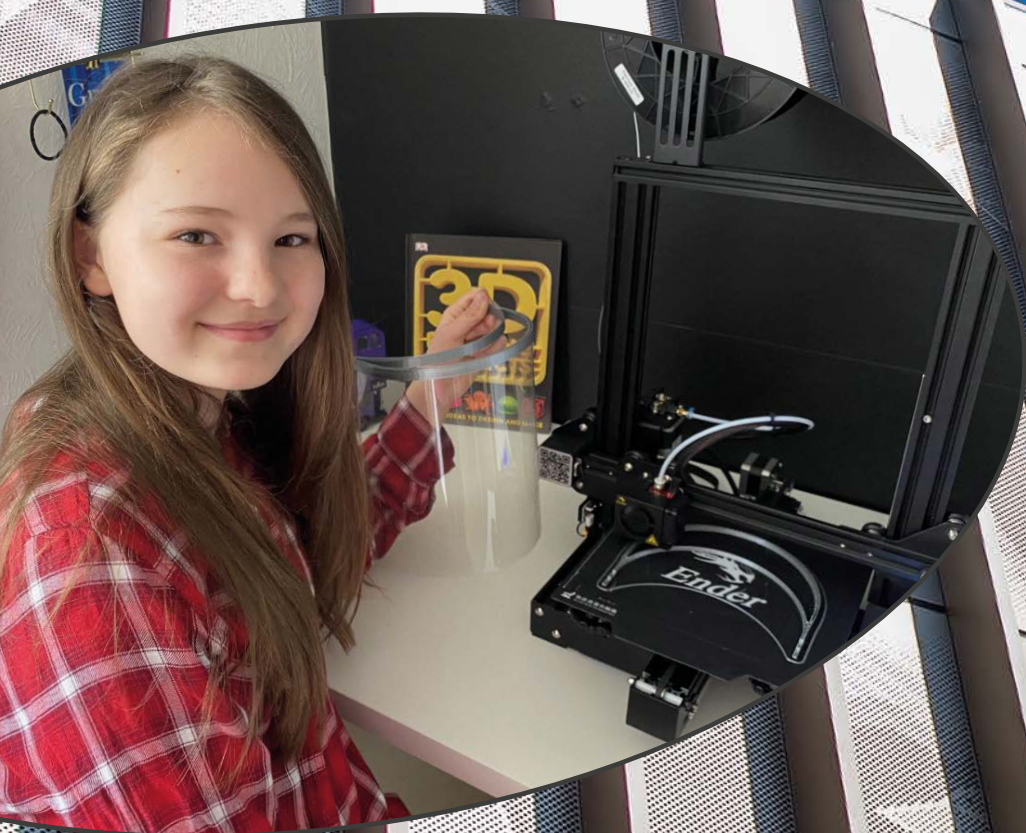


May 2020

The Independent Schools Magazine



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NATIONWIDE SUPPLIERS OF PEUGEOT (RECOMMENDED),
FORD & VAUXHALL

In this issue...



Support for NHS

In just 36 hours Worksop College, Nottinghamshire, raised over £5,000 worth of equipment to increase production levels of visors, thanks to the support of former students of the school.

The college has been working daily to make personal protective equipment for NHS staff battling coronavirus, a project initiated by Head of DT Gary Duckering. It comes as a national shortage of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for NHS staff on the front-line has resulted in many key workers suffering injury from wearing uncomfortable equipment for long hours, or going without vital protective wear at all.

The school had been funding the initiative from existing materials to produce 10 – 12 protective face visors a day to help local hospitals and surgeries in the UK, using an existing 3D printer. College staff invested in an additional two printers to increase production levels but put a request out for support in order to increase production levels even further.

The school have been overwhelmed by the generosity shown by their alumni community, providing an additional £5,000 worth of equipment, including 13 3-D printers.

And it's not just the Old Worksopian community who are doing their bit. Year 6 pupil Grace Galbraith is pictured making visors using her own 3-D printer at home, after getting in contact with the school to ask for the pattern.

Further Covid 19 initiatives & news
– see pages 30-46

Cover background

Science Centre wins architecture award

The Tonbridge School, Kent, Barton Science Centre has won a prestigious national award for architectural and design excellence.

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Covid-19

Reports, tributes, ideas, opinions

Including:

- Independent/state partnership rises to the challenge
- Heads flies in from China to take the helm
- Remote learning – how sectors compare
- A Chaplain's response
- Teaching re-routed & enriched
- Taking care of students who could not return home abroad
- Housemistresses face life in uncharted terrain
- Tens of thousands of face masks made for NHS
- Will the crisis mark a new dawn in education?
- A vision of how 'Phase 2' might evolve
- Pupils' experiences of lockdown

Pages 30-46

Living with the Land



Alistair McConville, Director of Learning and Innovation at Bedales School in Hampshire, describes the development of their new course...

A friend of mine who is a Professor of Education

shared with me his view about the future of education in a pub a couple of years ago. "Institution-led curriculum and assessment", he confided. In other words, schools, or groups of schools, agreeing a curriculum appropriate to their context, and assessing it themselves, or in conjunction with trusted partners, using their chosen assessment methodology. I hope he is right, and there are reasons to think he is. There is a great deal to be said for professional autonomy, and contextual flexibility.

Visitors have often asked when we would apply the same logic to sixth form courses. We held back because of a sense that universities would want to see some externally validated grades when awarding offers. We also held back from seeking OFQUAL accreditation for our BACs, since we wanted to retain as much autonomy as possible over them, and have the freedom to adjust them year on year. Perhaps our most outlandish – excuse the pun – course at 14-16 level has been the BAC in Outdoor Work. This is an eminently practical and farm-based course, covering a suite of rural and farming skills, and culminating in a major project, usually undertaken in a group.

course that revolves around the twin pillars of sustainability – food and shelter – building on the practical and theoretical foundations of our BAC, and retaining our principles of broad assessment via portfolio, project, and viva.

Having established via correspondence and phone call with a very helpful OFQUAL case officer that there was no bar in principle to a school becoming its own awarding centre, Dr Matthew Yeo – Head of New Qualifications at Bedales – and I set out to Coventry to talk through the logistics in person. We had expected some scepticism about an independent school seeking to badge its home grown courses with a cherished Level 3 stamp, but OFQUAL could not have been more open to the idea, and supportive. We were left in no doubt that the bar for success was high, and that a great deal needed to be done to fulfil the criteria to become an awarding centre, and OFQUAL were frank in saying that most applications did not meet the criteria first time, but that reworked applications would be supported. We girded ourselves for some tenacious form filling. Dr Yeo has borne the brunt to the tune of several hundred pages. The OFQUAL mantra of 'validity, reliability, freedom from bias' has been branded forever into his soul. The application process was a huge undertaking. Quite rightly, OFQUAL want to ensure that an awarding institution has the



necessary financial and governance structures in place to be a 'going concern' for some time to come so that no students might be left stranded. They probed deeply into our measures for managing conflicts of interests and appeals. They were less interested in content than our means to ensure consistent awarding year on year. We are fortunate in that we have considered all of this before in relation to our BACs, but the level of scrutiny and evidencing for OFQUAL has been 'next level'.

We had already committed to running our course with or without OFQUAL accreditation, and an enthusiastic cohort is all signed up for September. We hope to secure the right to accredit our first graduates with a Level 3 badge, and have two years to get there. At the time of writing, our first effort, as OFQUAL predicted, has come back with red pen on it, metaphorically, but with constructive feedback and a renewed offer of support to get us over the line.



My school, Bedales, has form on this front. Fifteen years ago we gave up most GCSE subjects, and launched our own, in-house alternatives, the Bedales Assessed Courses, in everything except a core of English, Maths, Science and Languages. We found GCSEs too prescriptive in content and too narrow in assessment methods. We graded them, and cite them to universities via UCAS. It has been a remarkably trouble free experiment. Bands of Bedalians have sallied forth clutching 'BACs' and have found them valuable currency.

Renovated tractors, hand-built verandas, round houses, and so on. This has been a hugely popular course, and there has always been a clamour for a sixth form continuation, which we have not got around to, until now.

So, in order to try and marry the desirability of external accreditation for final year work with our deeply held love of autonomy, we set out to create our own Level 3 course in 'Living With the Land' as well as seeking accreditation from OFQUAL in parallel. We have composed a



A New Era for Staff Retention

The world of teaching has certainly changed over the years and much of this has been driven by the need to raise standards, improve pupil welfare and safeguarding, more stringent inspection regulations and also to ensure greater opportunities are provided beyond the taught curriculum. Added to this, schools now face much greater scrutiny from parents who, in their bid to ensure their children achieve the best possible results and personal success, will question and challenge the decisions made by schools as well as the daily practice (and perceived quality) of its individual teachers. Ben Evans, Headmaster at Edge Grove School, Hertfordshire, reflects...



The impact of the childhood mental health crisis and pupil wellbeing agenda has also added

to the challenges schools now face in ensuring adequate provision is made for staff and parent training as well as awareness and pupil support. It is now freely accepted that as a teacher in addition to exceptional subject knowledge and pedagogy, you will need to have up-to-date safeguarding knowledge, be first aid trained, have a mental first aid qualification and be able to counsel both pupils and parents on academic and pastoral matters. The job of a teacher does not stop when they have finished teaching in the classroom.

Recruitment problems are commonplace

Consequently, the multiple pressures placed upon both experienced teachers and NQTs today, is certainly having a negative impact on recruitment and retention. This combined with the ongoing battle of low pay compared with other graduate entry careers, increasing workloads and more recently, the potential loss of the TPS (Teacher Pension Scheme), means that even the long school holidays are no longer a good enough incentive.

With the teaching profession attracting fewer and fewer high quality graduates, all but a few schools are now facing problems with recruitment. Whereas a few years ago, an advert for a new teacher might attract over 20 good applicants, this is no longer the case and the recruitment process is becoming harder by the day. Unlike years ago, the teaching applicants of today are increasingly confident to name their salary, even if this is considerably higher than their appropriate point on the scale. They will also not shy away from requesting additional responsibility allowances or higher fee discounts

if they have school-aged children themselves.

Biting the bullet

In a world where potential teaching candidates seem to be calling the shots, schools often have little choice but to acquiesce. It is therefore becoming increasingly important for schools to retain their best teachers and this can come at a cost too. Requests for flexible working are more and more prevalent, applications to cross the threshold are commonplace as are demands for certain timetable allocations and other teaching preferences. Schools can, of course, take a hard line to all of these but when the alternative is trawling through sub-standard application forms and contacting expensive agencies, they simply have to bite the bullet.

Managing expectations of new teachers can be a challenge too. 'Holidays are holidays' is something I heard reported recently from a young and newly qualified teacher. Whilst no school should ever expect teachers to work outside their term time contracted hours, it has always been an expectation that with an average of 18 weeks of holiday a year, some school preparation work would need to be completed during this time. It is always dangerous and often wrong to generalise, especially about the young.

However, in an age where 'wellbeing' and 'work related stress' are so often linked, there is an increasing tendency for young entrants to the profession to question their working hours, workloads and expectations regarding professional standards. This is also having an influence on long-standing and experienced teachers too, who also want the same considerations.

Never confuse age and length of service with ability

Years ago, there was an expectation in schools that teachers served

their apprenticeship before seeking or being given additional responsibilities such as subject co-ordinator, head of department, head of year etc. Today though, this is deemed right after only one or two years' experience and with it, the accompanying pay increase and the jump up the scale. Age and length of service should never be confused with competency or ability but there is certainly an argument for having a certain amount of time in the trade first, to make and learn from one's mistakes before seeking greater responsibility and management positions.

It's often forgotten that as teachers of independent schools, we are paid well for the service we provide and that we are fortunate to work in very pleasant environments with supportive colleagues, generous holidays and a number of other employment benefits – not forgetting the free lunch and day long refreshments.

Although today, the expectation is even higher with many believing it is the school's responsibility to provide all professional development opportunities along with access to professional coaching and counselling. Whilst any responsible and caring school places the professional development and mental health of its staff as a top priority, there must also be some level of expectation and onus on the individual to manage this themselves.

Dwindling applications doesn't mean schools are competing

Whilst the available pool of teachers appears to be dwindling, it does not necessarily mean that all schools are in competition. Every school is different and will therefore attract different professionals for whom there is an appeal or attraction. That may be due to location, size, pupil age, reputation or the latest inspection report or it might simply

come down to personal fit or atmosphere.

Recruiting teachers is a competitive business though and all schools are looking to increase the 'bonus' items such as pension, private health care, salary sacrifice schemes and professional development opportunities. Salary scales are also important and many teachers will ultimately accept the job that is the best paid and with the most attractive incentives – who can blame them?

Teaching is, and will always be, a vocation. This is increasingly the case with the myriad pastoral demands that are now commonplace in schools. Gone are the days, thankfully, when graduates were attracted into teaching purely by the 'good pension' or long holidays. Therefore, the profession will always attract talented practitioners who will make such a positive difference within the schools they work and on the children they teach.

Retention is about mutual respect not giving in

To prepare for the future and to ensure retention of the best staff, schools must (and many do) address the issue of workload. This is the most important and effective way of improving the retention of existing teachers and attracting the best possible candidates when recruiting new staff. Ultimately, there is a job to be done with certain budgetary constraints and it is therefore down to governors and school leaders to balance this with ensuring all staff (teaching and non-teaching) have manageable workloads, favourable conditions and understand that they are demonstrably supported both professionally and personally. This does not, however, mean giving in to every whim and demand for fear of losing people, but building a robust school community based on fairness, mutual respect and most importantly, kindness.

Challenges, challenges

As Head of English at Repton School, Derbyshire, James Wilton battled the national downward trend in students taking English Literature at A-level. In his current role as Director of Digital Development he's been working at full throttle on Repton's remote learning facilities, necessitated by the Coronavirus lockdown...

Q: National statistics indicate that English Literature is becoming less popular for sixth-formers. Why do you think that is?

A: Two things stand out; the mundanity of the GCSE curriculum and a growing (highly inaccurate) perception in society that the skills and insights one might gain from the study of Literature are less 'practically applicable' than those you would get in some other subjects.

Q: What benefits do you see for today's young people in the study of English Literature?

A: The study of English Literature accelerates your emotional maturity and strength in empathy. Though there are great and useful insights to be gained across the rich tapestry of humanities and sciences, there is no better subject for exploring humanity. If you open yourself up to the enormous questions that literature both asks and answers, it would not be overstating it to say you become a better person. But it is not limited to those aspects that some might reject as airy-fairy. Technological advances are going to alter the warp and weft of society.

Automation is likely to replace as much as 50% of the jobs that currently exist. The skills in creative and critical thinking that the study of Literature A Level nurture will be essential in the fastest growing occupations, and McKinsey predict that 30-40% of jobs will require explicit social-emotional skills. The study of Literature is the study of social and emotional behaviours and how those are communicated clearly and with insight; that makes this subject more than desirable, but essential to our future!

Q: What steps can schools take to reverse the national trend?

A: I think it does start by a change in the way schools talk about the transactional, practical aspect of A Level choice. I also think that schools who pare back the drudgery of GCSE English Language and make as much space as humanly possible for the Literature are doing the pupils and the A Level takeup a favour. It is important to make space in the English classroom for discussion of human issues that pertain to the texts being studied – we can't expect young people to see classics of literature in the way we adults might, and they need to be trained to read people as much as read the books. We need the English classroom to be first and foremost a place where we show our young people what people are like; how and why they communicate and interact with one another in the way they do. Every age group loves to suss out the motivations behind words and actions – they do this constantly amongst their peers with their he-saids and she-saids in the playground and the corridors. Focusing on how this is portrayed in great literature also does most of the teaching for the Language GCSE for you anyway. We have made more space in the classroom for that at Repton by cutting away at the discrete time spent on Language GCSE and giving the Literature and all its rich insights primacy from Y9 upwards. English Literature A Level at Repton has been consistently in the top two for most popular choice at A Level, and likewise almost uniformly at the top for results.

Q: Turning now to your work on facilitating remote teaching and learning in the current pandemic, one of the most important aspects is to ensure that pupils continue to feel supported and connected to their school, friends and teachers. How have you sought to achieve this?

A: First and foremost, we made sure that the importance of interactivity was in everyone's mind as we planned Remote Learning, and that would be facilitated by everyone and everything being run through Microsoft Teams. Academic work is all submitted online (regardless of whether it is completed by hand or on a computer) and discussions about that work always leave a 'trace' in the form of class chat within their Teams. We knew that interactive video calls at the start of lessons were about more than just introducing the topic; they were invaluable in connecting teachers and pupils and making them feel part of something beyond their four walls. We make sure those Teams videoconferences I mentioned earlier are recorded so that the overseas pupils can access them later, and we also schedule check-ins with online calls at various times so we don't cut anybody off just because they are in a different time zone. We have also been just as active and creative in our use of Microsoft Teams on the pastoral front as we have in the classroom. We have teams setup for each boarding house to keep those communities connected, share news, interact via quizzes and challenges; we have created virtual Chapel sermons to broadcast twice a week, and put together music concerts by having pupils submit recordings; we have interactive content in a Sports team which allows coaching to continue. Most crucially, we have maintained form time (via Teams videoconferencing) and counselling provision too (via private channels within counselling teams.) The upshot of all this has been that 94% of our pupils say their experience of Remote Learning has been a good one; anecdotally, a pupil told me this week that his teachers were more contactable than ever!

Q: Smaller schools which may not have much in the way of technical resources may find it hard to maintain the clear structure in every child's day as they would in 'normal' school. Can you suggest how this can be best achieved?

A: I empathise with that; we have had similar discussions with our Prep school, who have adopted a quite different model to ours. I think it is important that schools feel comfortable reimagining their school day rather than insist on business as usual. We have been able to run our timetable almost unchanged because of the emphasis on videoconferencing (and it is worth saying that all our pupils have their own device) but our prep school created a lot of pre-recorded video because they knew that not every pupil could reliably get online for a call several times a day. Indeed, I have worked with other schools in my capacity as a Microsoft Fellow who have placed two or three interactive 'checkins' between academic staff and their pupils each day to steer pupils through a programme of remote work. One thing that is definitely worth doing is surveying the families that send kids to your school and checking what kind of access the pupils could have, then shaping your provision around that. Also, bear in mind that Microsoft provide their Office platform and Teams free for educational use, so you'd be surprised what you can achieve without additional cost.

Q: The majority of teachers are embracing the opportunities surrounding remote learning and are enthused about delivering an exciting and high quality education to children in their homes; some, however, may not feel so comfortable. How can schools assist them?

A: Just as it is vital to make the pupils and their families feel as connected and supported as possible, it is equally important to make your staff feel that way too. It's worth noting that we did not have a particularly confident staff to start with when it came to IT, so there was a lot of trepidation. We set up a dedicated Microsoft Team for staff support, and the impact

of that was huge. Very quickly and organically, staff who were confident started to support those who were not, and set up small 'practice' teams to test things out and support one another. This really required very little structuring and scaffolding, which surprised me; giving the staff the right platform and responding quickly in the opening days did the trick. I think that is also very important – if people get a quick response to their query their confidence grows much faster. Teaching is a very urgent business, so connecting as many people together who might be able to help 'crowdsource' the support and makes it work.

Q: Now that you have several weeks' real-time experience of remote teaching and learning, what have you been most pleased with, and what do you wish you'd had more time to get right?

A: I have been so impressed and heartened by the willingness of the staff to get class teams up and running, and I'm probably most pleased and humbled by the fact that the use of Teams has become uniform pretty much

overnight (from 12 active Teams in the school to nearly 600!) That could not have happened without a lot of determination from the staff in the face of the daunting task of upskilling themselves. I do wish we had had more time to thrash out the most efficient and reliable way to mark work; there are so many ways to do this well and efficiently, and we are getting there, but it is still taking the staff longer than I would like. If we had had more time, we would have looked at the automation of some marking tasks, made more extensive use of rubrics within Teams to streamline the marking, and trained people in OneNote to allow for easier annotation of work. Those things are starting to take off, but I would have loved to refine them before we really got started. I would also have loved to train teachers and pupils more deeply in the tools that are out there to support SEN learning. Some of the kids who are used to a lot of support are – naturally – those that are struggling the most with remote learning. There is such amazing stuff out there to support them, but training them from a distance to use

that supporting material is very challenging.

Q: When the current crisis is over and schools return to regular working with all the everyday pressures of full classrooms, how can schools best keep their remote teaching and learning alive and kicking?

A: Don't return to "regular working"! Why would you? If schools miss the opportunity in the immediate aftermath of this to reflect on what online provision really meant, how it affected pedagogy and processes, then they will have made a disastrous error. One thing that has really stood out about remote learning is how visible everything now is; resources, lesson recordings, discussions – everything is retained and accessible. Imagine the impact that would have on the learning our kids are doing; how much knowledge they are creating alongside us and how dependably they can access it again for revision and review. That's before we even get started on how collaborative and flexible some of the learning opportunities are becoming. This is a once in



a lifetime opportunity – crazy as this might sound with the horrors that are going with it – to do so many things better. As well as improving the accessibility and retention of material in classes, every day we are proving that some things we took for granted as the day-to-day meat and drink of running a school are simply unnecessary and time consuming. This crisis is forcing everyone to do only what is essential and important, and think really creatively about how to deliver education.

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Encouraging political thinking beyond exams

Rob Verdon, Head of Politics at Cranleigh School, Surrey has won a Politics Studies Association Award for Outstanding Teaching of Politics. The prize recognised his encouragement of thinking beyond examinations, as well as numerous extra curricular initiatives. He spoke with ISM in an exclusive interview...

Q: Your 'Dangerous Minds' public speaking event - giving pupils just eight minutes to 'change the world' through their oratory - particularly impressed the judges. What ideas have struck you as the most compelling?

A: I have been truly blown away by the quality of these talks by our pupils, all of whom have managed to learn their talks off by heart and deliver them with the confidence of seasoned professional public speakers. I am always a fan of really radical ideas, that seem utterly bizarre at first, but the more the idea is developed, the more you start to think, well actually, what if that did happen. Three that stand out are firstly a scheme for ending the concept of nationality and nationhood around the world that ended up being the runner up in our first competition. This year, the winning entry called for the mandatory introduction of public speaking into the national curriculum by the government, which is something that I would definitely champion if it ever did happen. However I would say my personal favorite this year was the solution to the Brexit crisis, which was for Britain to become the 51st state of the USA; a totally hilarious concept, but brilliantly delivered and certainly got the whole audience thinking!

Q: They also liked your student-run political podcast. How does that work in practice?

A: I came up with the idea of putting together a podcast with our Politics students in the run up to the 2016 EU referendum. It was the first time in my memory that everyone in the country was constantly debating only one subject; should we remain or leave. It was dividing all sorts of people

and our students could not get enough of it. We are incredibly lucky at Cranleigh to have some amazing recording facilities and colleagues that have worked in music and radio production, so one Wednesday afternoon 4 pupils and I sat round a table full of microphones and recorded a pilot podcast. This was released later that day and we were blown away by the reaction to it from the pupils, staff and parents that listened to it. The pupils then decided we should do 3 more in the run up to a debate that the school was hosting, and planned what we would discuss, invited other teachers to join the show and also got their peers involved in surveys and editing the content. We have since tried to record and publish one podcast per term, opening it up to different pupils each time. There will certainly be a huge amount to discuss once we are back to normal after the current crisis!

Q: If a student is thinking of choosing politics as an A-level subject, how would you describe the benefits of so doing? Have any of your students gone on to forge out a career in politics?

A: I think the unique thing about A Level Politics is that it is the only subject which is constantly evolving. It literally changes on a day to day basis, which really does keep my colleagues and I on our toes having to consistently update what we teach. It is probably the only exam in which you could watch BBC News in the morning, and use an example that you have just seen as part of your analysis in an essay you write in your exam that afternoon. The other main benefit from the subject is that it really does teach you how to construct and rebut arguments, which is an absolutely crucial skill whatever



future career our students go into. A couple of my students from the last couple of years have gone on to be active members of their local political parties and were very much involved in the recent election campaign. Another has gone on to be the editor of a major university newspaper and has also had stints working for major media channels. I would not be surprised at all to see a familiar face sitting on the green benches of the House of Commons in the next decade or so!

Q: There is widespread cynicism about politics and politicians who say one thing and mean another, doubtless exacerbated by instant, often ill-informed comment on social media. How can the reasoned discussion you encourage inside school be more widely replicated outside?

A: One of the main things we try to establish in the department from early in year 12 is to help our students understand the inherent bias that exists within the media and the political leanings of different publications. 6th form students are still at a highly impressionable age, so if you can get them to really think through the purpose of each article they read, or fully understand why certain people post certain things then hopefully by the time they leave school and go to university they will be in a far better position to have more informed discussions and help their peers, friends and family get a better steer on what to believe

and what to take with more of a pinch of salt. I have also tried to make each of them follow a few people on twitter that they think they fundamentally disagree with as a way of helping them realise that there are always two or more sides to every story.

Q: Who or what inspired you to enter the teaching profession, more particularly the teaching of politics?

A: It was my sister who inspired me to change careers from management consulting into teaching. She had done a similar thing a few years before, having become disillusioned with the city and managed to recapture her true passion by becoming an amazing Biology teacher. I was always fascinated with Politics, even back in the days when it was far less interesting than it is now. I frequently bore my students by telling them how lucky they are with Brexit, Trump etc., where as I first started my degree in late 2002 where it was all fairly mundane, until the following year where it all suddenly kicked off with the invasion of Iraq. It is the subject that everyone wants to discuss and debate, be it down the pub with friends or over a roast dinner with the family on a Sunday afternoon. However, I feel so lucky that in my job I am able to do this everyday with fantastic students who have a genuine desire to unpick what is wrong with politics and come up with ideas to make it better.

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In line for teaching ‘Oscar’



Twenty-four year old Oliver McIntyre (pictured) from Hillcrest Shifnal School, Shropshire, has been shortlisted

in Pearson's National Teaching Awards – the Oscars of the teaching profession – in the category Outstanding New Teacher of the Year.

Mr McIntyre – who caught the eye of the judges sifting through thousands of nominations – has been teaching history and geography at the independent school for boys and girls aged 5–19 with Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs for just 7 months.

Set up to recognise and celebrate excellence in education across the country, the awards – the UK's most prestigious celebration of transformational teaching – are run by the Teaching Awards Trust and supported by Pearson and the BBC. Their purpose is to identify and honour exceptional teaching

within a society that values and celebrates the great work achieved by teachers and leaders in education, culminating in a glittering awards ceremony televised by the BBC.

The category Outstanding New Teacher of the Year is for those teachers in their first, second or third year of teaching who have brought new ideas and enthusiasm to their school and an openness to learn from those more experienced in order to improve their skills. An inspiring new teacher can have an immeasurably positive impact on their pupils' academic, social and emotional development. All great teaching qualities can be gained through experience, but outstanding new teachers have a natural ability and enthusiasm that shines through.

Oliver delivers a varied and engaging humanities curriculum covering tough topics and excels in engaging the school's students – helping them to transition smoothly to secondary school or into a job.

Commenting on his own education and teaching career, Oliver said,

“Whilst I was growing up I often struggled in school with my behaviour on account of my ADHD, ADD and other issues. While in education I was supported by fantastic teachers and Teaching Assistants who inspired me to be like them. Whilst studying for my PGCE I realised that I most enjoyed working with students who struggled in lessons due to SEMH issues and learning difficulties and had similar behaviours to mine when I was younger. I felt that I was able to make more tangible progress with these students than some of the other teachers. After successfully completing my PGCE I wanted to work in an environment that primarily focused on students who had SEMH and learning difficulties as I felt that this is where my skills and experiences could be best used to support them in making the best possible progress in a way that they can be proud of themselves.

“The main aspect of the job that I enjoy is helping the students achieve something. I find that they often have low confidence in their own abilities and believe that they will be unable to understand or accomplish tasks. My favourite part is when they realise that they've got the answer right when they thought they were going to get it wrong and then celebrating and praising their success. Witnessing their visible and tangible progress here is so fulfilling. I would strongly recommend other

trainee teachers to seriously consider taking up a role like mine.”

Oliver was nominated by his line manager Benjamin Cooper, Head of Academy Faculty, who said, “Ollie has everything you want in a setting like ours; fantastic relationships with students, an engaging and unique teaching style and importantly he's someone who realises the importance of working as part of a team.

“I nominated Ollie for his work with his tutor group – he's really got them on side and it's taken a lot of work to get there. It's clear that Ollie really cares about them. Ollie has an amazing teaching style – he leads discussions on his subjects and almost lectures – the students love it! I had to cover one of his lessons a while back and tried to mimic his style and failed miserably. Ollie is also a real team player, apt at getting laughs in team meetings, is open when he is struggling – which is something I'm really trying to promote – and has an openness that allows others to feel they can do the same. These things, along with knowing how hard Ollie struggled at school due to his own SEND, and the progress he's made since September – he's come on massively – made him a clear choice for the award.”

The Winners will be announced next month (June).



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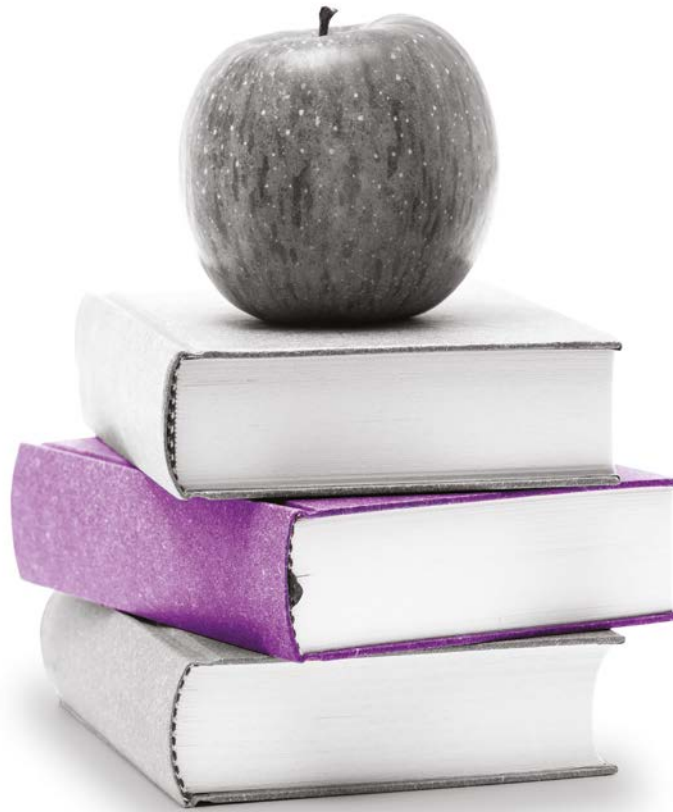
A kind-hearted Houseparent and Maths teacher from Bromsgrove School, Worcestershire, has run the equivalent of over 3 consecutive marathons to raise funds for Worcestershire NHS Trust.

Matt Giles' sponsored run of hundreds of laps around Bromsgrove School's sports pitches (~0.95 miles per lap) consisted of 68.37 miles, which took Mr Giles 9 hours 42 minutes and 20 seconds.

Speaking about his feat Mr Giles said “Inspired by so many back garden marathons being completed in lockdown, I thought I'd have a go myself. The weather looked good for the following day and as a last minute thought I set up a Justgiving.com page and offered a free takeaway for anyone who



guessed the number of laps I managed, in the hope of raising a couple of hundred pounds for the local NHS. Things soon evolved into a gruelling run and far exceeded my expectations of donations.”



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Learning 'sweet spot'

Scientists have identified a 'sweet spot' for learning information quickly. It involves ensuring that the task is challenging enough for learners to fail 15% of the time. Anyone teaching, say the boffins at the University of Arizona, should therefore try and find a 'Goldilocks Zone' in which lessons are not so hard to be discouraging but not so easy to become boring.



Jane Prescott,
Headmistress,
Portsmouth
High School,
Hampshire:

Any learner will tell you that to stay focussed the lesson must keep their interest throughout. However, any teacher will confirm that the differentiation of tasks within the classroom is at times quite difficult if the slower and faster learners are both to remain engaged. The wider the ability range the more

difficult it is for the educator to achieve this utopia. No pupil wants it made obvious that the task they have been given is the easier one. Even within subjects that are traditionally set by ability creating sufficient challenge is not simple. In the teaching of mathematics at Portsmouth High School we overcome this conundrum by allowing the students to learn at their own pace within the set. There are no textbooks which limit learning to examples within the

book. Instead pupils work within a topic stretching themselves with increasing difficulty of questions using a website whilst the learners who need to repeat basic questions may do so for as long as they need.

In subjects that are not set by ability in a non selective school it is challenging to keep everyone on the same learning trajectory but skilful teachers manage this by splitting tasks and sharing answers, for example. However,

the nature of GCSE specifications limit academic stretch for the most able and some are not challenged by the material and finding a "Goldilocks Zone" involves adding to the curriculum which can hinder slower learners. Keeping everyone engaged is the answer to learning information quickly which, whilst not exactly rocket science in concept, takes a talented teacher to truly deliver in the classroom.



Kevin Fear,
headmaster,
Nottingham
High School:

A couple of years ago, soon after a girl had joined us for the Sixth Form, I had a phone call from a parent. She exclaimed: "You've done it!". Naturally I was curious to find out what I had done. She reminded me of a conversation we had had when she was considering moving her daughter to us in which she had explained that her daughter had often come home

upset from her previous school because the work in Maths was always so easy and that what we had done was to set her some Maths that she had not been able to do. The mother was thrilled because the daughter had got so much pleasure when she had finally cracked the more difficult problem. The child had gone home beaming. She knew she had joined the right school.

We all learn best when there is a degree of challenge involved. There are the famous stories like that of James Dyson who went through

5126 prototypes before inventing the dual cyclone vacuum cleaner. We know it too from our own lives – the sense of satisfaction when you finally beat your personal best on a morning run or you finally work out how to navigate the TV menus or the specifics of various video-calling platforms during lockdown. Thus, it is imperative in our classrooms that we allow students to fail or at least to find things difficult so that they can then derive a great sense of worth from working the problem out.

It is important that we actually celebrate failure – asking questions is a great way to learn and whilst some children prefer to make no mistakes at all, this is actually a mistake in itself. Children need to develop resilience, need to value the process as well as the end goal and these problem solving skills will serve them well in the future when they are likely to be doing jobs that we have yet to invent. Let us celebrate failure on our way to building success.



Andy Nuttall,
Deputy Head
at Windlesham
House School,
Sussex:

The process of learning has fascinated scholars for millennia as we seek to understand the hidden power of the human mind and equate our superior intellect and ability to learn with the developmental differences that exist between humans and other animal species. The plasticity of the childhood brain is well understood

and research has shown that whilst a younger brain can learn with relative efficiency, older brains retain knowledge more easily. In terms of finding a sweet spot for learning information quickly one must also look to the motivational factors behind the learning.

Humans are intrinsically a challenge seeking species and evolutionary psychology suggests that whilst you can take a person out of the Stone Age you cannot take the Stone Age out of a person. We are to some degree hardwired to

think and act in a predetermined manner that appeared with the evolution of modern humans within the precarious environment of the ancient African Savannah.

Problem solving and learning therefore comes relatively easily to the young human brain if certain conditions are met. For any aspiring teacher creating the 'Goldilocks Zone' has to balance the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations of the learner with a level of success that is rewarding. Key to learning is the support in discovering how the

missing 15% can be achieved and ensuring the learner is confident in their knowledge of the 'next steps'. It should not be surprising when children opt for the 'challenge' option from a set of differentiated tasks. The role of the teacher is to create the experience of success, reflection and future strategy which will sustain the learner throughout their life. Harnessing the natural inclinations of the human brain is a rational consideration when designing educational tasks.



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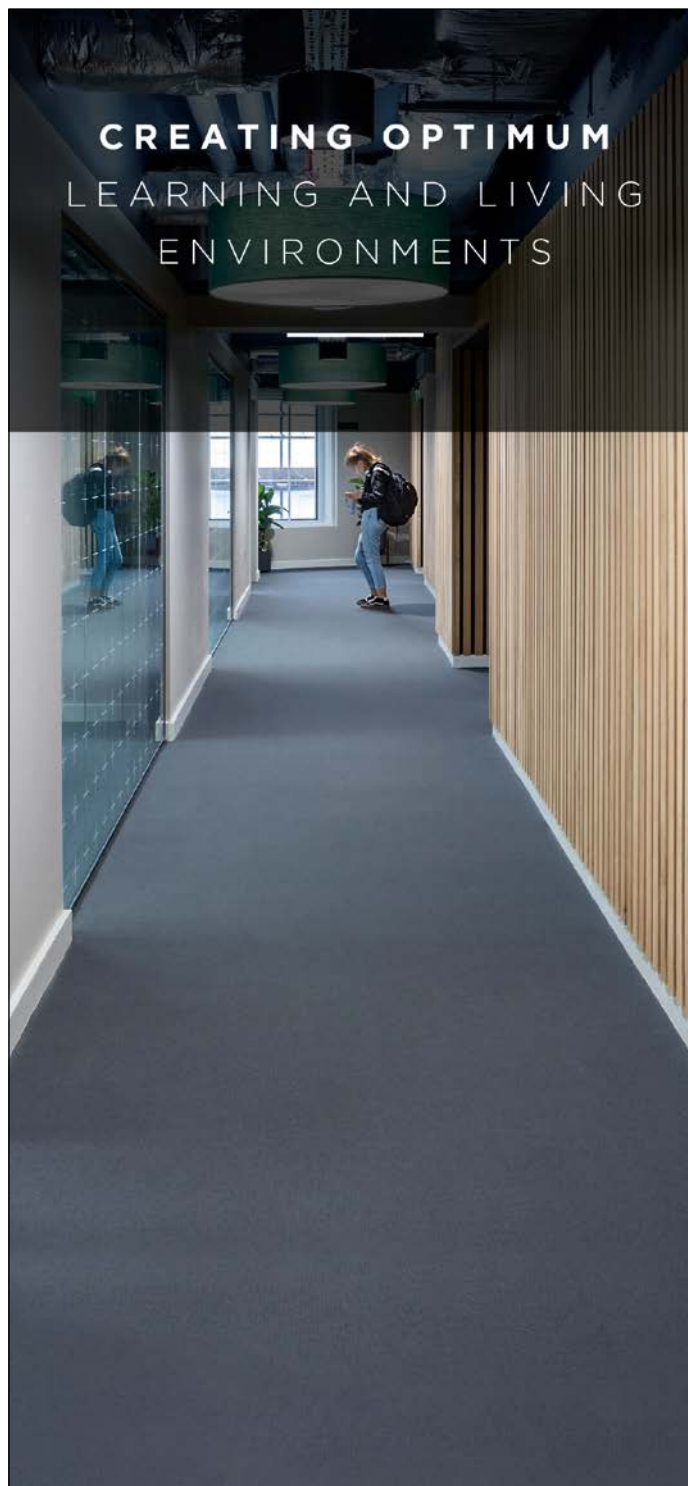
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New classrooms begin to take shape

Stroud School, Hampshire, is half way through developing a new KS2 building which is due to be ready in September 2020.

Following on the success of its new KS1 building a couple of years ago, the pupils are eagerly watching – online – the process of the new building in the school grounds.

The new building will provide a spacious educational environment, with a very dynamic design. What should strike visitors immediately on entering the building is how light and bright it will feel: the design includes a large amount of glass to allow natural light to stream in. All classrooms will have direct access to undercover outside areas, allowing all pupils to learn outdoors in all weather. The materials and colours have been chosen carefully to fit in with our natural woodland surroundings.

The soundproof, folding walls between teaching rooms enable collaborative interaction across more open and flexible spaces. These have been used successfully in Finnish schools, which regularly feature in the top five within world education tables. These walls also

offer an interactive space, where students and teachers can write together to build topic knowledge.

Once the ground is ready, the modular buildings will be constructed off-site and installed in just weeks, minimising disruption. Stroud School is passionate about limiting its impact on the environment and therefore external cedar cladding will help improve the overall sustainability of the school.

Chris Hopper, Operations Manager, says: "This building will considerably improve existing provision, and is a further development as part of an ambitious period of investment from King Edward VI School to update facilities for future generations."

Stroud has been awarded the 'Council for Learning Outside the Classroom' (CLOtC) Silver Award, a national accreditation that has been endorsed by the Department for Education. This award sits perfectly alongside the School's 'Eco Schools Green Flag', which it has maintained for the past ten years.



Science Centre wins architecture award

Tonbridge School, Kent, Barton Science Centre has won a prestigious national award for architectural and design excellence.

The three-storey, state-of-the-art building, which officially opened in 2019, has been named as the overall winner of The GGB Awards, presented annually in honour of Sir George Grenfell Baines, the founder of international architectural practice BDP.

In this year's awards, 12 finalists were selected from an initial 'longlist' of 20 entries across the UK. Every project visited by industry leaders was judged to be of

extremely high quality, displaying design innovation and a creative approach to its client's needs.

The judges noted: "At the Barton Science Centre, a new three-storey collaboration space has been carved out of the historic building and a new wing added. It houses a variety of labs and teaching spaces wrapped around a social hub which encourages interdisciplinary working. The judges were impressed by the creative approach to reusing and extending a historic building."

The Barton Science Centre is a blend of the old and the new, combining much of the Victorian

architecture of the school's original science building with a magnificent new extension and latest technology. Features include an interactive periodic table, a roof garden and greenhouse, a TV wall, three libraries and an observation hive for studying bees.

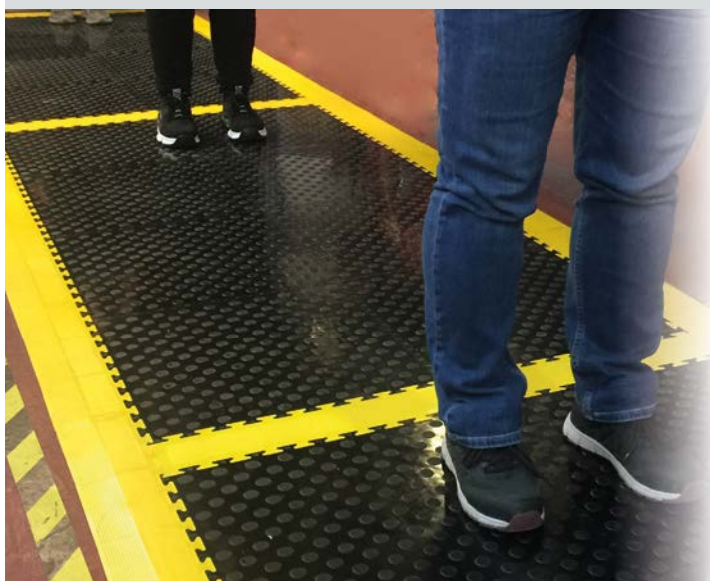
The building was named after former Tonbridge pupil Sir Derek Barton, an organic chemist who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1969. Several of the school's other notable scientists were also honoured in the naming of laboratories and libraries.

It was officially opened by NASA astronauts Dr Michael Foale CBE and Dr Steve Swanson.

James Priory, Headmaster, said the school was delighted with The GGB Award. "The Barton Science Centre is a world-class facility which places Tonbridge at the forefront of teaching and learning in modern science, both nationally and internationally. It also plays an important role as a hub in the community, hosting primary school visits, family days, student conferences and public talks".



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Building projects: Exploring/understanding the stages of work for a successful project

www.architecture.com/knowledge-and-resources/resources-landing-page/riba-plan-of-work

Since the mid-20th century, the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) has published its Plan of Work, a tool to assist with the making of buildings by breaking the process into clear sections. The most recent incarnation was published in 2020, reflecting the changing nature of construction by integrating aspects such as conservation, sustainability and information technology. Although developed for architects, the RIBA Plan of Work represents a valuable tool for clients to help understand the construction process and shape it to best suit their individual requirements.

The Plan of Work is divided into eight Work Stages from the initial statement of need through to the building in use. Robert McKinley, of BB&C Architects Limited based in Cambridge, explores key elements that can add particular value for clients.

0 – Strategic Definition

1 – Preparation and Briefing

At each stage, the building becomes increasingly defined and the opportunity for change becomes increasingly restricted and costly. The first two Work Stages are therefore arguably the most critical in terms of client involvement and

decision making.

Once the project moves into the later stages your design team and contractor will be in the driving seat; but following the road map you've set out through the early stage briefing process. Your design team can work with you to develop a clear set of client requirements that will produce a well-defined and firm foundation for a successful project:

- A business case defining the project need, considering risks and opportunities, and defining a project budget and timescale.
- A list of client requirements and a review of options that could best deliver these.
- Potential site appraisals undertaken to ensure the building is in the right place within the wider school context. The value of carrying out a high-level site masterplan strategy that ties in with the school's business and educational development plan cannot be overemphasised to ensure that short term benefits do not cause long term headaches.
- Appropriate engagement with all stakeholders, managed with a clear communication structure. We have seen internal 'project leads' acting as conduits for communication pay dividends on numerous educational projects.

These activities feed into the project brief, which should be a written (or drawn!) document that limits opportunity for ambiguity. As the project develops, the brief should



St Faiths pupils: New science lab with bespoke practical and theory teaching spaces

be regularly reviewed, updated, approved and reissued.

The briefing document can contain project absolutes and core requirements, but also vaguer or more ephemeral aspirations. Clearly defining essentials and nice-to-haves is of great value as your project team works with you in developing the design.

The time-cost-quality triangle is a simple but powerful tool used in construction to help define client priorities and shape decisions at all stages. If delivering the building as early as possible is the overarching factor, then a contractor-led design and build approach would make sense. If control over the final quality and appearance of the building is critical, then a longer programme and traditional approach where everything is defined by the client's design team would be more appropriate. Capturing these requirements within the brief will ensure that the decisions undertaken in the following work stages are the right ones.

2 – Concept Design

3 – Spatial Coordination

4 – Technical Design

These phases see your design team develop your brief into a building design and then develop that into a set of blueprints that contain all the information the contractor needs to tender for and construct your building.

As with the briefing process, it is important to determine a series of milestones or checkpoints during the design development. This allows the client to review and sign off on the proposals (and agree any changes) before the design team add each layer of increasingly detailed information. At BB&C, we produce a report at the end of each work stage that combines all the design team's drawings, usually alongside an updated cost report and any



St Faiths Atrium: A new teaching and social space created by enclosing an existing passageway between buildings

updates to the briefing document. This provides a clear record and opportunity for the client to take stock and make key decisions, such as submission for planning approval before moving on.

With the refinement of the design, the client's role in briefing becomes more technical and detailed, e.g. selecting audio-visual equipment, choosing furniture, confirming colours, etc. Again, it is important to consider who in the school needs to be involved in those decisions and how information is communicated across the team.

5 – Manufacturing and Construction

6 – Handover

Despite being at the heart of a building project, during the construction phase the client can often feel a little removed from the work (other than paying the invoices). With everything set up properly in the previous phases, the project should not need much input. A live building site within a live school environment is bound to throw up challenges, seen and unforeseen, and maintaining good and clear communication is key to minimising difficulties and delivering a successful building project together.

7 – Use

The introduction of 'soft-landings' and post occupancy review services by your design team and contractor can bring added value to your use of the new building by ensuring it is as efficient as possible and assisting with ironing out any teething troubles. The outcome of this work stage is a building that is used, operated and maintained efficiently throughout its intended life span.

Leys External: New studio theatre and social space creating new courtyard with existing buildings



Leys Internal: Theatre foyer used for gallery space for art department

Simple flexible social-distancing floor signage

For schools and educational establishments seeking a more permanent solution to stickers to introduce and maintain social distancing, Broanmain Plastics offers an instant, robust, flexible and cost efficient Trudec floor tile solution for indoor areas and covered corridors. REACH-compliant, schools can introduce directional messages, two-metre distancing measurements and safety warnings, which can be easily changed as COVID-19 guidelines evolve.

More forgiving than traditional ceramic floor tiles and a versatile, longer lasting alternative to epoxy coatings, floor paints and stickers, the bespoke interlocking Trudec

floor tile system can be designed to reinforce social-distancing requirements post-lockdown, as well as meet the most stringent Health & Safety and wellbeing requirements. Available in multiple colours and textures, heads, bursars and facility managers can clearly mark out one-way walkways and queuing systems. Colour zones can also be used to delineate collaborative classroom workspaces.

Made from hygienic, easy clean polyvinyl chloride (PVC), schools can personalise an entire floor space with branded leadership messages and logos. The use of interlocking translucent tiles means that as social distancing



Schools can personalise an entire floor space that complies with European REACH regulations for flooring

messages change, the tiles can be lifted, new instructions or directions printed and inserted, and each tile re-laid. If pupils need to be re-routed, arrows and signage can even be fully rotated, without having to purchase an entirely new floor system.

The use of icons and symbols also helps to ensure that culturally diverse schools continue to respect multiculturalism while introducing standard protocols to protect wellbeing.

Ideal for canteens, school hallways and sheltered walkways, the Trudec Tile System can be laid on top of existing floor surfaces, including heritage tiles and original wooden parquet flooring. For science, catering, and bathroom areas prone to spills, the PVC tiles are hygienic

and easy to disinfect, increasing confidence post-lockdown among pupils and teaching staff. Being industrial-quality, the tiles are also resistant to staining from oils and industrial chemicals, as well as being flame retardant.

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Customised layouts, directional messages, designated walkways and colour zones can protect pupil and teaching staff welfare as COVID-19 lockdown measures are eased



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The long-term value of a masterplan

Building projects can be a daunting prospect for even the most experienced educationalists given the significant cost and complexity, writes Laura O'Hagan (pictured right). For many school leaders, a major building project is a once-in-a-career experience. By working with an established architect to develop a longterm estates strategy, schools benefit from an experienced design professional to help manage risks, navigate regulation and overcome technically complex processes. Moreover, the skill of a talented architect lies in identifying design opportunities that maximise the success of a project.

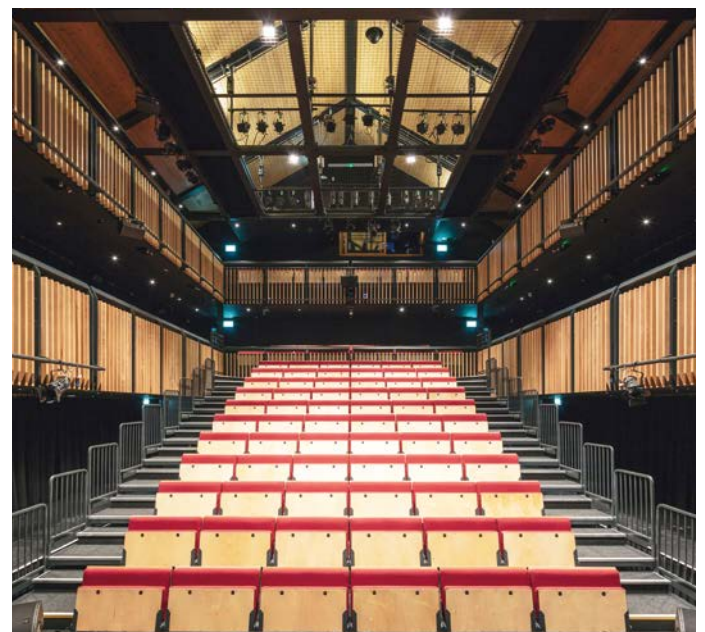
The importance of an architectural masterplan should not be underestimated. Developing a school with a masterplan is an assured way to manage risk and develop a financially robust, sustainable vision for future development. Masterplanning is a deeply analytical process that seeks to form an understanding of the spatial requirements of a school and assess them alongside long-term academic and pastoral objectives. It results in an estates strategy that makes the best use of the existing first, then guides new development in a way that

supports the values, objectives and ethos of the school.

Buckley Gray Yeoman work in the UK and abroad and have a wide-ranging education portfolio. Their recent completion of a six-year spatial masterplan for Channing School in London provided the school with a significant upgrade to its facilities on a highly constrained site within a conservation area. The masterplan served as the blueprint for this expansion, helping the practice demonstrate the full potential of the project to the community and planning authority, before



directing the reorganisation of existing accommodation and the delivery of over 25,000 sq ft of new facilities that include a professional-standard 250-seat performing arts centre, sixth form accommodation and a four-court sports hall. By considering many individual projects as elements within a coherent whole, the masterplan helped to deliver a transformational result that is the pride of the school.



Laura O'Hagan is a Director of Buckley Gray Yeoman
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Enthusiastic about Shakespeare

Actor Ralph Ineson, as seen in *Game of Thrones*, *Harry Potter* and *Guardians of the Galaxy* (pictured above), is going back to his roots as a drama teacher during lockdown. He has been working with Bournemouth Collegiate School (BCS) to encourage students to get excited about Shakespeare by performing monologues on screen to use in virtual lesson plans.

Ralph's most recent project sees him working with Director Joel Cohen and Actor Denzel Washington filming 'The Tragedy of Macbeth'. BCS students are currently studying the play, and what motivates Macbeth's decisions in the first and second act.

The students will then move on to create their own versions of the Macbeth 'If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well it were done quickly' monologue at the end of Act 1, submitted in audio or film format taking inspiration from Ralph's.

Maria Coulter, Deputy Head of BCS says: "We hope to invite Ralph back to critique some of their monologues, quite a bit of pressure to be placed under but an exciting opportunity for the students! We also are looking to combine a professional actor with the work of 14-year olds to produce Macbeth, in the future as we return to some normality. We would love to see how we can incorporate this work into the Shakespeare School festival."

Music scholarship opportunities

Two talented musicians will get the chance to continue into Sixth Form education at Ellesmere College with the aid of music scholarships funded by two families.

The Mullock Arts Scholarship and the Walker Music Scholarship – both funded by two families associated with the College – are now looking for applications for September 2020.

Donated by two families, with a passion for education and love of the arts, these scholarships have so far made it possible for seven students to achieve outstanding academic results and receive world-class music tutoring.

The Walker Music Scholarship has been presented by the Walker family for the past six years after their daughter came through the College Sixth Form on a Music Scholarship and is now a music teacher herself.

Tom and Margaret Walker wanted to give something back to the College as a thank you for the education of their own children – Rachael and Edward – and to offer another student the same opportunities they were given.

Mr and Mrs Walker said: "We are now very pleased to be able to

create a scholarship to help other talented young musicians.

"We are kept up to date with our student's achievements and it's rewarding to see them make progress and gain confidence to take them forward to the next stage of their life."

The Mullock Arts Scholarship has supported four students through Ellesmere so far and is presented by David and Robyn Mullock who wanted their love of the Arts to be passed on to the next generation.

They created a scholarship that supports students with particular music talents through their Sixth Form time at the College and encourages those students from all academic backgrounds to apply.

Mr Mullock said: "We cannot tell you how much pleasure we have had from funding our four previous 'Mullock scholars' – Nia, Beatrice, Elan and Amber. Our on-going friendship with them and their families is a delight."

The choral programme has seen the College awarded the Education Business Award for Music 2018, in recognition of its all round delivery and inclusion of music within the College and wider community.

They have been finalists in the Barnardo's Choir of the Year competition and recent semi-finalists in the televised Songs of Praise Choir of the Year competition.

Recent tours, both national and international, have included concerts at: Notre Dame, Paris; The Pantheon and St Peter's, Rome; and St George's Chapel. This year they had planned a tour to Vienna where they would have been performing in concerts and services at St Stephen's Cathedral, Pieterkirche and the Bergkirche.

Director of music, Tony Coupe said: "Music is an integral part of life at Ellesmere College and we value the talent, enthusiasm and dedication displayed by all our students.

"At Ellesmere, great emphasis has always been placed on the breadth of education. The curriculum choice of A Level, IB or the BTEC programme allows us to further widen the opportunities that exist and builds upon already established strengths within the College such as our academic excellence, Arts, Sport and Leadership development, and Global Engagement.

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School Radio launches during lockdown

St Mary's School Radio welcomed its first listeners to the launch of the breakfast show from Deputy Director of the Essex Senior School, Mr Roque Vieito last month (April) as the Summer term began. The school's community of students, parents, staff and former pupils tuned in to hear Mr Vieito sharing St Mary's news, playing a selection of upbeat songs whilst announcing dedications and shout-outs sent in by listeners.

This new project, funded by St Mary's PTA who purchased the radio equipment, has been some time in the planning, with training and student-led practice broadcasts taking place within the Senior School prior to the pandemic and subsequent temporary closure of the school. The St Mary's School Radio presenters visited BBC HQ, in London last academic year and rubbed shoulders with staff from BBC Radio 1 and BBC Radio 1Xtra,

picking up some tips and learning about careers within radio. Until students are back in school, Mr Vieito is holding the fort, broadcasting the new radio show from his home.

St Mary's Principal, Mrs Hilary Vipond said "I am delighted with how well received our new St Mary's School Radio has been. It has helped ease students back into the swing of home learning after the Easter break, creating a real sense of community and positivity during these challenging times. St Mary's School Radio is just one of many enrichment opportunities available to students who are encouraged to try something new which contrasts with other activities they might already be involved in."

The new radio station is streaming live Monday to Friday, between 8am and 8.50am, prior to the girls checking in with their teachers online for Registration.



BGT Golden Buzzer winner sends message to school

Entertainer Jon Courtenay, a former pupil at Suffolk's Royal Hospital School (RHS), wowed both the audience and judges with his performance on Britain's Got Talent last month (April).

His self-penned song not only won him a standing ovation, he impressed the judges so much that he was awarded Ant and Dec's "Golden Buzzer," which means he gets an automatic pass to the show's semi-finals.

Following the support for Jon on the School's social media, he decided to record a message for the current RHS pupils. Whilst the School remains closed following the Covid-19 shut down, RHS continues to offer a complete timetable of remote lessons to pupils across 31 countries and

Jon's message was broadcast during the School's remote assembly.

The message is one of hope and Jon makes the point that his time at RHS taught him the resilience and determination to never give up on his dreams. Commenting on the message, Director of Alumni Relations at the Royal Hospital School, Simon Marsh, said:

"Jon's story of positivity is an inspiration to our pupils and alumni. His message also connects deeply with current and former pupils with seafaring connections who, just like Jon and many thousands more, come to RHS supported by life changing bursaries. We will be backing him all the way!"

Happy Birthday, Your Majesty

Pupils, parents, teachers, alumni and governors from the Royal Hospital School (RHS) in Suffolk got together, remotely, to record God Save The Queen in honour of Her Majesty's 94th birthday last month (April).

Head of Academic Music, Ed Allen, recorded himself playing the backing track on school's Chapel Organ. This was then sent around the Globe for people to record the first verse of Britain's iconic anthem. Nearly sixty of the RHS community participated including pupil and drummer Fred Felgate who was responsible for the dramatic drumroll.

Commenting on the result, Mr Allen (pictured) said: "I am delighted with the result and overwhelmed by the response from the school community who turned this around in the day. I came up



with the idea in the morning and by the end of the day, thanks to everyone coming together virtually, we had created this great sound. My colleague, Tim Bond, then edited all the audio clips together and it sounded like everyone was together singing their hearts out."



"A Message to Corona"- Niamh Boyle

*We should not be strangers to the sink
Wash your hands, they say
Cause we don't want Covid-19
Non-essential travel has been banned
Stay at home, they say
Cause we don't want Covid-19*

*But I won't let them break me down to dust
Not gonna let this get me down
For we are glorious*

*When the biggest virus of our time
Tries to stop the world from going round
Stay inside, lock your doors
Don't go out to see your friends
No Covid!*

*Look out germs we will win
We will get our world back on its feet
We will fight against you
We make no apologies, we will win!*

*Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh, oh, oh*

*Another online school day has begun
Oh how I miss my friends, and all the
things we usually do
But beating this and moving on to*

*Greater heights we'll do, we are warriors
Yeah that's what we've become*

*I won't let this break me down to dust
Not gonna let them get me down
For we are glorious*

*When the biggest virus of our time
Tries to stop the world from going round
Stay inside, lock your doors
Don't go out to see your friends
No Covid!*

*Look out germs we will win
We will get our world back on its feet
We will fight against you
We make no apologies, we will win!*

*Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh, oh, oh*

We will win

*And we'd like to thank our NHS
They truly are amazing
When the biggest virus of our time
Tries to stop the world from going round
Stay inside, lock your doors
Don't go out to see your friends
We will win*

"This Is Me" given reboot

One of the most popular anthems ever to feature in a Hollywood musical has been given a coronavirus reboot by an Ashville College, Yorkshire, sixth former.

Year 12 pupil Niamh Boyle, who has performed The Greatest Showman's This is Me in public on numerous occasions, has now re-written the lyrics following her recent experiences – calling her song A Message to Corona.

The song now includes references to thanking the NHS, staying in, washing hands, home schooling and missing her independent school classmates.

Two years ago, Niamh, from Harrogate, performed the song at a fundraising concert she organised and staged at the town's St Wilfrid's Church, which raised more than £12,000 for national cancer charity Macmillan Cancer Support.

The same year, she played a lead in the school play – The Greatest Matilda Mashup – which featured songs from both The Greatest Showman and Matilda, where This is Me featured prominently.

The 17-year-old, who is studying music at A-Level, said: "Over the last few weeks, everyone's lives have changed beyond recognition because of coronavirus. Home schooling is putting added pressure on pupils and parents alike, and not being able to see friends and family is a very hard ask.

"This is Me is one of the most uplifting and inspiring songs of recent times. It's a song I love listening to and it's one I absolutely love singing.

"I've written new lyrics to reflect the times we are now living in, and I believe A Message to Corona will resonate with many people.

"It reinforces the key messages of 'stay at home' and 'wash your hands', and it pays tribute to NHS staff. It also has hope, as it says by abiding by this advice, which includes not seeing friends, we will ultimately beat coronavirus."

A video of Niamh performing her version of A Message to Corona can be found at <https://www.ashville.co.uk/niamh-boyle-message-to-corona/10021630.html>



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Profile

In conversation with Richard Foster

Born: 1956 (Leap Year baby)

Married? to Rachel in December 1981, with three children Caragh 36, Patrick 33 and Sam 30

Schools and University Attended: Kenton College, Nairobi; Clifton College; St. Luke's college; Exeter University

First job: Ballymaloe House Co. Cork 1974

First management job: Ballymaloe 1975

First job in education: St Andrews Turi Kenya 1978

Appointed to current job: September 2007

Favourite piece of music: Hymn Abide with Me

Favourite food: Seafood/Thai

Favourite drink: Red wine

Favourite holiday destination: Kenya

Favourite leisure pastime: Golf

Favourite TV or radio programme/series: Sport/ Wildlife/Desert Island Discs

Suggested epitaph: Love of family, love of life and love of children

Q Your first headship was in Kenya, where you led Pembroke House School for nine years from 1985. This was just over twenty years since the country gained independence from Britain, and a period when political turbulence followed the declaration of a one-party state. This must have been a difficult time for the country and for education. What – if anything – had prepared you for the challenges you faced as a 28-year-old head in such circumstances?

A I believe one of the reasons why I was appointed to lead Pembroke House was because I had a good knowledge and love of the country. Partly because I was born and brought up in East Africa, but also because I had decided to go back and begin my teaching career at St. Andrews Turi another well-established IAPS school in Kenya. At that time it was also helpful to be able to speak Swahili (I was almost fluent at the time). I was educated at Kenton College in Nairobi but also attended Clifton College in Bristol so I had a sound knowledge of the English Independent system which was vital. The third advantage I had over other candidates was the fact that a large number of Pembroke House parents had sent their daughters to St Andrews Turi so they knew me personally, not just by reputation.

Q You returned to the UK as head of St. Anselm's, Derbyshire, in 1994. Why did you decide to leave Africa?

A After 9 years at Pembroke House, Rachel and I were extremely established at the school and it was flourishing, having opened our doors to girls. It was an extremely hard decision to make, but with three children of our own we had to think of their future education. We also believed if we didn't make the decision then, we would still be there now. Such was the lifestyle in those days that it was very easy to get too comfortable. We realised there was another world to explore. I was also given some great advice by the then Headmaster of Oundle David McMurray, he said "Make sure you move on before you need or want to, move when things are really going well." I have taken this advice on board in all sorts of situations but especially in my major career decisions.

Q After 15 years in Derbyshire, you moved south to Sussex and Windlesham House, which holds the double distinction of being one of the country's oldest prep schools and becoming, in 1967, the first co-ed school in the Independent Association of Prep Schools (IAPS). By then you had become certain that happy children do well, and your mantra became: 'Be kind, be kind, be kind'. Has that philosophy

evolved to strike a particular chord with today's young people?

A Leaving St. Anselm's was very hard because we were extremely happy and felt very possessive of the school, just as we had at Pembroke. Another challenge and another opportunity to run a bigger and a 'top of the tree school' was an exciting prospect. We recognised Windlesham House ticked most, if not all of our boxes. It was well established with an excellent reputation, a very strong boarding ethos, renowned for being child centred and forward-thinking with a very welcoming atmosphere. It had all of the human resources to ensure the children had the opportunity to reach their academic potential, whilst also discovering their individual strengths and talents. It embraced every sphere of school life with a very broad curriculum – Art, Drama, DT, ICT, Music, team sports as well as all of the individual sports.

Windlesham House embraced everything that Rachel and I felt was important and we both felt we could make our mark and enhance all of the qualities further. I was renowned for demanding high standards of good manners and respect for each other. I knew I could embed this into the culture of the school alongside my mantra of Be kind, Be Kind, Be Kind.

Q Windlesham House has around 350 pupils between 4 and 13, with boarding from Year 4. You are known as an advocate of boarding and believe it helps in developing emotional intelligence. Can you expand on that?

A I would never suggest that boarding is right for every child or indeed every family, but as a parent I was acutely aware that there comes a time in a child's development when they learn more from their peers than their parents. It is hard for some parents to accept this but those who do often become the biggest advocates of boarding. Rachel once said to me that you really have to love your children to board them, as it is for their gain not the parents. She is absolutely right. Today's boarding is completely different to five years ago let alone ten years ago. With all the modern-day communications parents and children can be in touch as much as they like or need to be.

I do a huge amount of interview practice with children and the ISEB pre-test means this has to be taken in year 6. When I ask a boarder what they enjoy most about boarding they invariably say it is like an extended sleep over. When I then say what are the benefits of boarding, they invariably say it gives them more independence and helps them appreciate others' differences

Richard Foster retires from the headship of Windlesham House School, Sussex, at the end of this academic year, after 105 terms at the helm of schools in the UK and Africa.



and to recognise their own strengths and weaknesses. This is, in my opinion the most natural way to develop emotional intelligence and resilience, which are becoming the two most important attributes any young person needs to develop; the earlier the better.

Never before have social skills been more essential than they are today. The ability to understand, support, encourage and appreciate other people are the soft skills necessary for young people to succeed and derive satisfaction both in their work and their personal lives. The kind of environment Windlesham is, makes it the ideal place to give every child the opportunities to acquire all of these life skills at a young age, which will give them a head start in life.

Q You were a pupil at Clifton College, Bristol. Did you board? What would you pick out as the main difference in the boarding experience now compared to then?

A *I boarded at my prep school and at Clifton College. Looking back on the experience I was very lucky because I loved sport and was good at many of them. Quite frankly that was all that mattered. Boarding in that era was very much take it or leave it, sink or swim. The level of pastoral care was poor to put it mildly and there was little accountability. The reverse is now true and not just because of the incredible impact of safeguarding. Schools are generally warm and friendly places, teaching standards are vastly improved and there is scrutiny and accountability from every area. Boarding standards are on a different level and health and safety is of paramount importance. Instant communication is probably the main difference and transparency is essential.*

Q You have retained Saturday morning school when many others have dropped it. What's your thinking behind this?

A *The demise of Saturday school is of course not going to change and a stand-alone Prep school like Windlesham cannot hold out if all around them are changing. The impact on families, the inability to have inter-school fixtures and events will make it impossible to hold out. Being a bastion of boarding, Windlesham will need to have a two-tier provision because the boarders will need to be looked after. It presents the opportunity to be a lot more creative and offer activities at a different level. Whilst I will be sad to see it change, there is no getting away from the fact that today's family time is based around the weekends and rather than expecting the*

market to move to you, flourishing schools like Windlesham need to move to the market.

Q Your wife Rachel is Head of Pastoral and Safeguarding Lead at Windlesham. She will know that school marketeers across the land invariably describe their pastoral provision in glowing terms, but how can heads ensure on an everyday basis that the reality matches the promise, that issues will be nipped in the bud before they became major problems?

A *My wife Rachel has played a pivotal role ever since I became a head. She is extremely approachable and has always been on hand for children, staff and parents. Pastoral care is always a key focus. Every child in the school is allocated to a house and one of my crucial appointments is that of the houseparent. A full timetable and female member of staff who has that all-important quality of empathy and giving of their time. They are then supported by the rest of the staff who are allocated to the houses and become a tutor. Each tutor will have between 8-10 tutees who they monitor very closely. We also have 12 children who are trained as peer listeners and children often turn to the older children who have been very carefully selected because of their emotional intelligence.*

Q Programmes for reducing staff stress levels are also higher on the agenda than they were. Is the job getting harder, or are staff less prepared to 'get on and cope' than they were? Do you detect that fewer talented people are now prepared to take on the rigours of headship?

A *There is no doubt the rigours of a headship have increased year on year and the role has inevitably become considerably more demanding. For all of the reasons already mentioned, transparency, safeguarding, health and safety, risk assessments, GDPR and social media to name but a few of the overriding responsibilities. Parents' expectations and demands continue to increase and while I am not suggesting that the level of trust and respect are diminishing, there is no doubt that this is now a customer service industry.*

It is interesting that the online learning provision that every school in the country has had to deliver recently has only highlighted what schools and heads have known for some time, that comparisons are being made all of the time and add into the equation parent WhatsApp groups within year groups and you have a mine field of opinions flying around. It makes the car park gossip of yesteryear pale into insignificance!

Q Your three children have all gone into careers in the prep school world. What's your prediction for how the independent education sector will evolve for them and others in the next ten years?

A *It meant a great deal to Rachel and I that our children followed us both into the teaching profession and that in each case their spouses/partners are also teachers. We must have done something right in bringing them up. The greatest concern looking ahead has to be affordability. The independent sector has priced itself out of the market for the majority of the middle range earners. I do not have the answers, but something needs to change otherwise our schools will just be for the super-rich living in the country or abroad. It would help if the media and the government recognised and supported the independent education sector for the huge amount of respect it generates around the world, the revenue it generates for our economy, the influence on our tourism and the global interaction that we cater for. It is after all, a global world that the current generation are going to have to face and adapt to in the future.*

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

A *From a very early age I had an empathy with younger children and during my teenage years would often be found entertaining children at birthday parties and such like gatherings. I distinctly remember at the age of 17 knowing that teaching was the profession I wanted to join. I realised it would never make me rich, but I knew it would be extremely satisfying and rewarding in so many ways. With my love of sport, I also knew it was a lifestyle that would suit me. Teaching is all about dealing with people and giving oneself to help others and I knew this would suit my personality. I loved organising and having responsibility had always sat easily on my shoulders so I was always confident that I had the skill set to make a difference to young people. As years have gone by I believe I have also helped the vast majority of parents whose off spring have been under my tutelage.*

Q Your final term can hardly be working out as you might have expected, thanks to Covid19. What have been the greatest challenges of lockdown for you as a headmaster, and you as a private citizen?

Continued >

Profile In conversation with Richard Foster (continued)

A It goes without saying that no one could see what was coming. I often think back to New Year's Eve and the incredible sense that a difficult year was behind us. You only have to recall all the uncertainty of Brexit to know what I mean. Covid 19 has of course ripped up everything we were planning and this is the case for everyone in the world, so it is quite easy to be philosophical about what should have been/ could have been. Being ever the optimist I am confident we will be able to make up for what has been lost or should I say has been denied to us. The greatest challenge for me as a headmaster and as a private citizen is the realisation that I am such a people person and not being able to see my family and friends and of course, everyone who makes up the Windlesham community is

very challenging and upsetting. I long to be able to hug people again and socialise with everyone who knows us.

Q What are you planning to do to after you retire?

A It will come as no surprise to those that know Rachel and myself that we will spend more time with our family, we will travel a lot and I will make up for all the weeks and months I have not been able to play golf. We are very active people and we will definitely keep ourselves busy. I really intend to utilise my lifetime experience of helping parents and children identify their future schools and the right path for their lives. I am confident I will be involved in various different ways to make this happen and I want to keep earning enough to ensure we can enjoy ourselves to the full.

More photography awards

Three King's Ely students have snapped their way to victory in a national photography competition.

There were more than 1,500 images submitted in this year's Beyond the Frame student photography competition, on the theme 'Through my Eyes'. The contest is organised by Norwich University of the Arts (NUA) and attracts entries from across the UK.

King's Ely Senior student, Emily Parsons, who is in Year 11, won the top prize in the competition's Under 16's category. King's Ely Sixth Form students, Lydia Goff and Paige Newell, who are both in Year 12, also won Judges' Choice Awards.

Lydia's image was chosen by Julia Belgutay, Acting FE Director at the Times Education Supplement (TES). Paige's image was chosen by professional photographer Kane Layland, fashion and portrait photographer who graduated from NUA in 2018 and now works with brands including Vidal Sassoon, Armani Exchange and Jimmy Choo.

The trio's success comes just weeks after Paige was crowned



Pictured: Emily's 'Through My Eyes' winning image

the winner of this year's ILFORD PHOTO UK Student Photography Competition with a different image to the photo she won with in Beyond the Frame. In 2018, King's Ely Sixth Form student, Gaia Giardinelli, also won the Beyond the Frame contest.

As well as Emily, Paige and Lydia winning awards in Beyond the Frame, King's Ely students Alice Edwards, Lisa Lyu, Mia Wang, Tabitha Udy and Luna Guo also had their work shortlisted in the contest.

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1989-90: Rachel Wilson
1990-91: Michelle O'Neil
1991-92: Susan King
1992-93: Victoria Harris

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1988-89: Sara Chapman
1989-90: Rachel Wilson
1990-91: Michelle O'Neil
1991-92: Susan King
1992-93: Victoria Harris

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2003-2004: Matthew Norrington
2004-2005: James Ashburn
2005-2006: George Phipps
2006-2007: Anna Marshall
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Pictured: Paige with her Ilford win

University offers free online training for teachers to support the delivery of a digital curriculum

Teachers in the Tees Valley and County Durham are now able to sign up to free digital skills training – technical and creative – following some quick thinking by Teesside University as part of its comprehensive response to Covid-19.

The Digital Skills for Growth programme was due to run as physical events but is now being offered as a series of online accredited courses for primary and secondary school teachers – as well as non-teaching staff – until 24th June. The eight different courses span a combination of half-day and full-day sessions meaning that teachers and other school staff can immediately sharpen up their professional development in areas such as coding, digital marketing, and arts for games and film. There are also courses available in data visualisation, developing personalised business intelligence solutions with Microsoft POWER BI, making sense of digital business, and web production.

The programme is part-funded by the European Social Fund and delivered by the University's School of Computing, Engineering and Digital Technologies. University colleagues at DigitalCity, funded from the European Regional Development Fund across Tees Valley, will also provide a mentoring service to Tees Valley learners to help their employers gain maximum benefits for their upskilling.

Teachers who complete the short accredited courses will receive a University Certificate in Professional Development in Digital Skills Qualification.

Through the programme they will also get a six-week lesson plan to take back to school and deliver immediately to their pupils.

"Given the unprecedented situation we have adapted our project for the immediate short-term and changed the way we are going to be delivering some of our accredited courses so that everything is online," explained Siobhan Fenton, the School's Associate Dean (Enterprise and Business Engagement).

"Whilst we understand that teachers are extremely focused at this time, the bespoke training will help to address the digital skills gaps and teacher training needs in the region that were identified by schools and we wanted to deliver against our original promise to help them. The programme presents a fantastic opportunity for teachers to future-proof their digital skills at this time. Importantly there is no charge for the courses.

"The world in which we work, live and play is clearly changing and we need to keep up with technology in all aspects of our lives. Digital technology, particularly artificial intelligence and data analytics, has introduced revolutionary changes in every sector to enhance efficiency, increase productivity and reduce costs. Arguably this is going to be even more important once the coronavirus pandemic has passed."

For more information please email digitalskillsforgrowth@tees.ac.uk or call 01642 738701/07917 473992.

Mayflower Marathon

In recognition of the journey made by the Pilgrim Fathers in 1620, Plymouth College pupils and staff are seeking to collectively travel the 2,750 miles from Plymouth to Cape Cod. The Mayflower Marathon is a challenge designed to keep the wider Plymouth College community physically active during lockdown as well as celebrating the history of the great maritime city of Plymouth.

Mr Mutlow, Director of Sport, who came up with the idea, said; 'I wanted to do something that the whole school community could get involved with and to also mark the importance of 2020 for the city of Plymouth. We only launched the marathon a week ago and we've already reached the halfway point so it looks like we'll make the journey a fair bit quicker than the Pilgrim Fathers did! We've had pupils doing laps of their gardens on roller skates and clocking up the miles by park trips on their scooters– the more inventive the better!'

Not only does this give the school a chance to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower setting sail from Plymouth, but also encourages the whole community to look after their physical well-being and show what can be achieved when people pull together during these challenging times.

Everyone is encouraged to record their activities and a daily total is updated and shared on social media using the hashtags - #PlymouthCollegeMayflower400 and #MayflowerMarathon.

Virtual badges and certificates are being awarded for reaching milestones such as 1 mile, 5 miles and 10 miles. Mr Mutlow added; 'I am hoping these little awards will be something our pupils and staff can look back on in years to come and remember fondly how they contributed to this one-of-a-kind marathon. I'm so proud of the spirit shown by everyone to get involved and have some fun.'

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Who says teachers need a D1 to drive a minibus?

Chris Maynard, Managing Director of Castle Minibus discusses the advice from various sources on whether teachers need a D1 entitlement to drive a minibus.

Why the law changed in 1997

The UK was the only EU country that made exceptions to needing a D1 to drive a minibus when the law was changed in 1997, following a tragic school minibus accident in 1993 that killed 11 pupils and their teacher. D1 entitlement was no-longer included on a licence issued after 1 January 1997. The UK made an exception to needing D1 entitlement to 'protect' the voluntary sector and introduced the Section 19 Permit, to regulate this sector.

Organisations, including schools, that have charitable status or are not-for-profit and run their minibus operation at cost, can apply for a Section 19 Permit which means they don't have to have an Operator's Licence and drivers aren't required to have the full D1 entitlement and CPC to drive, even though they can be paid to drive.

Some drivers will have the inherited D1 (101) entitlement but drivers who passed their test after 1 January 1997 will not, they will hold what is known as the standard category B car licence.

To allow the voluntary sector to drive minibuses without a D1 entitlement, the Section 19 Permit guidelines state 'Category B entitles them to drive a small bus but only if all of the following conditions are met:

1. they have held a full category B car licence for at least 2 years
2. they receive no payment or other consideration for driving other than out-of-pocket expenses
3. the vehicle has a maximum gross weight not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (4.25 tonnes including specialised equipment for the carriage of disabled passengers)
4. for drivers aged 70 or over, that they don't have any medical conditions which would disqualify them from eligibility for a D1 licence
5. no trailer is being towed
6. where the driver's licence only authorises the driving of vehicles with automatic transmission, that only a vehicle with automatic transmission is used'

(www.gov.uk/government/publications/section-19-and-22-permits-not-for-profit-passenger-transport/section-19-and-22-permits-not-for-profit-passenger-transport)

Vehicles under 3500kg

There are minibuses on the market that are under 3500kg. They are commonly known as light-weight minibuses. These vehicles leave the factory as a van and are converted into minibuses. Schools need to be aware that to keep the weights down some safety features such as side impact bars and more robust seats may have been excluded. There is no 17-seater minibus that leaves the factory as a minibus that is under 3500kg. These vehicles appeared on the market so schools could avoid putting their staff through a D1 licence.

Relying on the weight of the vehicle to drive on a standard B licence means schools need to be sure

they understand the weights of their vehicles, their allowances and what payload will take them over weight.

Are teachers/school staff driving minibuses doing so for no payment or other consideration?

One of the conditions under the Section 19 Permit for driving on a category B licence (as well as vehicle weight) is 'they receive no payment or other consideration for driving'

Are teachers/school staff who are driving minibuses doing so for 'no payment or other consideration'. The government gives no definitive answer on this matter. This is the issue that schools driving minibuses on a B car licence need to be aware of, and seek advice for clarification.

Who says teachers need a D1?

Castle Minibus, have investigated this issue with various governing bodies and county councils and sought legal advice based on our research detailed below, we therefore recommend that teachers and school staff do not drive without D1 entitlement.

County Councils who have sought specialist legal advice require teachers to have a D1 entitlement

Hertfordshire County Council states:

'If you drive for your employer, your licence must include category D1.

This includes teachers and school staff, during the school day or out of hours. That's because you're at work, being paid and your journeys are official business.

There is an exemption for volunteers without D1 on their licence. However, our legal advice is that this exemption does not apply to teachers and school staff.'

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/speed-awareness-and-driver-training/minibuses-in-hertfordshire/minibuses-in-hertfordshire.aspx#DynamicJumpMenuManager_1_Anchor_4

Northumberland County Council

'We insist that all drivers employed by Northumberland County Council hold category D1 minibus entitlement on their driving licence. Although there are circumstances where the law allows drivers in the voluntary sector to drive on a car licence (category B), the Freight Transport Association advise that the exemption does not apply to school teachers nor anyone else driving in the course of their paid employment. This is regardless of whether their contract of employment requires them to drive.

<http://northumberlandeducation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/School-Minibus-Advice-and-Guidance-1.pdf>

NASWUT National Union of Teachers

'Whether a teacher may be deemed to be driving a minibus for hire and reward because they are being paid a salary as a teacher is unclear, and

advice on this point is contradictory, except in Northern Ireland.

The NASUWT strongly asserts that, particularly but not exclusively due to the ambiguity around the hire/reward status, the full D1 licence is the minimum requirement, and a car licence is insufficient in all circumstances. If schools wish to train minibus drivers to D1 level, the costs of any training and testing for the D1 licence must be covered in full by the employer.'

www.nasuwt.org.uk/advice/health-safety/minibus-guidance.html

Northern Ireland require teachers to hold a D1 and DQC (Driver Qualification Card)

In April 2018 Northern Ireland published its guidance on licence requirements for minibuses, 'to explain the law as it is intended'. The UK has not followed suit, but it is an indication that when the issue is examined properly by the UK government the outcome is likely to be the same.

'Drivers who drive buses as an incidental part of their employment, drivers such as teachers, health workers, and caretakers who drive buses as part of their employment are deemed to be paid drivers. These drivers need a full D1 licence. This requirement applies whether or not they are full time drivers or casual drivers. In all likelihood anyone driving during their hours of employment, for their employer, where they are responsible for the passengers in their care and subject to disciplinary procedures would be viewed as driving as a consequence of their employment.'

www.nidirect.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Driver-Licensing-Requirements-for-Minibuses-April-2018.PDF

In Summary

This issue, concludes Chris, has never been tested in court and there is ambiguity surrounding teacher's status as volunteer drivers, driving without reward, payment or other consideration.

As a business we are doing what we can to educate schools on minibus compliance with online and face to face training so they are aware of the issues and can make informed decisions. It has never been more important for schools to create a robust safety system for their minibuses, as increasingly we are hearing about the DVSA and police pulling minibuses over to check permits, licences and vehicles.

I urge schools to check their permits are valid, that they are fulfilling all their obligations under the Section 19 Permit and that they are confident their drivers are holding the right licences.

Our best practice recommendation is that, regardless of minibus weights, all school staff driving 8 or more passengers need D1 entitlement. But, please do not rely on commercial advice; if there is any doubt then either adopt best practice to eliminate all risk or seek specialist legal advice.



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Taking the helm during lockdown

Mr Simon Ruscoe-Price became Headmaster of Abbotsholme School, Staffordshire, at the beginning of the summer term, immediately after experiencing the leadership challenges of lockdown schools in China...

It seems like it was in a different era that I was appointed as the next Headmaster at Abbotsholme School back in December 2019. I flew over from the hustle and bustle of Shanghai to a progressive school nestled in the heart of the English countryside. I was struck by the polite, eloquent and well-rounded pupils who asked searching questions with self-confidence and a sense of humour. I immediately felt both a pedagogical and philosophical fit with Abbotsholme. It was with great enthusiasm that I spent the following month preparing for my first term in post, with a smooth handover from the previous Headmaster followed by a plethora of activities aimed at getting to know the school, the staff and the community and enabling them to get to know me.

Three months later, I am starting my tenure as the Head at Abbotsholme at a time when close to four billion people are under some form of intense social distancing to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Much, if not all, of our summer term learning, will be remote and online, and we have had to adapt to a new way of working. However, having spent the last three months supporting schools on lockdown in China, I have experienced first-hand how well-structured e-learning and strong pastoral support facilitate excellent learning outcomes.

The first INSET day in April was conducted online. It felt somewhat peculiar addressing a new team through the lens of a small camera on the top of my laptop, with no way of gauging how the message was being received. The meeting centred on introductions, the usual housekeeping followed by an outline of the e-learning approach for the weeks ahead. I thanked my new colleagues for their resilience and courage and highlighted how we would move prudently, yet swiftly to enrich and embed

sound policies and practices to complement our all-inclusive robust e-learning environment.

During this period of prolonged lockdown, we will remain faithful to Abbotsholme's tradition as a progressive school which develops the whole pupil, centred on educational practice to encourage independence, confidence and academic success while also ensuring that pupils' wellbeing and engagement remain at the heart of what we do. To this end, we have adopted a threefold strategy.

Firstly to reinforce our current e-learning platform and structure of the school day. We ensured that we continued to use the applications to assign, collect, and review pupil work and aligned the structure of our virtual school day to the physical one.

Secondly to meet individual learning needs through machine learning, often mistakenly referred to by the more exciting term of artificial intelligence, where online software can analyse and draw on vast data to provide just-in-time learning to pupils.

The third approach is to introduce a safe and robust live learning platform where the virtual classroom draws on multimedia to generate and share deep learning. It also allows for effective pastoral provision and a time for children to be in the moment with their peers.

We explored and implemented ways to strengthen communication and introduced protocols that allowed us to provide safe small group live interactions through MS Teams. We recognise that pupils have now spent a long time in isolation with their siblings, parents or guardians, and actively engage in their daily school routine through e-learning. Many parents are working from home, maintaining the house, keeping a close watch on the health and learning of all in their care. Moreover, the economic uncertainty brought through the

pandemic and the associated risks of an early exit from the lockdown compound the pressure on households. It is usual for this to take its toll on us, and to this end we recognise the need to provide online pastoral support, a time for pupils to interact and guidance for groups of pupils to enable them to keep up to speed with their learning and their friends. I would argue strongly that at this time, we must equip our school community with an understanding of wellbeing along with the skills and adeptness to manage uncertainty and to be mutually supportive.

As a new Headmaster I am heartened by how quickly the school has embraced change and salute the courage of the staff, parents and pupils in adapting not only to the new ways of working but also to a new school leader. I would never have imagined it possible to be able to take the helm of a school when almost everyone

is working from home and yet now feel very much a welcome part of the community.

I have been struck by the positivity of our community, and as we commemorated VE day, it was heartening to see that we are able to unite and adapt in the darkest and most challenging times. I want to thank staff, parents and pupils for their leap of faith in the e-learning strategy. Abbotsholme pupils will continue to be inspired to develop intellectually, physically, spiritually and emotionally. I am thrilled to have the opportunity of leading this excellent school in its next exciting chapter as a progressive school in a fantastic setting, built upon British family values driven by excellence for every child in his or her chosen domain. I remain firmly committed to upholding the Abbotsholme values of honesty, integrity, respect, humility and courage.



Simon Ruscoe-Price at Abbotsholme School. He served nine years as Director of Specialism focusing on language, culture and diversity at a high school in Suffolk, before taking his first step into international education as Deputy Director of a national school improvement programme for the government of the United Arab Emirates. Mr Ruscoe-Price then moved to India to implement a specialist international curriculum delivering academic excellence across a group of schools.

In 2014, Mr Ruscoe-Price took on his first UK Headship and set up a new free school in Sussex. He was then tempted back overseas by Wellington College who employed him as a Director with responsibility for the academic aspects of their six schools in China.

Learning science at home – independent and state school partnerships rise to the challenge

Abingdon School, Oxfordshire, prides itself on the value placed on engaging with the local community and other schools in the area through Abingdon School in Partnership (ASiP) initiatives. The strong, professional relationships built up over a number of years is paying dividends during the COVID-19 crisis, particularly for ASiP's Abingdon Science Partnership (ASP), which works with science coordinators from over 30 local schools through established networks in the area. A report by Jeremy Thomas, Science Partnership Coordinator at Abingdon School.

The ASP supports many science-related opportunities for the local community. A programme of primary science workshops, designed specifically for the KS1 and KS2 science curriculum, is run in a bespoke science lab in the School's Yang Science Centre and support for the British Science Association's CREST Award scheme leads to hundreds of local children obtaining the award each year. Workshops and activities, such as GCSE Astronomy, are offered at secondary level and ASP is a main supporter of the annual Abingdon ATOM Festival of Science and Technology, with the school providing venues for many key events. Such activities have led

to strong bonds of professional respect and friendship between staff and pupils at all the schools involved.

When it became apparent that the response to the COVID-19 pandemic would involve restriction of public gatherings and school closures, Partnership activities became an immediate casualty with visits between schools prohibited even before closures began. However, it was also obvious that this was an opportunity to adapt existing ASP resources and collaborations to new and challenging circumstances. The aim of ASP became to try to provide meaningful science education for children at home, but also to provide

time-saving support to teachers and parents suddenly coping with new demands and the flood of uncoordinated, online resources being offered to them.

Our partners instantly engaged with the idea, particularly Holly Irving, Science Co-ordinator at Caldecott Primary School, and Ruth Barnett, at Sunningwell Primary School, who contributed ideas for generic lesson plans and then reviewed resources using their specialist, primary science knowledge. This generous support was very welcome, especially as both were also involved in teaching key workers' children at school as well as delivering work packs and even basic writing materials to children without access to online platforms or resources at home. Working together with these colleagues, ASP Coordinator Jeremy Thomas, was able to design tailored lesson plans for school or home, adapted for use with minimal resources, and to share these freely via the ASP's website. Having such a platform, run by the ASP Assistant Megan Milarski, proved essential in this case as it provided a fast and secure way to share resources with users outside the School's own ICT network. As an end user of the resources, Ruth Barnett, at Sunningwell Primary, commented:

'The support and ideas that ASP has provided have been extremely helpful in supporting our staff in this time of lockdown. They have carefully thought through how they can be adapted for use both at home, with parents, as well as in school with a wide age range of Key Worker children. The children



have benefited from the practical activities that have been suggested and have had lots of fun.'

The online platform, in addition to membership of the Schools Together network, also facilitated collaboration with the Oundle, Peterborough and East Northants Learning Partnership (OPEN) based at Oundle School and directed by Gordon Montgomery. Gordon's colleague, Stephen Adams, coordinates OPEN's STEM activities and was able to share their own home science resources, developed through collaboration with Imperial College London, via the ASP's website. Resources continue to be developed for the ASP/OPEN Science at Home platform throughout the closure period, including remote GCSE Astronomy lessons for pupils from four schools, and contributions from ASP's team of student Science Ambassadors who had been disappointed by not being able to run their weekly Science Club for primary school children during the summer term. Instead, they turned their efforts to planning a weekly science at home session for sharing with Year 5 and 6 children.

The ability to develop and share resources in such a short space of time and in extraordinary circumstances has been yet another demonstration of the power of sustained partnerships for all involved in these initiatives, both at Abingdon and its partner schools. Lessons are looking to be learnt from the experience of Abingdon Science Partnership to help broaden the range of support available beyond science in the future.



The challenges for independent schools in responding to COVID-19

A report by the Sutton Trust published last month (April) revealed that a third of pupils are taking part in online lessons since schools closed, but that independent schools are twice as likely as state school pupils to participate in daily remote learning*. This is not surprising; many schools in both sectors were significantly challenged when the UK government directive to close came with little warning just weeks before the end of the spring term, writes Jenny Neild of the Stephen Perse Foundation (SPF)...



At SPF we embarked on an expansive digital strategy eight years ago to underpin our vision for learning, ensuring that all students gain the skills and education they need for their future. Rolling out iPads on a 1:1 basis to staff and students in our Senior School and Sixth Form, with iPads available for class use in our Junior and pre-prep schools, SPF was one of the first schools awarded Apple Distinguished School status in the UK. Now one of 470 schools recognised by Apple as "centres of leadership and excellence" in the use of Apple technology for learning, we also use Google Apps for Education extensively too.

We have always believed that the use of technology should be part of a multiple tools approach used by teachers and students, alongside books and more traditional methods of teaching and learning. It's not a choice of either books or screens; the best outcomes for students in today's highly connected world are achieved by using both.

SPF's digital strategy, investing and firmly establishing a robust technological infrastructure over a long period, meant that we have been able to promote a high level of confidence in staff to be able to actively teach, and students to learn in new ways.

The use of technology has always been a key strand in our critical incident planning. Last summer a full emergency planning exercise involving a scenario where the majority of our sites were closed

because of extensive flooding allowed us to work through what we would do if the sites closed suddenly. This was invaluable in determining our actions in the run up to lockdown. The difference being we had a few weeks to plan for COVID-19, not a matter of hours.

As a result of the digital strategy and the emergency planning, the transition to remote learning was not only possible but also successful. As we followed the unfolding crisis in the weeks before lockdown, we were able to anticipate the need for a remote learning policy and the required procedures for effective implementation and spent two weeks rehearsing with students and staff.

Training staff and ongoing support has been critical to our success. Many staff members had already taught lessons remotely, either with our maintained sector partners or for reasons of practicality and delivered training sessions both before and after the lockdown. There is also support for staff wellbeing as they transition to this virtual world.

Very quickly a broad aim was agreed: that all students, whatever their age or stage of education should have access to the learning and pastoral support they need to ensure their education continues through this unprecedented time. Continuity and structure are paramount to their wellbeing. From the first Monday after schools' closures students in Years

7-13 were able to access the full curriculum through live teaching in their normal school timetable. In the Senior School this was highly effective with high levels of engagement in terms of classes attended and the work achieved. 99% of students reported being engaged in online learning after lockdown started. Across the Foundation, recent analysis by SPF's IT team revealed an average of just under 950 active Google classes per teaching day since lockdown and over 1400 individual Google Classroom users since Easter. As SPF has c1400 students these statistics demonstrate the extent of online engagement.

Our approach to the continued education of our younger students has been to minimise the additional support needed from busy parents, now trying to juggle jobs and childcare. Our young learners (from Kindergarten upwards) are very comfortable with the technology; however they do need more support to be able to access it. A stepped approach has worked and, following the very successful trial in the older year groups, all students from Year 1 upwards are now learning in accordance with their normal summer term timetable, with the school providing iPads to all students from Year 3. Our youngest Early Years students are working with their teachers in recorded lessons and activities that they can access when convenient to their parents. It is not all screen-based there are many physical activities, even music and singing lessons.

Once the remote teaching had been effectively set up and properly resourced, we turned our attention to the financial side of the equation and fees in particular. The coronavirus pandemic was found to invalidate our business interruption insurance and the Governors decided early on not to declare a force majeure. Boarding and nursery fees could not be charged during closure and we extended the hardship provision to those in financial distress. Working closely with Governors we determined the savings that could be made and returned those to parents. These have been limited as the costs of full remote teaching are high and we are still incurring many of our physical site costs. Whilst most parents have congratulated the Stephen Perse on the remote teaching programme, there are some looking to the fee discounts offered by other schools and have drawn unfair comparisons. They do not appreciate the relative amount of teaching and learning delivered, or the extra work required by staff to deliver work remotely, or understand the nuances of school finances and the differing reserve levels across the sector. We recognise that this is not an easy time for many families who may be facing financial challenges of their own so some pushback on discounts is inevitable. However we remain resolute that the prioritisation of the wellbeing and education of our students through these unprecedented times is paramount.

Jenny Neild is Executive Director of the Stephen Perse Foundation which runs seven schools (including two nurseries) located in Cambridgeshire and Essex
• Dame Bradbury's Junior School • Rosedale House Junior School and Madingley • Stephen Perse Senior School • Stephen Perse Sixth Form • Two Stephen Perse Nurseries

*<https://www.suttontrust.com/news-opinion/all-news-opinion/independent-school-pupils-twice-as-likely-to-get-online-lessons-every-day/>.

Covid 19 – A Chaplain's Response



Alongside the personal concerns that people have for the health and safety of their loved ones, the current crisis caused by Covid 19 has brought with it enormous disruption to the life of our schools both in this country and around the world. The normal rhythms of school life have been suspended, public exams have been cancelled, teachers and pupils alike are having to learn how to study online, and the normal school conventions and rituals associated with the Summer Term look like they will not take place. It is particularly hard for those leaving School this year, for whom it seems, at the moment, there may not be any proper sense of closure.

Simultaneously, the Covid 19 emergency has also resulted in questions that challenge people of religious faith and perhaps harden further the views of people of no religious faith. At the core of this challenge, is the question of "where is God in all this"? To this could be added the supplementary questions, "has God abandoned his people" and even, "is Covid 19 God's doing"? Reverend Brian Cunningham (pictured), Senior Chaplain at Oundle School, Northamptonshire, discusses...

These questions have been raised many times before when considering the extent of human suffering and tragedy in the aftermath of natural disasters like the recent volcano eruptions in the Philippines or on White Island in New Zealand, the Tsunami in Indonesia or, going much further back, the Spanish Flu pandemic at the end of the First World War 1918-20. The difference now for many in our schools is that this is perhaps the first time they have been at the sharp end of such a crisis, where everybody's individual response matters hugely. Consequently, the need to observe the protocols of social distancing and confinement will not just have

clipped the wings of the young but also perhaps undermined confidence in the perceived stability of the world around them. Potential questions surrounding personal wellbeing and faith develop naturally from this.

For Chaplains, when faced with questions of this nature within a School environment, a pastoral response is called for, not a philosophical one. It is important initially to acknowledge the gravity of the situation, there is a sense of "exile" about where we are. Although we are not physically separated from our homes, quite the contrary actually, we are separated from our School communities and the regular rhythms of life. We have become hugely reliant on the "virtual" world rather than the "real" world and there is a sense of alienation about this.

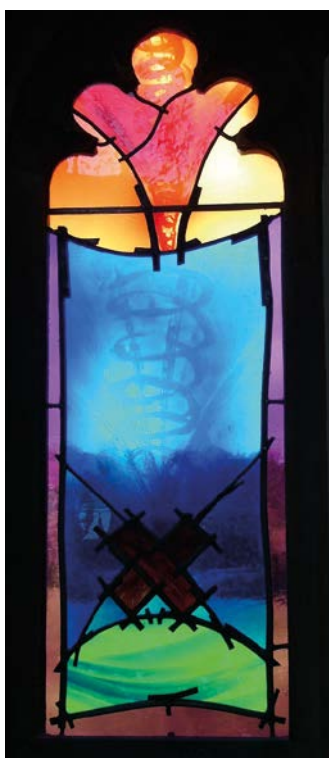
In these circumstances, we need to return to the fundamentals of our faith. We need to remember that we believe in a loving God who neither wills nor orchestrates the suffering of his people; indeed, we believe the opposite to be true. We have just celebrated the great Christian festival of Easter, although with the Churches being closed, in a radically different way. Nevertheless, as we followed the events of Holy Week towards Easter Day itself, we are shown that our God does not abandon us to the suffering and challenging situations we confront in life. On the contrary, the Passion and Crucifixion of Jesus show us that God knows exactly what it means to suffer and, so is able to stand alongside and support us in times of personal and national crisis.

These are the roots of our faith and

must inform the pastoral approach we adopt in our contact with pupils and staff alike. It lies in the ability to communicate and reassure people. In the words of St Paul to the Romans we need to emphasise, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

How does this work out in practical terms when a School is physically closed? At Oundle, we have relied, firstly, on the Chaplaincy Pages on the School intranet. Here, pupils and staff are able to access daily Biblical readings, submit

prayer requests, and to contact a School Chaplain. There is also the opportunity for Staff to be part of an online prayer group. Secondly, we are making use of Microsoft Teams, as many schools are, in order to post in the School channels, a midweek spiritual reflection and an abridged "Sunday Service". Our future plans include seeking more pupil involvement online and also arranging "meetings" with those pupils who would normally attend our Christian discussion group and Bible study. In these strange and testing times, it is more important than ever that we encourage people in their faith, and to seek the support of our loving God.



One of the windows on the School Chapel at Oundle School – It is called "Resurrection" and was designed by Mark Angus.

Scrub hub

The WGHS Scrub Hub was launched at Wakefield Girls' High School in response to demand for critical personal protective equipment to keep NHS workers safe during the coronavirus. Four teachers of DT, Textiles and Languages – Elizabeth Maher, Natalie Phillips, Emma Critch and Sandy George – are putting their skills to valuable use, making scrubs for frontline workers at Pinderfields Hospital, Wakefield.

With guidance from Volunteer Manager Gwen Shackleton at Pinderfield Hospital, teacher Mrs Maher has been able to download and convert a pattern for producing scrubs. With many healthcare professionals among the school's parents and alumni, The WGHS Scrub Hub has been able to consult and adapt the pattern to ensure the scrubs being made are identical to the ones the NHS use.

The WGHS Scrub Hub have pre-washed and dried the fabric to allow for shrinkage. Each set of scrubs are then being made reversible so that wearers or laundry staff don't have to turn them the right way round before or after washing. In order to make them reversible, The WGHS Scrub Hub make the scrubs with flat felled seams throughout.

One Year 13 pupil, Ruby Allen, has risen to the challenge and amazingly produced 32 scrub bags to an exceptional standard already.

Headteacher Heidi-Jayne Boyes, commented "I am extremely proud of everyone in our community. It is always important to make the best use of our resources and I am delighted to see how this is currently happening at Wakefield Girls' High School."

Rerouting to remote learning

Andrew McCleave, Headmaster at Ballard School, a co-educational, day school for children aged 2-16 in Hampshire, shares his insights on the challenge of quickly becoming a 'remote school'...

At Ballard, we take pride in our bespoke education and have been able to support some of our pupils remotely for some time, for example our international skiers who spend three months a year training in Europe or the States. To do this for the whole school, from the ages of 4-16, was an incredible challenge.

Looking back, one of the most important things we did was to begin our preparations early. In the two weeks before the closure, we were in constant communication with parents, governors, staff and pupils, laying the groundwork for what we felt was sure to come. We took key decisions about our approach and began practical preparations. Teachers began saving work into folders they could access remotely for example, and students were asked to start taking their books home.

Training and support

We knew we wanted to provide a fully-functioning remote school with "live" whole-class lessons in order to maintain the group discussions and participatory learning which are fundamental to Ballard's educational approach.

Having opted for Microsoft Teams, we stayed 'closed' on the first Monday and Tuesday of nationwide school closures for two full days of staff training, also delivered remotely. School laptops were loaned to teachers if required, and those among the staff already familiar with the software were

tasked with getting their colleagues up to speed.

This process involved the staff not only getting to grips with a new platform, but also delivering their lessons in a completely new way. We were aware it could be overwhelming, especially given the challenges staff were inevitably facing in their personal lives. The Ballard leadership team offered personal and professional support, and we made sure there were plenty of opportunities for questions and feedback.

With the learning curve steep for some, we facilitated a phased introduction. Our aim in that first week was for all lessons to be set with resources via My School Portal, a communications platform we were already familiar with. Those that were confident to do so began live lessons on Microsoft Teams straight away, while others were given time to build their familiarity and confidence. From the start of the Summer Term, all live lessons are being recorded for those pupils who may not be able to access them live, for those pupils who may wish to revisit parts of a lesson and in order to share best practice.

Familiar rules, new applications

It is so important that pupils see ballard@home as a natural extension of Ballard School. To that end, teachers are keeping a daily register, and parents are still required to notify their child's Head of Section if they are unable

to 'attend'. We have asked that they complete work, wherever possible, during normal lesson time, and conduct themselves as they would in the classroom – that means being punctual, dressing appropriately, meeting deadlines, remaining attentive and interacting respectfully.

Parental feedback

Whilst not surprised, I am full of admiration for all the staff who have shown enormous resilience, supporting each other throughout this time. The parents have been extremely positive and I have received countless messages of thanks and support. The rapid turn-around was key; putting in place that structure from the very start set expectations for home schooling and gave pupils a sense of stability, continuity and ongoing connection. Parents appreciated the clear leadership and flow of consistent communication from the School, as well as the abiding sense of mutual support and community. Many parents have highlighted a sense of a deepening of the Ballard Family values we hold so dear.

Moving forward

I feel we have set the firm foundations we need to continue to work in this way for as long as it is necessary, but inevitably there will be more challenges to come. Moving forward our focus is as much on pastoral care and supporting children's emotional and mental wellbeing as it is on maintaining their academic



progress. With that in mind, form tutors are holding twice weekly Teams meetings with their classes, as well as individual catch-ups to check children are OK. Our SENCo, Department of Enhanced Learning staff, and the pastoral team have continued their 1:1 support sessions remotely, and are putting out a weekly wellness bulletin with resources and ideas.

Ballard School has already learned an enormous amount about how to deliver its education remotely to pupils of all ages; we will continue to improve and develop our use of technology in creative and imaginative ways. Our Arts Department, for example, has launched a virtual choir project across the Ballard community, and we are using social media to stay connected and keep the Ballard spirit alive.

This is a time of intense challenge, but also of innovation and growth. Even when normality returns, I am sure we will use these experiences and new pedagogical techniques to improve our provision. Education at Ballard will never look the same again, and that is a very exciting prospect in the long term.

Music pupils remake 1940s classic

A Level music pupils from Yorkshire's Ashville College recorded a vintage song from 70 years ago to mark the opening of Harrogate's NHS Nightingale Hospital.

The seven, under the direction of Anna Wilby, the College's Director of Music, have come together 'separately' to sing and play A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square, which was made famous by Dame Vera Lynn during the opening years of the Second World War.

When the school virtually returned from its Easter break, Miss Wilby discussed her idea for a musical tribute to the NHS with the Lower Sixth and Upper Sixth pupils – four instrumentalists and three vocalists – who readily agreed to the challenge ahead.

They were sent the sheet music and words for them to practice along with the piano accompaniment and, once sufficiently comfortable with the task ahead, the teenagers recorded themselves either playing or singing.

Pupils emailed their individual performances back to their teacher to be collated via an online track-mixing platform, enabling pupils to continue to work together on group projects despite the current restrictions.

Ashville College's version of A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square can be viewed on its website at <https://bit.ly/2Vq79h4>



When foreign students couldn't get back home...

Thirteen international students at Felsted School, Essex, were unable to get home when the Coronavirus lockdown came into force, due to restrictions in their home countries, cancelled flights or no flights at all.

Felsted's duty of care to these students put them at the front of any decision making process by the School, at a stressful time when the students were very concerned for their own families and just wanted to be at home.

Headmaster, Chris Townsend (pictured above), decided to make Follyfield House, one of Felsted's senior girls' boarding houses, home to the 13 boys and girls aged 14 to 18 years of age who were unable to travel home to Bermuda, China, Italy, Malawi and Russia.

Three experienced members of the Felsted staff made up the House staff team; Caolan Wukics, Lewis Mann and Isobel Nicholson.

Here, Mr Townsend describes what was involved...

1. How did you go about making these vacation-time arrangements?

It became clear as early as February that there were going to be some issues with some pupils getting home for the Easter break. We had already made arrangements for students from Hong Kong and China to remain in the UK over half term, because of the risk of being put into quarantine, so began our planning relatively early. However, the situation was quickly moving, with Italy going into lockdown (we have 16 Italians studying at Felsted currently), and then the rest of Europe imposing various travel bans (we have another 50 students from various countries across Europe).

Our initial expectation was that students who had public examinations in the summer would need to stay, to prepare for those exams, and avoid being put into self isolation for a period of 14 days, which could have been disastrous for them. That all changed suddenly on Wednesday 18th March, when it was announced that there would be no public exams, and so rather than hosting a group of highly motivated students, with a lot of work on their hands, we were faced with a much smaller group of students, without the certainty of what they would face.

Therefore, from 18th March, our initial priority was to support as many students as possible in getting home. A number of staff put in a lot of hours helping in talking to agents, airlines, guardians, and parents to try to help these students get home, and in the end, we managed to reduce the number of those who could not get home to 17 students, from Germany, Russia, China, Italy, Bermuda, USA, Switzerland and Luxembourg.

2. Were there any staffing or financial considerations?

We have provided additional boarding staff to look after this group, with three members of staff committing to supporting the boarders. We also needed to make sure that we had sufficient senior staff available as back up, medical team on call, safeguarding lead available, and catering staff, to help with looking after the group.

Clearly, all of these things do come with some cost, but we took the decision early on that we were not going to charge for this time, because we wanted to help the families who were faced with such a challenging situation. I am sure that this was the right approach, and it has been a privilege to be able to provide the additional care.

3. How do you see it panning out in the summer?

The situation is very hard to predict at the moment. It seems unlikely that schools will reopen before half term, but a phased return after 1st June does look possible. With various measures to limit social distancing, I would also anticipate that there will be limits placed on travel, which means that we will continue to provide remote learning for those who cannot get to school, alongside some on site teaching, perhaps aimed at Year 10 and Year 12 students, who are facing disruption in the middle of their exam courses.

4. What pastoral support did the young people need being long-term separated from their homes and families?

This has provided significant demands. For some of the young people, they have had significant concerns about the danger of

the virus at home. In particular, a couple of students from Northern Italy have seen their families under lockdown for more than six weeks, and the impact of the virus on local communities has been very significant. For those from China, the UK has seemed a more dangerous place than home, and parents have wanted to bring their children back, but have not been able to do so.

Fortunately, communication now is so much easier, and all the students have had lots of access to video calls to speak to family and friends. In addition, the relatively small number has meant that staff have been able to provide individual support, focusing on wellbeing, social interaction, physical health, and educational enrichment. We are fortunate to live in a rural part of the world, with 80 acres of school grounds, so they have been able to get outside and enjoy the good weather. As a group, they have played games, cooked for one another, and spent time together, in some cases making new friendships.

For those who have found it difficult, we have run wellbeing sessions, yoga and pilates, and our wellbeing centre and staff have been available via phone and email.

In all cases, we have reinforced the positive messages about doing something special, doing something important in keeping others safe, and building memories of this most unusual time as well. This struck home when an adjacent boarding house was used for Paramedic Students, who were training locally to work with the East of England Ambulance service, and our students were delighted to see the school supporting such important work.

Bespoke Bridging and Enrichment Programme

Bruton School for Girls, Somerset, has designed a Bridging and Enrichment programme for Year 11 and Upper Sixth cohorts who suddenly found themselves stripped of a Summer of examinations, as staff members Claire Peach and Xaviere Harvey reflect...

We wanted to give the girls a solid academic foundation for their next stage and so looked at what skills we needed to develop in each cohort, so they could begin their next chapter well prepared and confident. In Year 11, an hour a week per chosen A Level subject is dedicated to some introductory teaching; additionally, linguists have sessions with our language assistant, scientists are spending time with specialists developing skills necessary for success at A level, and statistics has been timetabled for all girls aiming to pursue A levels in subjects such as geography and psychology. For those not going on to A level, however, we have tailored things further, with students keen to pursue courses in childcare attending sessions with our Nursery Manager for some initial training.

With our entire Upper Sixth cohort bound for university in September,

applying our bespoke approach to their chosen degree courses seemed apt. They are working on a research project linked to the current Covid-19 pandemic, which offers the opportunity to delve into their subjects with a member of staff most closely related to their undergraduate field of study. The students are benefitting from expert advice from their mentors who, in turn, are able to share their passion for their subjects in an unexpected way. Exciting projects are afoot, ranging from topics as diverse as Public Health Planning, Care Homes in Distress or Life in Lockdown, to name but a few, and developing skills such as complex data handling, scientific reporting, coding, sketching, scriptwriting, etc. amongst others. The girls are really enthused by their projects and judging them should prove a tricky task for the Headmistress! The amount of effort the students are putting in cannot fail to be noticed and we are planning to reward them accordingly. These projects should certainly be an interesting talking point at interview in the future.

In Upper Sixth, the academic project is supported by a range of skills useful for undergraduate study, delivered both in-house and via MOOCs hosted by UK universities, and tailored to the needs of each student, to include courses for non-native speakers of English. In addition to this, a module of life skills such as First-Aid, Teamwork and Leadership is on offer, as well as a chance to improve their mastery of various software packages and more specific skills such as TEFL or Web Design. An element of choice was vital so students could feel the real benefit of our programmes, which in Year 11 can include an accredited course in Driving Theory,

Touch-Typing or Sign Language. So far, the Food Hygiene Certificate is proving the most popular of all the courses on offer! Developing responsible citizens who are well equipped to thrive in the outside world is part of our mission and to this end, we have also provided girls with the chance to take sessions in cooking for life, finance and tax, as well as a Psychology course which we hope will give them a greater understanding of the basics of human psychology. Tutorials in writing CVs, performing well at interview, as well as navigating the various practical aspects of the tricky transition to university, are allowing us to supplement our already extensive Careers and PSHEE offering.

Much as in 'normal' circumstances, both programmes are underpinned by our ongoing pastoral support system, whereby each Year 11 girl has been assigned a mentor overseeing her programme, emulating the pastoral system they are to expect in our Sixth Form, and leading to a greater feeling of independence, with more flexibility than the tutor group system they had been used to until very recently. In Upper Sixth, girls meet individually every week with both their tutors and the academic mentors guiding them in their personal projects. Even remotely, assembly and house gatherings are providing some excellent leadership. Wherever the girls find themselves currently, the opportunity to keep up community spirit via inter-house competitions, charity events and fitness challenges is very much a motivational force for all. For those with some time to spare still, there is work experience to organize, volunteering in their local communities or even the opportunity to undertake paid work to save for university.



Pictured: Xaviere Harvey, Head of Sixth Form and Head of MFL

One of the biggest challenges in setting up the whole project was balancing carefully the needs to inform our staff of substantial changes whilst respecting the holiday period. With planning completed over the Easter break, our – remote – CPD day at the start of term allowed for the programme to be shared, questions to be asked and some of the details to be fine-tuned. Our staff have been truly remarkable adapting not only to teaching through Teams, but also planning, delivering and supervising these new courses. While it is still early days, our parents have been overwhelmingly supportive and the girls amazingly positive and enthused. Bar the odd internet issue, we have 100% attendance and, while creating a bespoke programme for every girl has been a mammoth undertaking, we feel confident that our students will have a relevant, interesting and stimulating term despite feeling robbed of the opportunity to prove their worth through the examinations they had been expecting. At BSG we strongly believe that good things do come out of what may, at first glance, seem like the depths of despair. Our Summer Term 2020 offer may be just the silver lining our students needed.



Pictured: Claire Peach, Head of Year for Senior 4 and 5 and Head of Humanities

Enrichment Programme for Upper Sixth

Dauntsey's School, Wiltshire, has launched a new enrichment programme for its Upper Sixth students whose A-levels have been cancelled due to Covid-19.

Once assessments are complete, the students will be able to take part in a series of enrichment courses designed to challenge and stimulate and provide a head start on life beyond school, whether it be in the world of work, University or a gap year.

The courses range from An Introduction to Law to Spanish for your Gap Year through to Pre-University Social Sciences and an Introduction to Gothic Literature. The sessions run remotely from early May through to July.

One course already proving popular is the The Dauntsey's MBA-lite, run by the School's Bursar. For those 18-year old students interested in finance, business management or accounting, the course is intended to provide a taster of some of the technical concepts that drive management decision-making. It will include recent case studies of real-life business issues and consist of six one-hour weekly tutorials run via Microsoft Teams, supplemented by reading materials and independent research relevant to each week's tutorial.

Sam Moore, Head of Adventure Education, and the mastermind behind the programme, said: "Education is about much more than exams and the cancellation of the summer exams has given us the opportunity to offer our students a range of enrichment courses. These may be relevant to their chosen higher education course or future employment, they may provide an opportunity to study something completely different or learn a practical skill."

Mark Lascelles, Head Master, Dauntsey's added: "We very much hope that students will sign up for a range of courses and will enjoy learning without the pressure of exams on the horizon. Staff have been incredibly enthusiastic about the opportunity to share their knowledge and interests in a very different way to teaching within the curriculum and I am really looking forward to seeing Dauntsey's on-line enrichment courses in action."

The full list of courses on offer includes:



The Design Technology (DT) department at Dauntsey's has been a hive of activity in its continued efforts to make face shields for frontline NHS staff.

Efficient systems have been implemented for making the visors quickly and Head of DT, Alun Pickford, working with his two sons, are able to make more than 100 masks in just two hours.

Some 36 masks have gone to Devizes GP surgery which has a COVID-19 hub and a further 20 to a care home in Longbridge Deverell. Alun is also in touch with a paramedic who works out of various bases, including Devizes and Chippenham, who has also received some masks.

A further 100 masks went to Kings Hospital, London.

- Pre-University Social Sciences
- Aspiring to Lead
- The Dauntsey's MBA-lite
- Introduction to Law
- An Introduction to Engineering at University
- British Sign Language and the Rest - Non-Verbal Communication
- "Lesser than Macbeth; and greater": a module on Shakespeare's key works
- An Introduction to Gothic Literature
- A Nascent Nation: A Narrative of Italy in the Nineteenth Century
- Theatre in Lockdown
- Global Catastrophes – a Short History of the End of the World
- Reading Club
- Introduction to Interesting Psychology
- Theory of Knowledge; How do you know you know what you know?
- Spanish for your GAP year
- RYA Day Skipper Theory
- An Introduction to Political Thought
- British Political History, 1945 to present day
- An introduction to International Relations
- International Relations: Middle East case study
- The Duality of Human Nature

Wide-ranging support

St. Margaret's School, Hertfordshire, has donated supplies of goggles, gloves and face shields to an NHS hospital in North London, and additionally, some 6,000 poolside biodegradable, overshoes and various items of unused personal protective equipment, have been donated to Northwick Park Hospital, Watford General and Hillingdon Hospitals for both staff and patients. Food and drink supplies from the school's coffee shop have also been delivered to staff

at Watford General Hospital in the hope of raising the spirits of those working around the clock to save lives.

In a recent Tweet, staff at Whittington Hospital thanked the school: "A huge thank you to the science department at St Margaret's School in Bushey, especially Constantine Michaelides (the school's Head of Physics), who generously donated essential safety goggles and gloves to community midwives at Whittington Health NHS Trust, we are so grateful."



Around the Country in Brief...

A teacher from **King Edward's Witley, Surrey**, is helping to provide vital protective clothing to the local NHS frontline workers fighting the coronavirus pandemic.

Julie Hooker, a Food Technician and Teacher of Food Technology at King Edward's is working as a volunteer for Scrubs4-NHS- North Hants, Surrey & West Sussex, sewing scrubs (hospital uniforms) at home in her spare time. The group, which is made up of professional and



semi-professional independent seamstresses from Surrey, West Sussex and Hampshire who came together via Facebook, has now cut, stitched and sent out more than 1,000 sets of standard scrubs to local hospitals and practices. These include Haslemere Hospital, Haslemere Surgery, Basingstoke Hospital, Basingstoke Hospice, Grayscott Surgery, MacMillan Midhurst Carers, Royal Surrey County Hospital, Petworth Cottage Hospital and many more.

The Scrubs4-NHS JustGiving page says they were inspired to start stitching scrubs after a nurse, Ashley Linsdell, started making scrubs at home after they ran out of paper clothes and she set up a Facebook page called "For the Love of Scrubs". Scrubs4-NHS provides scrubs to many practices and hospitals in their local area that are in need.

To donate to Scrubs4-NHS JustGiving page visit: <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/scrubs4-nhs>

A drive-through facility, set up in the car park at the **Tonbridge School Centre, Kent**, is being used by NHS workers to assess patients from the Tonbridge Primary Care Network (Warders, Hadlow, Hildenborough Medical Group, Woodlands and Tonbridge Medical Group). Similar projects are being set up in other areas.

The Assessment Centre is operated between 8am and 6pm on weekdays.

All patients attending are required to have talked to a GP, or to have telephoned NHS 111, prior to coming to the centre, and this service is by appointment only. The service is designed to assess people

with Covid-19 symptoms, and will therefore help relieve the enormous pressure currently being placed upon surgeries and hospitals.

A marquee in the Tonbridge School Centre (TSC) car park will house up to four cars at any one time, and people are expected to be assessed in their cars.

The TSC has been chosen as it can be completely self-contained, therefore leaving ample safe distance between the main school, school accommodation and the wider community.

James Priory, Tonbridge's Headmaster, said: "The school would like to thank all of the staff who have worked so quickly to bring this new and important facility into operation in such a short time, and to assure the NHS, and the wider community, of our total support in these difficult times."

The NHS and the school would like to thank Party Doctors for loaning its marquee free of charge, and Wettons Cleaning Services for donating a large stock of hazmat suits.



Pictured: The drive-through facility being constructed at Tonbridge School Centre

Staff at **Durham School** have been working to support the efforts of NHS and Social Care workers on the frontline.

One of the School's resident House Masters, Mark Younger and his wife, Victoria who teaches at Durham School's junior school, Bow, have been making a range of visors and scrubs bags.

The much-needed items of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for which there is unprecedented demand across the UK, have been delivered by Durham School and gratefully received by staff at hospitals across the North East,



including nurses at Sunderland Hospital.

Using cotton pillow cases and 1mm plastic film – and the Durham School laser cutter – the couple have already made more than 200 visors and 150 scrubs bags.

A group of pupils from **St Peter's School, York**, are creating a time capsule to record their experiences during the Coronavirus lockdown.

Working remotely with the theatre group, Company Three, the group of 12 pupils aged 13-18 from St Peter's have joined groups from all over the world to create a cumulative video time capsule. A different recording is being produced weekly and each will have a different theme.

The pupils meet virtually every Wednesday to plan and share ideas, before editing and uploading their material to the Company Three website. Reflections can include video,

song, poetry, animation, dance, monologue, and any other creative mediums that the pupils would like to explore.

Led by the Drama department, the project has brought together performers and non-performers, including drama pupils and others who enjoy film editing, animation and technology.

Ms Veasey, Drama Teacher at St Peter's, who is co-ordinating the project, said: "This term our pupils are unable to perform as usual, and the project offers a great opportunity for them to be creative and express their thoughts."

Third Former Maggie Hutchings, aged 14, from **St Peter's School, York**, designed an innovative hand sanitiser in response to the coronavirus pandemic. The hand sanitiser has now been shortlisted for the international design competition 'Fountain of Hygiene'.

Launched by Bompas and Parr and the London Design Museum, the 'Fountain of Hygiene: Sanitiser Design Competition' invited creatives, designers and makers across the globe to design inspired takes on the hand sanitiser pumps being widely used as a direct consequence of the coronavirus pandemic.

Maggie's innovative 'Coby the Crocodile' design was selected for the competition by her Design & Technology teachers following a school competition to design a hand sanitiser pump. Maggie's



design is now one of just six entries shortlisted for the 'Cadet Designers (Under 18)' category.

The category winner will be decided by a public vote. The winners for each category will be announced towards the end of this month (May) and the prototypes will be displayed as part of an exhibition at the London Design Museum when it reopens to the public.

Life in uncharted terrain

Moreton Hall School, Shropshire, housemistresses describe how they are approaching the personal challenges of lockdown...



"Being a houseparent at the moment is not easy. With a head full of questions, worries and concerns I started to consider new ways of connecting with my students from afar. No easy feat and something I feared doing wrong or unsuccessfully. How do I ensure each student truly knows she is not alone in this?"

It is all too easy to compare what we are doing now to the "before". The lack of constant noise and bedtime chats are dearly missed. No more common

room toastie breaks for now. As a Sixth Form Housemistress, I used to remain fluid in my daily plans prepared at any moment to rearrange meetings or lessons and prioritise whatever is happening in the boarding house be it a crisis or moment of madness. In this new way of living it is suddenly important that I structure my day arranging Zoom meetings and catch-ups with the girls and their teachers and tutors. I am increasingly aware of the huge importance of sharing. I tell the girls to talk about their problems, their worries, their joys and to ask for help. Suddenly it occurred

to me, perhaps it's time to start listening to my own advice.

Following a "squad Zoom" (not my words!) with girls one weekend for ideas and inspiration we discussed plans for weekly quizzes, fun debates and challenges. Their enthusiasm and energy as we talked about trying to find ways of bringing some lighthearted fun into all our days reminded me that we are a team, a family and together we'll find our way through this. Sharing ideas as well as discussing the challenges and successes with colleagues reminded me of the same thing. In these new strange times we seem to be

pulling together more than ever – everyday we are searching for and finding solutions to problems we never imagined we would experience. So perhaps that's my piece of advice, keep sharing and ask for help.

So I'll keep checking in and continue asking for help when ideas and inspiration are in short supply. What's become clear over the last few weeks is a feeling that I'm not doing this alone, I'm being helped by the girls that I am hopefully helping and together, we will get through this very strange time".

Miss Gabriella Jones.
L6 Housemistress



"For those of us having worked as a Sixth Form houseparent, I think it is fair to say that most years can

be remembered by certain events and / or characters who have punctuated the usual flow of the academic year.

There most likely is not an Upper 6 houseparent in the country who secretly dreads the year-end prank, with seemingly the entire year group daring each other into new "no

other leavers year before us would have thought of that!" territory.

I genuinely feel for this year's cohort; the opportunity lost for those who may have welcomed the challenge of their exams, tradition stolen from them, along with an unknown delay to leavers balls, frivolities or parties to celebrate the end of their two year A Level or BTEC marathon.

Instead, this Upper Sixth are the first to place their feet into truly uncharted terrain. Although this may seem a daunting prospect to some, as house staff and

teachers we should be reminded of the sheer resilience these young people hold. It is however, likely now more vital than ever that we continue to keep the lines of communication fully open to our students, with regular catch ups via Zoom, phone calls and email. This requires so much more effort on everyone's behalf, fitting in with time zones and family time etc and whereas we may normally rely on a "chance encounter" with a pupil in house, we are now diarising zoom appointments and therefore potentially missing the nuances and

signs that we might pick up in a boarding house setting.

Solid teamwork is essential in any successful Sixth Form and I count myself lucky to be part of a strong body of staff, heavily invested both in the pastoral as well as academic wellbeing of our pupils. Equally, in order to keep up with this standard, we need to continue to take time out to support each other – even a phone call debriefing with a colleague has proven incredibly cathartic.

Mrs Karen Davenport.
U6 Housemistress

Two sisters support NHS Staff

Bella and her younger sister Alessia, have been hard at work making surgical mask ear extenders to help NHS staff. This is their own project and they have been using their birthday money for materials.

By early May they had made over 500 and delivered 100 mask extenders each to COVID wards at the PRUH Hospital, St Thomas' Hospital, King's College Hospital and Lewisham Hospital. Some were even on their way to a nurse in Dorset.

Bella is a Year 7 pupil at Babington House School, Kent. Production has slowed now 'school' has started back and home learning has resumed, but the girls have not given up – another 100 are almost ready for a North London Hospital.

A local businessman hearing this heart-warming story on Facebook donated £100 for further materials. He knew of some local care home workers, visiting carers, NHS Physios and occupational therapists in the Chislehurst area in need of them.

Tim Lello the Headmaster of Babington House said, "This is a fantastic demonstration of kindness, positivity, generosity and enterprise. I like to think that adversity brings out the best in good people and this is certainly true with Bella and Alessia. I am so proud of them!"



Answering the plea for face masks

A team from **Ellesmere College, Shropshire**, is putting the school's equipment to use in the fight against Covid-19 by making more than 1,000 essential face shields for Shropshire hospital and hospice workers.

The Design and Technology team has already self-funded and donated 200 face shields to the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital and Severn Hospice.

They also aim to join with other schools who have supported Telford's Princess Royal Hospital and will help others that need their help due to PPE shortages.

Now the group of teachers – key workers themselves – has raised more than £1300 through crowdfunding to make another

1,000 for the frontline NHS and hospice staff.

The face shields are composed of an acetate visor and the head-band is made from polypropylene.

Matthew Horton, Head of Design Technology at Ellesmere College said: "We wanted to find a way to help the frontline heroes who are putting themselves at risk every day to help others – and do our bit in the battle against Covid-19.

"Concerns have been raised over a lack of Personal Protective Equipment to protect key workers – so we've made use of our laser cutter to manufacture visors for them.

"I'd like to say a big thankyou to the rest of the team who have helped in making the first batch – Jonathan Haycock, Andy Lycett and Ian Williams; without whom this would not have been possible.

"We initially exhausted all usable material in-house but Jonathan played a big part in gaining the additional material we needed for the first 200 masks".

Mr Horton said the Just Giving page was initially set up to raise £550 to make a further 1,000 visors but that target was quickly reached within 24 hours.

Pictured: Matthew Horton, Head of Design and Technology at Ellesmere College in Shropshire hands over some of the visors to staff at Severn Hospice



Children of key workers, parents and teachers at a Shropshire school joined efforts to make protective face shields for frontline NHS staff at the county's two hospitals.

Old Hall School used its collection of 3D printers to make the shields and called on parents who have printers at home to join their efforts. The project, which involves children still at school during their holidays because their parents are key workers, was led by Head of ICT, Design and Technology Peter Ashley.

Mr Ashley (pictured) said it had given the children and staff at the school a positive focus and they were delighted to be able to do something to help the NHS which is facing a massive battle against coronavirus. One of the key appeals in the area has been for protective equipment for frontline staff.



Headmaster Mr Martin Stott said he was very proud of all the school community which had seen staff step in to look after the children of key workers while also ensuring that children at home had a continued connection to school through online activities and programmes of school work.



Staff and students at **St Benedict's School, London**, have made over 1,000 protective visors for frontline NHS staff, carers and key workers, in London and beyond.

St Benedict's DT teacher Mauricio Mendes, assisted by a team of sixth form volunteers, has been producing and distributing this essential PPE to hospitals, care homes and doctors' surgeries since mid-March.

The school has received many requests for the visors, from hospitals, care homes and surgeries in west London, including West Middlesex University Hospital, Georgian House Nursing Home and Florence Road Surgery, Ealing. The visors have also been distributed further afield, to care homes in Hertfordshire, Warwickshire and even North Wales.

Pictured: Mr Mendes with St Benedict's students Lydia and Helena

In addition to providing PPE, St Benedict's also donated its science lab protective equipment, such as goggles, gloves and sanitisers to local hospitals.

"I have designed the visor to be made of one whole strip of polypropylene that goes around the head and holds a protective shield made of clear acetate", said Mauricio. "We have a fair amount of polypropylene in the Art and Design department, for our school projects, and we had a few dozen acetate sheets. After two days we had used all the acetate available in school, having produced nearly 150 visors. After that, St Benedict's staff came together to donate more acetate and, over the Easter weekend we received enough acetate sheets to produce almost 2000 visors and counting."

Staff, pupils and their families at **Christ College Brecon** have set up facilities to help provide much needed PPE kit to care workers.

To assist in providing the much-needed equipment, Dyfed Thomas, Head of Chemistry at the College is overseeing the assembly, sterilisation, and packaging of face shields in one of the laboratories on the school's site.

The initiative is being coordinated by Adam Tofarides at Crowd PPE Powys which is part of 3dCrowdUK. Adam is one of 11,000 volunteers who are 3D printing visors and is the hub manager for Mid Wales while also overseeing all volunteers in Powys. Once packaged, Crowd PPE Powys will be distributing the equipment to care homes and care workers.

A rota of volunteers, made up of staff and their families living on



the school site, has been developed to maximise production while ensuring all volunteers are kept safe and social distancing guidelines are adhered to.

Dyfed said: "It's a wonderful thing Crowd PPE Powys have set up and it is great to be a part of it. We feel very lucky to be able to facilitate this initiative and know we are doing our bit to help those on the frontline."



Marc Rogers and David Fernandez of the D&T Department at **Bancroft's School, Essex**, have been putting the school's workshop and equipment to good use while the school is closed due to Covid-19. They have spent their Easter holidays making much needed visors for frontline NHS staff in the area local to the School. Hospitals to benefit have included Whipps Cross, the Royal London and Harlow Princess Alexandra. In addition visors have been provided for local pharmacies, GP practices, opticians and midwives.

Marc Rogers originally saw a suggestion that anyone with manufacturing capability (3D printers, laser cutters etc.) could help in the production of PPE for the

NHS. Further messages suggested that it might be possible for D & T departments within schools to use machines which were necessarily idle during school closures to help. Marc decided to put his skill, and that of David Fernandez (D & T Technician) together with Bancroft's equipment to good use. "I found prototypes of the various components on line and decided to build the Prusa MK 3 developed by the 3D printing company Prusa. Each 3D printed frame takes 1.5 hours to complete, so to make best use of time we set the 3D printing in stacks of four overnight. The visors can then be constructed the next morning."

By mid-April, they had made their 1000th visor.



As frontline medical staff continued to experience critical shortages of PPE equipment, **Kirkham Grammar School, Lancashire**, were delighted to be able to support health workers by producing and supplying their own.

The plea for the visors initially came from a KGS parent who works at Preston Royal Infirmary. The first 80 visors Kirkham Grammar School produced (those in the photo with the paper covers on) were laser cut from polypropylene sheet which meant 5 visors could be produced in about forty minutes until material ran out. 50 of these visors went to Preston Royal Infirmary and 30 to Blackpool Victoria Hospital.

To continue production over the Easter holidays, Design Technology teachers, Mr and Mrs Hancock took home the department's two 3D printers which were used every day for two weeks to make an additional 240 visors, each headband taking one hour to print.

Kirkham Grammar School Headmaster, Mr Daniel Berry, said, "As soon as we heard that these amazing frontline staff were not being protected enough against this devastating virus, we set to produce the much needed visors. In addition to this, we have also donated a large quantity of science goggles, surgical gloves and disinfectant wipes to local GP surgeries and medical centres."

Two **Hull Collegiate Prep School** pupils responded to the national calls for more Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for NHS workers and have begun making their own.

Emma and Lizzy Norris, whose mother is a GP working for the Bridlington Primary Care Network, spent their Easter holidays making face masks for those working in GP surgeries in Bridlington.

The face masks are made of 3D printed coloured visors which are printed by a volunteer in Withernsea. The girls then add a clear shield and some elastic and the visors are ready for the health professionals to wear!

Antje Kell, Head of Hull Collegiate Prep School, said: "We are so impressed by how Emma and Lizzy have used their initiative to help the NHS at such a critical time. Their enterprising spirit and willingness to help others are attributes we strongly encourage at Hull



Collegiate and we are incredibly proud of what they are doing."

It's not just Hull Collegiate School pupils who are rising to the challenge; Physics teacher Paul Fong (pictured) has also been using a 3D printer to print face shields for local GPs and hospitals in Hull. He said: "It's not much but if it helps key medical staff do their job safely, I'm happy to set my printer off producing a handful of face masks each night."



Staff at **Kelvinside Academy, Glasgow** manufactured protective visors to help doctors and nurses in their fight against Coronavirus.

The protective face shields are being produced at the onsite NuVu Innovation School using 3D printers and laser cutters. Hundreds of visors are being shipped daily to, among others: Wishaw General Hospital, Glasgow Royal Infirmary, Royal Alexandra Hospital, Vale of Leven Ambulance Service, Balmanno Care Home, and the list is growing as the crisis escalates.

Kelvinside is playing a key role in the national effort to produce personal protective equipment (PPE), collaborating with schools, including Larbert High School, Denny High School and Graeme High School. Together, over 4000 visors have been produced to date.

Pictured: Dan Wyatt and David Miller with care staff at Balmanno Care Home

David Miller, Director of Kelvinside's Innovation School said: "Medical and care staff are on the front-line of this crisis, but to save lives, they need to be protected themselves. It has been humbling to meet the doctors, nurses and care staff; these visors are in many cases that crucial extra layer protecting front line staff in these incredibly challenging times."

Dr Janis Lynch, a recipient of visors for her GP Practice said: "The team at Kelvinside are doing an amazing job in manufacturing protective visors for the worthy NHS staff, demonstrating their innovative thinking and immense kindness, really making a difference in this challenging time. It's a shining example of how communities can make valuable contributions."

Answering the plea for face masks (continued)

Unphased by the end of the Easter break, the **Leighton Park School, Berkshire**, face shields hub and dedicated partners in production have continued to make vital personal protective equipment (PPE) for the NHS and keyworkers in the healthcare sector.

18,713 face shields have now been distributed with orders for another 4,000 on the books. The success of the operation has only grown as teachers and students return to their lessons. There are 22 schools and three commercial organisations involved in the face shields initiative, so it was expected that there would be an inevitable reduction in the output as the demands of delivering distance learning became more pressing. But the commitment of all those involved is such that this has not been the case.

Twenty furloughed Leighton Park support staff have volunteered

their free time to assist with the continuation of the effort as teachers return to the preparation, delivery and marking of their virtual lessons. The University of Reading, based opposite Leighton Park School, has also become a major partner as their two large laser cutters are able to produce head bands for the shields in high volumes at a high speed. The Orthotics Dept at Royal Berkshire Hospital, also located very near to Leighton Park, is even exploring ways of producing an adapted version of the face shield design within their own workshop.

"We're still making between 1,200 and 1,500 per day and we've got loads of drivers involved," commented Mark Smith, Head of DT & Engineering at Leighton Park (pictured). "Old Leightonians, current parents and some kind residents in the local area have volunteered to deliver face shields. It's such a community effort. I think everyone wants to play a part where they can. We're getting fewer individual orders but each order is for a greater volume so that obviously makes it easier to co-ordinate deliveries. We can quickly bundle them up and get them out; it's brilliant!"



Last month, April, **Plymouth College** joined the effort to support key workers who found themselves without protective equipment when fighting against Covid-19. The first 100 were snapped up by local doctors, key workers and even a funeral director from Plymouth. Since then the attention that Design Technology teacher, Mr Martin Wesley, has received has been overwhelming.

Mr Wesley said, "When I started this project, I wanted to do something to help as many key workers as I could and do my part in supporting their efforts. I initially made just over 100 face shields but the support and encouragement on social media has been amazing. People dropped materials outside the school and offered donations for me to buy more supplies which has now meant I've made 1,000 face shields!"

Pictured: Sam Holden and Headmaster Jonathan Cohen exchanging 250 visors for the NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group

They have been collected by lots of people across the city and the local area, including Derriford Hospital, Liskeard Hospital and Kingsbridge Hospital. The Covid-19 PPE Headquarters collected 250 last week and the appeals keep on coming."

Sam Holden, from the NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group said "We are grateful to Plymouth College for making 250 visor face shields and kindly donating them to the NHS in Devon. We have already put them to good use and delivered them to staff working on the frontline."

It is humbling to see the community come together to help the NHS. From NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group and the rest of the NHS in Devon we would like to say thank you to Plymouth College."



Peter Clague, Headmaster of **Bromsgrove School, Worcestershire**, along with a small number of remaining boarders and residential staff who are living in one household within the School campus, are producing face shields to an approved design in the School's DT department for frontline NHS staff tackling the Coronavirus.

Former pupil Cllr Aled Luckman collected the first batch of shields for distribution and they are now in use on Ward 6 of the Alexandra Hospital, Redditch where Aled's

sister and former Head Girl is a junior doctor in Cardiology. More of Bromsgrove's face shields are now being used to help protect staff at Russells Hall ICU, Dudley. In addition, 290 pairs of goggles from various departments across the School have been delivered to County Hall for distribution wherever they are needed.

The School is continuing to produce the shields, which upon completion will be sent to protect healthcare workers in a variety of settings.

A **Tonbridge School, Kent**, team has produced more than 2,500 protective masks for those on the front line in the fight against Covid-19.

Led by the school's DT Department, the mask-manufacturing operation has run virtually non-stop for the past month. The masks have been distributed to workers in various parts of the country, including those in hospitals, GP practices, assessment centres, care homes and even an opticians.

The school has been making approximately 200 masks every day, with a team of more than 20 staff members, students, family and friends all helping with what is now a full-scale operation of manufacturing and delivering masks. They work on a shift basis, generally from 9am to 3pm. One DT teacher drives the laser-cutting machine, while volunteers help with cutting velcro, using staple guns and assembling the masks.

Pictured: Will Biddle wears one of the protective masks in the school's DT lab



Will Biddle, Design Technology Teacher and Tonbridge Housemaster, responded to the challenge after he was approached by a GP, who is the parent of one of the boys at the school. He said: "Thanks to a great team effort and lots of volunteers, we have put together an efficient and flexible manufacturing system, and so we've been able to respond rapidly to requests for masks."

A new dawn in education lies behind the current crisis



Taking a lucid look at the future, amid the eye of the storm, will help schools see their market advantage and differentiate their offering further as we not only survive into the summer, but also plan ahead to September and beyond, suggests Jonny Timms, Senior Deputy Head (Wellbeing & Compliance), Caldicott School, Buckinghamshire...

Our neighbour opposite plays the oboe. She's masterful – not a deafening, velociraptor-screaming amateur. I've planned many a lesson with a concerto as a distant, beguiling soundtrack because she usually plays in the evenings once my children are in bed. But on Thursday evening a few minutes before 8pm, we heard her playing from her front garden playing into the silence of the street as a rallying call before the Clap for Carers.

We and our neighbours on either side of us rushed out onto our driveways and whooped and clapped and cheered. And then something magical happened as my 2 and a half year old son—way past his bedtime—picked up his tambourine and ran outside to join in; another little girl further up the street chimed in with her recorder and a teenage boy made it a quartet playing his sax. Moments later and practically the entire street was making a cacophony of sound and dancing. A plethora of households contributing to a sublime whole.

The oboe roused me from my laptop, working out the realities of our virtual school; how we continue to deliver excellence; how we safeguard in this new reality; how we pay staff; how we access government bailouts; and – while we are at it – what on earth we are going to do with our own 2 young children tomorrow in the confines of our own house? It was getting through the next few hours, never mind the next week. The crisis had sucked me in and left no headspace for anything else. The Clap for Carers was just what I needed; it gave me the sense to recognise that my focus had shrunk dramatically which, in turn, gave me the courage to take a step back and see the

woods for the trees. Someone once said there are three types of people: leaf people who just see leaves; tree people who see leaves and trees; and more rarely, forest people who understand that leaves and trees make forests and that forests are very different.

As in any crisis, we become myopic as we battle for survival. But for schools to see this storm pass, we must keep the wheels moving whilst seeing the bigger picture, thinking now about what the world will look like on the other side. This crisis has offered clues about a headwind that was already in the forecast but which is now coming towards us with greater haste. In every crisis there are opportunities to learn ways to do things better. The schools that are quickest to find these opportunities will be able to shape a new dawn in education.

- Not only have we had parents up and down the nation expressing their newfound respect for us and our vocation, with parents juggling their own work schedules alongside home schooling, but we are also seeing an interesting bridging of the gulf between school and the workplace. This is an opportunity to develop relationships with the working world that are reciprocal. Never before have we had the opportunity to see whether what we are doing in the 'classroom' makes sense in context. Watch this space.
- We're beginning to understand that the most effective e-learning sees an appealing blend of synchronous and asynchronous learning. And instead of exam grades, perhaps we might begin to see the value in trusting teacher assessments as indicators
- We're seeing new levels of communication, for communities and families coming together, for a rapid reinvention of how we operate. The nuance between presence and connection has never been clearer and the nature of our conversations with each other about how we're going to take care of others is stirring stuff. Our young are looking out for the elderly and whilst the impact on the vulnerable is well documented, of equal value for us to reflect on is the effect on the young and how schools can maximise this going forward. We now seem much more aware of inequalities and how not all of us have the basics to study and work at home. It's been interesting to think through who has what, and who needs what and what can we do to help. This conversation needs to be escalated.
- Whilst parents don't normally like to think of our schools as being businesses, communication and transparency seem to be more important than ever in terms of full financial disclosure and a forensic review of costs whilst remaining solvent to operate. Stakeholders now need to be helped to understand how and why decisions have been reached about fees.
- There will be a smaller pond into which we'll be casting our nets come the autumn so we should be preparing for that at the same time as really reviewing the business models we readily accept as normal in our sector.

Jonny Timms, currently Senior Deputy Head at Caldicott School and Headmaster at Walhampton Prep School from January 2021.



Goodie Bags #NHSstaffrock

Pupils, parents and staff at Solihull Preparatory School are taking part in an initiative to show their gratitude in support of the NHS workers.

More than 450 families have received #NHSstaffrock kits to create goodie bags for NHS key workers battling the coronavirus pandemic. The sets include four bespoke themed postcards featuring Solihull Preparatory School's Scuffle and Twitch mascots, a list of suggested gift items to include, such as a treat or wellbeing product and four paper bags for packaging.

Pupils have been invited to personalise the postcards with a handwritten message, colourful drawings or happy photographs to make the NHS staff smile!

Mark Penney, Head of Solihull Preparatory School said: "We wanted to show the NHS staff how incredibly grateful we are for all they are doing. This is a small gesture which we hope will brighten their day. Our wonderful pupils are kind and creative and I'm delighted that this initiative allows them to harness and amplify both great qualities.

"Our families have followed all Government guidelines in the packing and production of the goodie bags and our parents have banded together into a small army of delivery and collection volunteers to help us complete the project. It's been an absolute joy to see our community respond with such gusto, in showing NHS staff how much we value their efforts."

Unexpected Transitions – Young People's Experience of Lockdown

The initial impact of schools out – 'indefinitely' on Evie (8yrs), Fran (12yrs) and Leo (14yrs) was elation! While Tara (16yrs) and Amelie (12yrs) worried about what this meant for them, their friendships, and their studies. Parents were also destabilised, "We were bombarded with emails from school ...I just didn't know where to start... we had a folder full of work dropped off on the doorstep which was really daunting". Everyone was reeling with the sense of fear, loss of 'norm', control and predictability, and then we hit lockdown!

A report by Dr Sam Littlemore...



For months, I had been working with pupils suffering from issues such as lack of confidence, anxiety and exam stress. They then began displaying pandemic reactive behaviours, including anger, confusion and increased anxiety. Tara explains, "I feel worried all of the time. What will happen with my exams, I have done all the work, my revision timetable. Now there might not even be exams, what's the point? They're saying they will look at the grades for mocks, my mocks weren't good. What will happen? It's all been a waste. I won't get into my A levels!". Anxiety creates catastrophising (negative 'what ifs' dominate our thoughts). The negatives can normally be mitigated by using positive previous experience (top-down processing) but a pandemic thrives on 'what ifs' and mitigation becomes more difficult. In a recent survey, 83% of young people reported that the pandemic had made their mental health worse (Young Minds, 2020).

Conversely, Evie (8) misses her 'teachers and playtimes' but is 'happy' at home. Luckily, Evie is on the cusp of a cultural/developmental stage that will eventually eject her family out of her primary social circle, where it sits very comfortably for the time being. Beyond that cusp, young people begin to strive for independence in preparedness for adulthood. This is where Fran

is heading, she is taking control of studying to ensure that she won't fall behind but the loss of face2face social interactions and enforced confines of the house and her bedroom are proving difficult to control, "I won't see my friends and don't find it easy to get on with my sister and sometimes get angry at my parents."

Similarly, Leo, a bright young man, who has an Autism diagnosis, is spending a lot of time in his bedroom, "I get more time to play online games with my friends, but if they are doing something else, it gets pretty boring". Being bored is far from innocuous when it is indefinite, it can lead to loss of interest in your surroundings, reduced motivation, and truculent behaviours. Interestingly, solely on-line friendships are not sufficient, "It has affected my friendship group because we can't see each other and socialise" explained Amelie (12). Pandemic social isolation can affect wellbeing due to prolonged stress, fears of infection, boredom, lack of personal space and the 'indefinite' caveat, all with a potential to cause enduring, problematic effects (Wang, et al, The Lancet, 2020). As Leo notes, "No one can pinpoint a time when this will end. It could be a week; it could be a year. No one knows".

For more school support, Evie says that she would like to talk to her teacher. Fran suggests Webex classes would be useful. Leo stated, "(School) should keep

it laid back as people need to ease out of lockdown mode and into work mode." Amelie would like to see more supportive videos on completing work and Tara wants adults around her to stop panicking and provide some normality and reassurance.

So, how do schools respond to pupils' wellbeing and the impact of lockdown during a pandemic? Firstly, while schools can't protect young people from the fear, illness and loss which they may experience, they can mitigate some of the social and mental health impact. The key word here is resilience. We can't

Top tips for schools

Encourage in/formal group chats between pupils (moderated by staff (MbS));

Allocating peer mentors to pupils who are struggling (MbS);

Distribute qualitative surveys on the pros and cons of school support during this time and what more could be done;

Recruit pupil volunteers for an on-line activities committee (MbS);

Creating on-line focus groups to evaluate school policies (MbS).

By focusing on social engagement, isolation will feel less daunting and the separation from the physical and social elements of school, less dramatic. Even on-line, schools can help to maintain pupils' identities as a social collective. This will prepare for transition back to school and, in whatever form that may take, one thing is for sure, school won't always be in lockdown!

'teach' resilience on or off-line; you have to model it but we can scaffold and model resilience, and empower pupils on-line. And we can help to maintain a degree of young people's need for independence, familiarity of routine/social identity/social group and their craving for control by focusing on the social elements of pupil engagement and peer-to-peer support.

Wellbeing hub

Cardiff Sixth Form College has launched a new wellbeing hub to help support its students during the coronavirus pandemic.

The website includes videos, website links, suggestions for self-care as well as resources, useful Apps and information on managing mental health. In addition, there is guidance on healthy eating, getting into good sleeping habits, meditation and the benefits of regular exercise including lockdown workout and yoga routines designed and filmed by the Cardiff Sixth Form staff.

The website also details links and contacts for the counselling, wellbeing, house parents and pastoral staff at the College who are available to talk to students at any time as well as external contacts from a wide variety of organisations all linked to student health and wellbeing.

Said Cardiff Sixth Form College Head of Pastoral Care, Lisa Morton: "Whilst we are all currently separated it is important to remember we are part of the Cardiff Sixth Form College community. We wanted to give our students some information, resources and apps to look at if they are struggling as well as being able to talk directly to the staff about any issues they are having. The situation is challenging for us all but it is important during this time for our students and families to know we are all in this together and support is at hand."

Dr Sam Littlemore, Behaviour Therapist, Researcher, Trainer, Author.
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Returning to a new normal

A vision for Phase 2 and thereafter



COVID-19 has been a trigger for change. As anti-social becomes the new social, spare rooms double up as remote classrooms and living digitally takes centre stage, we are already seeing unprecedented levels of innovation and invention.

We all hope we are making online living enriching, virtual relationships heartfelt and socially distanced learning relevant.

And then will come Phase 2...

Mark Tottman, Headmaster of Dunottar School, Surrey, considers what the future may hold...

We cannot expect to return to business as usual. Until a reliable vaccine is available, schools will need to observe social distancing, avoid mass gatherings and be prepared for cycles of further social restriction.

This is an extraordinary challenge – possibly greater than Phase 1. It is diametrically opposed to how we intuitively lead and run a school – collaboration, community, routine and consistency.

How can schools adapt?

Closure was predominantly to avoid children being spreaders rather than victims of the disease. So, on returning, we will need to enforce social distancing for the foreseeable future. Whilst this is unachievable in its entirety, we can manage the risks.

Initially, we are unlikely to welcome all pupils back simultaneously or run at capacity. A phased approach may be required, with the rotation of different year groups on different days.

Class sizes will need to be limited and reorganised to enable everyone to keep a safe distance; perhaps keeping pupils in a 'base' classroom with teachers moving between lessons? Movement will be choreographed; the flow of pupils around the site, one-way systems in corridors, play areas

and outdoor spaces restricted.

Daily temperature checks may be needed at the school gates; anyone infected sent home immediately. Arrival and departure times will need to allow for smoothing the peak with lunch and break times similarly staggered.

We may need to operate with a different working week, scheduling lessons across unusual time slots including weekends and holidays. This would require new staffing patterns and a significant cultural shift.

We must support vulnerable staff; high and volatile levels of staff absence may become the norm if the need for 7-14 day self-isolation strikes at any time. Physical and social confinement takes its toll on mental health so the return to school needs to be accompanied by greater availability of counselling support for staff and pupils. A culture of pastoral care will be paramount.

Mass gatherings – assemblies, prize-giving and drama productions – should be avoided. Virtual concerts will be fine. It could be a while before "Crouch; Bind; Set" precedes the first scrum of the season, but cricket can be played with acceptable social distancing across the slip cordon. Open Mornings will continue to be replaced by virtual

coffee mornings or a Town Hall meeting with the Head.

The new normal sounds like quite a challenge. But 12 weeks ago, distance learning and partial closedown did too!

A new model for independent schools?

COVID-19 may have fundamentally changed children's learning.

We now know that pupils can study at home using online solutions and virtual reality. Likewise teachers can conduct lessons and carry out assessments remotely with the help of AI. Perhaps a new era of learning has been born? A school may become a hybrid institution, a venue for distanced learning, offering a digital first approach from a virtual platform, and a place to which learners commute on some days to be with other people and experience the heartbeat of the community.

When pupils gather back together in school, they will enjoy those essential aspects that cannot be properly replicated online; building rapport with teachers, developing friendship groups and receiving individual pastoral care. They will also work on practical assignments such as science experiments and DT projects, play certain sports fixtures and sit invigilated exams.

This model opens up the possibility that children could access multiple, rather than linear, learning experiences with different online 'schools' who specialise in particular subjects and courses, with differential prices.

Who will succeed?

We must be agile; re-wire our schools around disruptive, new capacity models, virtual collaboration and lean cost management. We must retain those aspects that work so well now – excellent pastoral care, broad co-curricular opportunities and aspirational programmes for individual learning.

But Covid-19 presents a new existential threat to independent schools. We are about to see how resilient and agile schools can be. Those who have relied on images of glorious buildings and grounds to entice parents, may find they are more interested in your staff's mastery of online delivery and your capacity to be flexible in what you offer and how you charge.

Those who understand and anticipate pupil needs, who build and execute quality solutions at speed and at an acceptable price, will continue to thrive. Others will fall permanently by the wayside.

Mark Tottman heads Dunottar School, which was saved from closure by United Learning in 2014. All pupils have school iPads for use in lessons and for homework assignments. Since joining United Learning, it has received investment including a £2.2m Sixth Form Centre and a £4.5m Assembly Hall and Performing Arts Centre.



Re-purposed in the national interest

Uniform supplier Perry has re-purposed its blazer factory in Leeds to make mattress covers for the NHS Nightingale Hospitals.

Said Perry's Anna Bunting: "To be in keeping with government guidelines, we initially closed our factory and had to furlough our production staff. However, we were then approached by Leeds City Council to produce mattress covers for NHS beds in the new Nightingale Hospitals in three locations across the country. Over

a couple of days we repurposed our factory, configuring the work space to ensure safe working, to manufacture specialist mattress protectors for a local supplier of mattresses to the NHS".

Perry is a supplier of uniforms to independent schools, universities and clubs.

Said Anna: "We are incredibly proud of our team for stepping up to volunteer and support the national effort".



Pictured: A member of the Perry team producing NHS mattress covers and another image from just a few weeks before the lockdown of producing the Wetherby Prep School blazers

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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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