifesto and three weeks before the General Election, ensured that there was lively debate, writes John Richardson, National Official independent sector, National Education Union...

In November, 100 NEU independent school reps and active members convened at DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel - Tower of London, to discuss the issues facing them.

Opening the conference, Robin Bevan, NEU President-elect 2020/21, anchored the current political swirl with his personal journey. An early job in an independent boarding school resulted in redundancy after the school folded a year after he joined. His journey took him to working in an academy, to Headship. He noted the inherent uncertainty of working in a commercial concern and the importance of cutting through the noise. Robin emphasised the need for all members, whatever sector, whatever role, to be in an active and effective trade union.

Joint General Secretary Mary Boustead gave the morning keynote speech. Addressing the political concerns, Mary made clear that although the NEU is unaffiliated to any political party, as the largest education union in the UK, it has significant influence. She reassured members that the union has been forcefully advancing their interests. She explained that the politics of the independent sector are sensitive and using a megaphone can cause more damage than good. Wielding influence is often effectively done behind closed doors.

Whatever the outcome of the General Election, she cautioned, the debate on independent schools' charitable status and tax concessions is not going to go away, as it is not confined to the Labour Party. There are notable voices in the Conservatives calling for similar. Scotland is to remove Business Rate Relief from independent schools north of the border from 2020. Wales is consulting to do the same.

Mary noted that not all independent schools are wealthy. Some could face closure if tax concessions are removed. Whatever the threat, she said that the NEU will robustly protect members' jobs.

From speculation, to real and present threats, Mary turned her attention to members' pensions. She commended the many NEU members who have successfully persuaded their employer not to withdraw from the TPS. For some reasoned argument has prevailed but unfortunately, many other members have been forced to undertake ballots for industrial action before their employer has seen sense. Amongst others present on the day, she congratulated reps from St. Bede's School, Sussex and St. Edwards, Gloucestershire.

Mary joked that perhaps St. Edward was the patron saint of independent school trade union

members, as she also paid tribute to our members at another St Edward's, this time in Oxford, who 'have taken the principled and courageous decision to strike in defence of their pension'.

Members commended Mary's speech as inspirational, honest, clear.

Helen Porter, National Executive, independent sector lead, gave an overview of the democratic changes in the union. She exhorted members to play their part in their Districts and local independent sector networks being promoted by National Council members.

Helen also revealed the headlines of the authoritative NEU Independent Sector Pay and Conditions Survey 2019.

The morning session ended with two discussion groups.

I led a discussion on the Teachers' Pensions Scheme – protecting your pension.

Members were heartened by reps recounting members' successful campaigns in their schools. Afterwards, feedback included: A call to action... Interesting comments from people at various stages of consultation ....Feel more informed and empowered.

Peter-Marsh Jenks, NEU Regional Official, led the second discussion group on Contract and contractual changes. Feedback included:

Exceptionally knowledgeable speaker with plenty of opportunities to ask questions.

In the afternoon keynote session 'Greening your School', Karen Gracie-Langrick, Deputy Head, Leighton Park School, Reading, shared the lived experience of what worked and what didn't in her school. The verdict was: Thought-provoking and insightful... I thoroughly applaud what Karen and her school have done.

This year there were two new democratic sessions. Under the new union's rules, Section Conferences can now submit a motion to NEU Annual Conference the following year and nominate six delegates. This is in addition to doing the usual route for all members, via democratic structures, namely the local Branch and District.

The last word, almost,... goes to the member whose feedback punctured any hubris we might have had... 'None of the talks interrupted fruitful conversations I was having with other members!'

Lastly, to end on one portent finding of the 2019 NEU independent sector survey. Does your school have an environmental and/or sustainability policy? More than half of respondents replied 'No'.

A New Year's resolution for your school!?

# The benefits of kindness

Children's mental health and well-being is high on the public agenda, and with good reason. At least one in eight children and young people have a diagnosable mental health condition, with over half of these starting before the age of 14. Anxiety and depression are on the rise, and we are still in the early stages of even beginning to understand how new aspects of childhood such as screen addiction (of both parents and children), social media and cyber-bullying will impact on children's emotional health. Providing children with the tools to take control of their own mental health and well-being at a young age is clearly important. But how do we do this? It may sound a little simplistic, but kindness could help, suggests Jaime Thurston...

Kindness is often associated with helping others, but the benefits it brings to our own physical and mental health are life-changing. The science of kindness is well-documented. Like most medical antidepressants, kindness stimulates the production of the feel-good chemical serotonin. It also produces oxytocin (which in turn lowers blood pressure and helps to protect our hearts), it helps to relieve anxiety and depression and it slows ageing... to put it simply, kindness makes us healthier and happier.

So at a time when there is a lot of concern around mental health,

kindness is a powerful way to help children not only improve their own well-being, but to do so in a way that also helps others.

In 2013, I founded a charity called 52 Lives. Every week, we help to change someone's life and spread kindness, with the help of almost 100,000 supporters. A few years ago, I was invited to speak at my children's school about what we do, and the response from the children was incredible. It inspired me to launch a 'School of Kindness' which now runs free Kindness Workshops in primary schools all over the country.

In our Kindness Workshops, we teach children what it means to be kind, why it's important, what changes it triggers in our minds and bodies, and what impact it has on the world. We then put that theory into action by sharing a real-life story of a child in need of kindness and work with the children to come up with ways to help that child.

The children at the Paragon School in Bath, for example, worked with us to help a young boy called Toby. Shortly after the death of both his mother and step-mother, Toby was the victim of a vicious attack by a group of boys, which was also filmed and posted on social media. Toby was struggling. In one of our Kindness Workshops, the children at Paragon made Toby cards, wrote him letters and filmed a video for him. And the impact it had on Toby was incredible.

We find that putting the theory in action in this way empowers children by helping them to realise that the little choices they make every day have the power to change people's lives – while also improving their own physical and mental health at the same time.

Our workshops have been promoted in the press as 'anti-bullying' and,

[www.schoolofkindness.org](http://www.schoolofkindness.org) [www.52-lives.org](http://www.52-lives.org)



Jaime Thurston

indeed, some of the children we help have been bullied, but that is not where our focus lies. The absence of bullying is not enough. Kindness is what we should be aiming for.

We have received various awards for our work, and also gained the support of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, so demand for our workshops has been strong. To meet the demand, the School of Kindness has recently expanded to reach schools we are unable to visit. We are developing video lesson plans and have also launched 2 new initiatives to offer schools a variety of ways to get involved. Our new Kindness Fund provides small grants for children with amazing ideas to spread kindness in their school or community, and another new initiative 'Pick a Project' brings together schools in need of help, with schools who want to help.

We work with schools in a variety of ways, but everything we do is based on one simple premise – that 'kind' is the most important thing a person can be.

*"The Paragon's chosen charity in 2018-19 was 52 Lives and Jaime and Greig won the hearts of staff and children with their uplifting assemblies and support. Greig has run a couple of Kindness workshops with us and each time, a sense of wellbeing and happiness pervades the school - it is empowering for children to learn that little differences can make so much impact and I could say with confidence that we now have a school of Kindness ambassadors."*

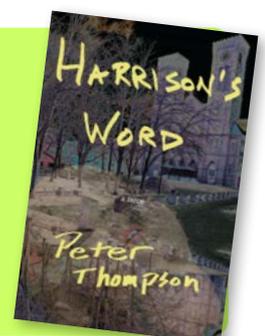
Andrew Harvey, Headmaster, The Paragon School, Bath

*"It is amazing how powerful a single act of kindness can be. The workshop by Greig and Jaime, sharing the story about a child less fortunate than our pupils, sparked huge acts of kindness from the children, not only towards the child, but to each other in school. It had a profound effect on the attitudes of all our children. It inspired us to have our own 'Kindness Tree' in school which promotes positive attitudes towards one another. All of this was inspired by the '52 Lives' workshop and schools should consider this, as it had such a dramatic effect on our children."*

Guy Shore, Head Teacher, Waverley School & Day Nursery, Berkshire

Boarding school drama: a racy and biting funny tale of infatuation and a young teacher's struggles at a private school – HARRISON'S WORD. This is a sequel to the acclaimed Winter Light. By Peter Thompson, from Diálogos Books.

[www.dialogosbooks.com](http://www.dialogosbooks.com)





# CCFs develop pupils' character and sense of worth

In its 450th year, Devin Cassidy, Headmaster and Vice Principal of Bury Grammar School reflects on the importance of the CCF which he says is at the heart of the school, encourages risk taking, develops self-discipline and resilience and inculcates a sense of service to others, self-worth and purpose...

Unusually for a day school, the CCF seems to fully encompass the values of a Bury Grammar School education. Situated 10 miles north of Manchester, between Rochdale and Bolton at the foot of the Pennines, Bury is a very special town and not just for its world famous market! Our parents are decent, hardworking and really value the importance of education and an independent education at that.

Bury Grammar School was founded in 1570 and has evolved and changed many times over its 450-year history. In recent times the school consisted of two schools, a boys' school and a girls' school but in 2018 we formally merged into one school with a diamond model structure: coeducational Infant School, separate boys and girls Junior and Senior schools and a coeducational Sixth Form.

The school is now thriving and has moved from 6 to 8 form entry at year 7 such is the demand for a Bury Grammar School education. This has also seen our CCF numbers, whose membership is entirely voluntary, swell to nearly 400 cadets, the largest number since it was introduced at the school in 1892, some 32 years after Officer Training Corps were introduced to a small number of public schools.

The CCF seems to ooze through the pores of the school and it seems that everyone associated with the school has a great fondness for this great organisation even if they were never actually a member. It was fitting that in our CCF biennial inspection last year, an old girl who is also a serving Lieutenant Colonel was the inspecting officer. What made her inspection of the CCF even more special was that she was the first girl

to join the CCF in the mid-1990s and unknown to the then Headmistress!

And this says it all - character. To me, the CCF is very much about developing the character of those who join into thoroughly decent human beings who then go on to make a significant contribution to society. Characters who are not afraid to take risks; characters who learn something about self-discipline and resilience; characters who learn something about service to others and characters who develop an understanding of others and tolerance.

These characters have the opportunity to develop their leadership and have a great deal of fun along the way. Whilst many teenagers are communicating in a virtual world dominated by handheld devices with some suffering the consequences including low mood

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## In order for students to achieve their very best academically, they must be supported in all areas, which includes prioritising their wellbeing.

As such, PSHE is a valuable avenue through which we can educate our students on the importance of their own wellbeing.

However, it's not only education content that can help us to look after our students' welfare. By knowing what the behavioural signs of a change in wellbeing are, and keeping an eye out for these, you can offer support quicker. Signs may include:

- Acting out in class
- Arriving late to school or skipping class
- A drop in usual standard of school work
- No longer handing in independent learning
- Reserved in their usual character

When teaching multiple students every day, understanding the intricacies of each individual, and subtle changes that could be a warning sign, can take a while to notice.



Software such as Satchel One provides leading educators with easy-to-export reports which track student attendance, punctuality, grades, behaviour and independent learning submissions, so they are able to immediately identify changes to students' normal behaviour patterns.

As well as this, our newest feature, Welfare Notes, enables teachers to communicate wellbeing concerns regarding individual students with the appropriate teacher so that students can receive the care and attention they need.

Find out more about the award-winning learning platform, Satchel One, at [www.teamsatchel.com](http://www.teamsatchel.com)

and self-esteem, these cadets are out there interacting, bonding and forming life-long friends along the way.

I have seen in my time, many pupils' characters transformed through membership of the CCF which provides them with a real sense of purpose and self-worth and the confidence which it instils is quite remarkable. They leave the CCF having held senior ranks as confident, articulate and intelligent young men and women who their parents and the school are very proud of. Indeed, our annual Founders' Day parade sees the whole CCF parade through the streets of Bury before laying a wreath at the cenotaph in memory of our fallen alumni, and the marching would not look out of place on Horse Guards Parade Square!

Bury Grammar lies at the heart of Bury which is the hometown of the Lancashire Fusiliers. The CCF has a strong affiliation with the now Royal Regiment of Fusiliers and indeed wears the cap badge and hackle. And they wear this cap badge and hackle with pride. They are all too aware that in the last two world wars former members of the school and CCF lost their lives in the service of their country. These fallen old boys have now come to be known as our Fallen Swans owing to a tremendously successful collaboration between the school's Art and History

department which created a permanent war memorial in the Headmaster's corridor. Each Fallen Swan is remembered with their own ceramic poppy and ninety eight of these line the wall of the Headmaster's corridor, an impressive sight indeed and one the school is immensely proud of.

As we move into our 450th Year we look forward to having, for the first time, our own CCF standard which will be consecrated in a special service which has been arranged by one of Her Majesty's Chaplains who is also a former parent. Many dignitaries are expected to attend and the standard will then be hung in Bury Parish Church, a fitting place since this was where the school was founded all those years ago. It is also fitting that in this our 450th year, the RAF has just approved the school to incorporate an Air Cadet section to the CCF to compliment the Army section.

So, the CCF is an important part of who we are at Bury Grammar School. It captures the history, develops character, provides a sense of belonging and a framework of pride in being a member of something very unique and special. Alumni recall their school days with great fondness and always with a chuckle, indeed they look back with such affection on their school days and the CCF played no small part in their memories.

<https://hubs.ly/H0mwOV10>



**Be informed.**



**Be curious.**



**Be heard.**

## Students make their voices heard

Each week VotesforSchools provides teachers with resources to hold a debate on a topical issue.

The students then get to vote on the topic and make comments. These comments are shared with those in authority who need to know what our young people are thinking.

'Tutor times have been transformed' said Angela Brown, Pastoral Head at Lingfield College. 'From trans-gender toilets, to homelessness, extremism or county lines,

VotesforSchools provides my tutors with the resources they need to create a space for our students to have these discussions.'

Part of the VotesforSchools community since 2016 Lingfield's students' voices are being heard by the top authorities in government, police, charities, businesses and the media: making a real impact.

'As for the ISI inspection' says Angela 'we evidenced our Prevent and FBV at the touch of a button.'

[www.votesforschools.com](http://www.votesforschools.com)



## Executive-level development for sixth formers

The Ivy House Award, a life changing self-leadership programme for sixth formers, has opened up places for its 2020-2021 programme.

Developed by a leading team of executive coaches and headteachers, The Award brings personal and professional development previously reserved for the most senior execs, to sixth formers. Developing ownership, resilience, emotional intelligence and self-leadership, The Award equips students with the knowledge and skills to take ownership over their future.

It's running in a number of schools including Canford, Eton, Brighton College, Charterhouse and City of London – and following huge success has released another 5000 student places.

Distilling the essence of 20 years' experience coaching 40% of the FTSE 100, this transformative programme bridges the gap between education and work – bringing students clarity over who they are, the life they want, and arming them with the skills to make it happen, starting now.

“The Award enhanced the school's leadership training, tenfold. Pupils have developed confidence in who they are – their weaknesses have been laid bare, their strengths celebrated and they've come to realise they have the characteristics of a leader.” Alexandra Neil, Headteacher Farnborough Hill.

If you'd like to find out more about The Award, visit [www.ivyhouse.co.uk](http://www.ivyhouse.co.uk).

[www.ivyhouse.co.uk](http://www.ivyhouse.co.uk)

## New Cloud Finance, HR & Payroll solution responds to market sector challenges

WCBS, the leading provider of finance management software to independent schools in the UK, has launched the latest addition to their product suite – and it's set to take the market by storm.

This comprehensive cloud-hosted solution comprises powerful Billing, Finance, HR & Payroll software systems. Together they deliver dynamic management of all core financial and administrative needs, supporting growth plans and decision making to help deliver strategies for success.

Sales & Marketing Director, Stephen Bilboe says, “The competitive landscape that independent schools now find themselves in is getting tougher, with costs rising and more pressure being placed on budgets. Cloud Finance will give schools greater efficiency in performing key

financial management activities and provide enhanced consolidation for group reporting”.

WCBS has developed and supplied specialist management information systems for 35 years, to schools in more than 40 countries. Their on-premise passFINANCE software has been the market leader for over three decades.



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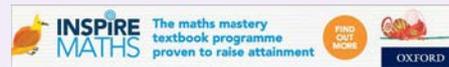


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The Independent Schools Magazine

Vires per Verum – Strength through Truth

The Independent Schools Magazine is read by decision-makers – Governors, Heads, Bursars, Departmental Managers – and reflects news, ideas, influences, and opinions in the independent education sector. A personal copy is mailed to heads and other key personnel in fee-paying independent schools plus opinion formers in governments, political parties and educational associations. It is also available on the internet.

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