

November ~ December 2018

The Independent Schools Magazine



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NATIONWIDE SUPPLIERS OF PEUGEOT FORD & VAUXHALL

In this issue...



Rugby team meet Dylan Hartley

Bedford Prep's U12 rugby team were jubilant on Sunday 7 October when a series of superb performances earned them the runners-up trophy at the Finborough School Rugby Festival, where they were very excited to meet England co-captain, Dylan Hartley.

In the group stage, they won their first three matches against St Faiths, Finborough B and Taverham. In the final group game, Bedford Prep undoubtedly played the best rugby of the tournament; they used free-flowing, running rugby with quick passing and some outstanding offloading out of the tackle to overturn a gutsy St Joseph's side.

Having won all their group games, the boys progressed into the top-tier triangular against an extremely physical Finborough A side and a Greshams side playing a similar style to Bedford Prep, with eye-catching speed and passing.

The boys finished runners-up, scoring 19 tries and conceding just one, gaining the Runners-Up Trophy. While they were there, the boys met and had their photo taken with England co-captain Dylan Hartley (pictured).

Town Crier tradition

Warwick's Town Crier has visited Warwick School annually for more than a century. This year his visit got a specially loud cheer.

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Season's Greetings

As has become our custom, this is a combined November~December issue.

Our next issue will be out in January.

The team at ISM wish all readers, advertisers, and advisory board members a pleasant Christmas and successful New Year.



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New outdoor pursuits venture

Giggleswick School, Yorkshire, is expanding its provision to become a commercial outdoor activities provider.

The school is opening up its facilities and expertise to the wider public with a range of outdoor educational and recreational courses for all ages and abilities as well as instructor training and qualifications.

Head of outdoor pursuits (OP), Chris Wright (pictured), is implementing and leading the development, which will make the most of the school's experience, resources and ideal location for adventure on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

Said Chris: "From now on, everyone can access our OP department. This is an exciting development for us, we are opening up the outdoors to a much wider range of people, giving adults and groups of all ages the opportunity to improve their skills and discover new activities."

Courses and events will be on offer throughout the year to fit alongside the school's extensive programme for its pupils in a wide range of outdoor sports, from climbing, fellrunning and mountaineering to kayaking, caving and mountain biking.

Giggleswick Outdoor Pursuits will offer courses such as Hill Skills and Mountain Skills under the Mountain Training England umbrella, as well as National

Governing Body Leadership Awards such as Hill and Moorland Leader, to provide training relevant to a range of activities. This is expected to be popular with those such as scout leaders or teachers working on the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Giggleswick also has providership status for the National Navigation Award Scheme.

As well as set dates open to anyone to book onto, bespoke courses will be available, with a minimum of four people per class.

Chris said: "Corporate development days can be arranged and we can also facilitate guided walks, caving, mountain biking - you name it. We have a range of experienced staff at Giggleswick and we also work with local freelance experts to offer safe and fun activities to all, under our AALS licence.

"We intend to reinvigorate our holiday course provision and develop programmes for adults as well as children during the Easter and summer breaks."

Chris also intends to put Giggleswick firmly on the map for outdoor interest events. Already it is the venue for the English Schools Fellrunning Championships and hosts a popular Kendal Winter League fell race. The school will host a cyclocross race in December, in collaboration with the Yorkshire Cyclocross Association and on April 13 and 14 2019 a specialist UK ultra running festival will take place at the school.



PE Teacher's Channel Swim

Sophia Storrar, a PE teacher at Abbey Gate College, Cheshire, successfully swam the English Channel in a team relay to raise money for Cancer Research UK. Smashing her £2000 target, Sophia raised nearly £4000.

The team of three swimmers completed the crossing in 11 hours and 58 minutes supported by pilot boat, Rowena. The Dover Strait is renowned for having strong tidal flows and the

high water Spring tide of 7.1m certainly added to the challenge!

Sophia took on the Channel challenge to raise funds to help improve cancer treatments and in memory of her best friend, Pip and all those who have battled cancer.

In preparation for her cross-Channel swim, Sophia trained across the globe in oceans, seas, rivers, quarries, lakes and pools, both day and night, sometimes in temperatures below 7°C.

Former heads gather for centenary



A host of ex pupils and staff came together recently to celebrate the Bickley Park School, Kent, one hundredth birthday – and shared tales of wartime, prime ministers and pop stars.

Alumni were tracked and traced from around the globe and were invited to revisit the school to collectively share memories. Old boys who'd been pupils during World War II, and from as far away as Finland, came together to join four ex-Head Masters and the daughters of two others, for the day.

The oldest old boy in attendance, Clyde Britton, recalled a German bomb landing on the main building while he and fellow pupils sheltered in the cellar. Another told stories about the occasions when Prime Minister Harold Macmillan used to drop in for tea and biscuits with the boys, while one told of listening

to David Bowie practising his music in his parents' house which was next door to the school.

Current Head Master, Patrick Wenham, said: "This was a unique gathering, with former pupils flying in from as far afield as Finland. It was especially wonderful to be able to assemble Heads spanning over half the school's existence. A joyous atmosphere pervaded the day with those attending sharing a common delight in revisiting Bickley Park and even enjoying a school meal together."

This term the centenary was themed around celebrating the past. The Spring Term will look at how schools and learning will change in the future and the Summer Term embraces 'Community' with a massive street party involving the school and wider community.



School fees & money laundering

Following the recent publication of The Serious and Organised Crime Strategy by the Home Office, the Government minister for security and economic crime, Ben Wallace, said that the government would target bodies such as public schools, football clubs and luxury car garages that may be facilitating billions of pounds worth of money laundering, but failing to report suspicious activity. The comment prompted a stern reaction from school leaders who demanded concrete evidence of any wrong-doing. Henry Briggs, senior partner at the Birmingham office of chartered accountants Haines Watts, considers the issues...



As the Home Office is currently being vilified in other areas of the press for providing inaccurate information to the last Home Secretary, one may be forgiven for cynically dismissing such politically charged hard talk, were it not serious.

It is, at the very least, an opportunity for fee paying schools to re-examine their systems and controls so as to demonstrate that they should not be targeted in this way.

Independent schools currently are not in the regulated sector under the recently revised Money Laundering Reporting Requirements 2017 under the Proceeds of Crime Act. Unlike Accountants and Estate Agents, who are also targeted by the same minister for having not played their part in hardening the environment and reporting suspicious activities. As members of professional bodies who risk going to prison for failing to comply, he produces no evidence of this or indeed reports of this being so. Prosecutions have been almost non-existent. Feedback to those who are regulated, of how the numerous suspicious activities reports that they have had to make by law, have been followed up, has been underwhelming.

Fee paying Schools, though, do accept money for high value

services and so should be aware of their need to comply with the Regulations.

The areas of risk for them are a matter of common sense. Payment of fees by cash can have no good reason, other than that either the funds would attract too many questions if paid into a bank first, or they have been obtained through tax evasion. Either way, in these circumstances, a criminal offence has been committed and a recipient of such funds is indeed handling 'dirty money'. In no circumstances should it be accepted.

Parents or payers of fees who are members of a family that is politically exposed – either in the UK or abroad – should be subject to enhanced due diligence procedures by the recipient; these are not so onerous, with numerous reputable internet credit agencies providing facilities to check background and detail.

The best way for schools to ensure they are neither liable to be taken advantage of by criminals in this way, or wrongfully accused of doing so, is to have robust systems for its prevention. Real money launderers will quickly seek to take their money elsewhere and any potentially difficult or illegal situation will be prevented.

A 'No Cash' policy should be firmly in place. I would be surprised if there are many schools left that do not already have this. If they do accept cash, and think they have good reason for some parents paying this way, they should fortify their credit policy by providing options such as payment by direct debit. If granting credit, they should either obtain a credit licence or use a licensed provider as a contractor on their behalf. Cash may not only be ill gotten, but will also provide temptation to defraud inside the organisation.

ID checks and credit ratings on prospective parents are also carried out in many schools and this can be done early in the process as

a matter of course; to help with any possible future non-payment of fees, as well as satisfying any Home Office enforcer or journalist alleging improper or illegal activity.

With both Home Office and HM Revenue and Customs staff struggling with huge workloads in the light of other challenges, one wonders if these recent reports of holding handlers of cash in the legitimate private sector to account are either a deflection, or just all talk and no action. It is best in any event for financial managers in independent schools to make sure their systems are robust, and are seen to be robust, to counter any possibility of providing any outlet for the proceeds of crime.

Little in the way of answers

ISM placed the following questions before the Home Office:

- i) Have there been any known instances of independent schools accepting cash-payments for fees which are believed to have come from criminal activity?
- ii) If no, will Mr Wallace make it clear that he was referring to possibility rather than actuality?
- iii) If yes, how many instances over what period? What action has been taken or is being taken against those schools? Can he name 'guilty' schools?
- iv) What checks does Mr Wallace suggest schools should take to avoid inadvertent complicity in money laundering?

A spokesman said the Home Office would 'neither confirm or deny' points i, ii, and iii.

On iv, the spokesman said Mr Wallace is trying to raise schools' awareness of the issue.

Henry Briggs is a former school governor with expertise in advising and supporting both independent and state schools.

Pupils solve real world problems through interdisciplinary projects

Ian Munro, Rector at Kelvinside Academy, Glasgow, suggests school leaders look beyond the traditional curriculum to creativity, innovation and a new curricular model, to better prepare youngsters for a rapidly changing world.



At Kelvinside, we have an audacious goal – to transform education. And it's probably about time too.

Amongst many educationalists, it has become de rigueur to lambast the current exam-led educational system. However, few have forwarded suggestions on how the system might evolve to better prepare youngsters for a world and job market which is changing at a more rapid pace than ever before.

Let me be clear, I do not think the current system is completely broken, lots of extraordinarily good things happen in schools across the UK every day. However, worryingly, in many ways the educational offering does not look too dissimilar to what we would have seen in classrooms over 100 years ago.

That's why we are steadfast in our ambition to expand the possibilities schools can offer our pupils. To do this, we are constantly gathering insight and ideas through research of innovative practise elsewhere in the world. We have engaged with pupils, parents and teachers, as well as learning from the public and private sectors.

We've looked outside our school, and outside the UK. The system which grabbed our attention was developed at NuVu – the world's leading innovation school, based in Boston, USA. Their approach focusses on developing the creative process through the architectural studio model. There are no exams, rather pupils solve real world problems, big and small, through interdisciplinary project work.

Last year, we secured an exclusive European partnership with NuVu,

and in the short time since, the difference the collaboration has made to pupils has been transformational.

By working with NuVu design experts from Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) over the course of two summer camps, pupils from Kelvinside Academy, and other schools across Scotland, have broadened their horizons and achieved far more than they ever thought possible. Pupils don't normally get to build robots or wearable technology at school – but why shouldn't they? That's exactly what some of our pupils have had the chance to do!

Rather than learning from teachers in a traditional setting, pupils have collaborated with design experts and each other to achieve incredible things.

Pupils learn in different ways and we as educators should present a variety of opportunities and options. While some will learn best through more traditional practices, others seem better suited to a more hands on and creative environment. We should be able to offer both – and more. As school leaders, it's our duty to identify and provide the best education possible for our pupils. That cannot be done without asking questions and making changes to the current system. For example, does the current curriculum really 'map' to the real world, and what do exam results alone actually tell us about a young person?

We believe that we are now starting to answer some of these questions. We propose

that providing pupils with the opportunity to learn from experts, not necessarily 'teachers', in an environment that fosters creativity goes some way towards offering an evolution of the traditional system. Diversity, both of message and how these messages are delivered, is essential. Experts in specific areas can provide valuable insight into the world of work and research that will complement what our teachers already offer.

We've expanded our partnership to embed NuVu and its style of education within our own day to day core school curriculum. MIT graduate James Addison is a designer and researcher whose work spans architectural design, urban planning, technology, entrepreneurship and education. As of August, James joined our school as a NuVu design fellow and will lead pupils through two-week immersive design studios this academic year.

During these two-week studios, pupils will be challenged to learn in new ways, solving real world problems through interdisciplinary hands-on projects. This could involve building a swarm of robots capable of completing search and rescue work in a disaster zone, or it might entail creating a piece of physical theatre that draws attention to homelessness in Glasgow.

As children progress through school, we have to help them unleash and develop their creative sides. It seems exams, timetables and the traditional classroom can erode our pupils' imagination. Traditional elements of education cannot succeed in fully developing our young people if

they operate in isolation. A hybrid approach is required.

The benefits of learning from what our NuVu colleagues are already achieving in America and building on it with help and input from everyone involved at Kelvinside Academy, will be far-reaching. We have already built a series of industry partners who are helping us to co-create a new curriculum around future skills that sit well within the two-week studio model.

We hope our drive to push the educational envelope will have a ripple effect across society. We want to encourage decision makers, particularly in the Scottish Government, to question the status quo and to look at alternative models, concepts and solutions.

The future is unknown and no-one has all the answers. What we do know is, that if we remain standing still, we will not prepare pupils for a rapidly changing world. And that would be a dereliction of duty. I enjoy and encourage an open dialogue and debate with my colleagues across the education sector and will continue to be both reflective and responsive in these conversations.

We will rigorously monitor the outcomes of our innovative approach to education and share what we learn with our counterparts in schools across Scotland, the UK and the world, as well as with parents, pupils, peers and politicians. I truly believe our new approach at Kelvinside Academy can be an exemplar that demonstrates the vast array of benefits a new style of education can have for our pupils.

CHANGING FACES...
CHANGING PLACES...



For 'Old Boy' Geoff Laidler, returning to Dame Allan's Schools, Newcastle-upon-

Tyne, as head of the Junior School was an irresistible opportunity.

A student at the Boys' School from 1985 to 1992, Geoff went on the study music at Durham University, but it was through volunteering

one summer with his sister, who was a primary school teacher, that Geoff found his true calling.

Following a PGCE at Northumbria University, Geoff worked at various North East primary schools before taking up a post as head-teacher at St John Boste, Washington. He stayed there for six years before moving to St Agnes' in Crawcrook, where he has been for the past six years.



Mr Louis d'Arcy is the new Headmaster of St Bede's College in Manchester and will be

joining the College in January 2019. He is currently Deputy Headmaster at Bradford Grammar School in Yorkshire. Mr d'Arcy read Chemistry at St Peter's College, Oxford before beginning his career as a management consultant at Accenture. The call of teaching proved to be too

strong and in 2002 he joined Whitgift School as a Mathematics teacher. He held a number of roles during his time at the School, including second-in-charge of the Mathematics department, Head of First Form (Years 6 and 7) and Housemaster. From there he joined Ipswich School in April 2012 as Head of Sixth Form and also became a member of their Senior Management Team. His wife Roxanne is a Primary School Headteacher and their first child, Anna, was born very recently.



Moorfield School, Yorkshire, has a new head – Paul Baddeley.

From the village of Instow in North Devon, he studied teaching at Bishop Grosseteste College in Lincoln and achieved BA honours in English with Qualified Teacher Status.

He has been in teaching for 20 years and 13 of these years have been as a senior leader with the last four being as a Head Teacher. He mainly taught in the Ely area

of Cambridgeshire across 3 schools, but has also taught in Devon and Grimsby.

Married with four primary aged daughters, he enjoys spending time with the family at weekends and keeping active together.

During his career as a headteacher he has introduced and championed such initiatives as Forest School, a Pupil Welfare Officer, a Nurture Classroom and individual mentoring for children as well as focusing the whole school vision and values around the importance of community.



The Governors of King Edward's Witley have announced the appointment of a new Head

and Principal of Bridewell Royal Hospital, effective from September 2019. Mrs Joanna Wright will take over the leadership of the School from the current Headmaster, Mr John Attwater when he becomes Principal of King's Ely following

nearly a decade of service to King Edward's and the School's charitable foundation, Bridewell Royal Hospital.

Mrs Wright is currently Deputy Head at St Peter's School, York. Prior to this she was Deputy Principal Pastoral at Queenswood School, Herts, a Housemistress at St Edward's, Oxford and Assistant Director of the Stahl Theatre at Oundle School.

Heads Hunted

Among the upcoming head and principal appointments:

Bablake School	West Midlands
Glasgow Academy	Glasgow
Hilden Grange School	Kent
Seaton House School	Surrey
Stonar School	Wiltshire

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

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

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Student Leadership

There are few issues written about more these days than the concept of leadership, whether the focus is on the stories of great past leaders, techniques on how to improve leadership, or concerns over the lack of diversity seen in those who lead. It is clear that leadership is a hot topic, and more than ever it is essential that schools prepare students for the types of leadership roles they will hold in future. In this special ISM report, Dr Andy Kemp, Head of Wells Cathedral Senior School, Somerset, discusses his innovative approach, and reports on the recent conference he held for heads of school across the south-west region.

A right or a privilege?

Analysis led to radical changes in prefect structure

Leadership roles and approaches have changed a lot over the years, and it is essential that we as schools respond to these changes, and ensure that we are supporting our future leaders to develop the skills and experiences necessary to enable them to confidently take on the roles and responsibilities they will hold in the future.

Our schools have always provided opportunities for students to develop their leadership skills whether through captaining a sports team, leading a section in the CCF, or being a House Captain or Prefect. However the problem is that these opportunities tend to favour the students who have benefited from past experiences to develop their leadership, and so as is often seen in the world of sport, students who show some small natural disposition (such as being tall when they are 7-8 for sport) at a young age are provided with opportunities to develop further, with the net result being an uneven profile of experience.

This brings me to the heart of my question - should the opportunity to develop student leadership be a right which all students deserve, or should it be a privilege for those who have earned it. It was this question, which was debated by the student body at Wells Cathedral School

as part of our debating society programme last year, which lay at the heart of some radical changes we made to our prefect leadership structures at Wells Cathedral School a couple of years ago.

We like many schools operated a structure which involved the appointment of around 20 student leaders (making up around 20% of the upper sixth). They were chosen through a combination of written application, staff and student votes, and an interview process for those who wanted to be Head Boy or Head Girl. Every year it was a challenge to choose only 20, as there were always excellent students who just didn't make the cut, but who could have benefited from the experience and contributed significantly to the school.

So after a number of years of feeling dissatisfied with this, we radically turned the process on its head, and decided that rather than capping the number of students involved, we would open it to everyone, and move from student leadership being a privilege reserved for the few who had already shown potential, to a right open to everyone who wanted to improve.

To make this work we had to create properly defined roles and responsibilities made up of sports captains, house captains,

instrumental captains, academic captains, year group captains, whole school areas of responsibility such as philanthropy, welfare, mentoring; and the head and deputy head boy and girl.

The specific duties of the various student leadership roles are intentionally vague, to provide space and scope for those who take on the role to take it in a direction which matches their passion and interests. However in general we would anticipate that every student leader would at some point during their tenure be involved in leading an event or activity designed to promote or support their area of leadership. This has led us to describe the work of our student leaders as 'project leadership' and has given us a structure through which we can train and support them in developing their skills.

Each student, or group of students is responsible for devising and delivering a project which could be as simple as planning and running an assembly, arranging a visiting speaker, running a competition, through to organising a major music festival, such as our Event on the Lawn, which included three stages and a light artist and raised almost £5,000 to support our charitable work in Sierra Leone. The students are supported by designated staff,

but their role is very much to offer support and put them in contact with people, not to direct them, or step in and fix things for them.

This structure enables us to ensure that every student has gone through a process of planning and delivering a project which they own. This gives them an experience of leadership, working with others, and importantly also gives them something practical they can talk about in future interviews.

We have also redesigned the process of applying for the roles of Head Boy and Girl and their deputies so that it better reflects a real application process. Students are required to write a letter of application, they then go through a long-list interview process which involves a number of practical tasks, before a final shortlist interview which involves previous Head Boys and Girls.

I am committed to helping all students develop their leadership potential in their time at school, and feel that providing a structured process to support these is essential for any school who is committed to the holistic education of the young people in their care. So I am convinced that student leadership should be a right open to everyone, and not a privilege reserved for the few.



Head boys and girls think through their roles at conference

Forty-five students from independent schools across the south west descended on Wells Cathedral School full of excitement and anticipation. This particular group of students brought with them confidence, but also lots of questions, because they were the Head Boys and Head Girls, and their deputies who had come to spend some time thinking and reflecting on what it means to be a leader.

Leadership in schools is a topic of growing importance, although the experience of students varies widely from those whose role as prefects is to manage behavior and support the work of the staff, through to those who are given the space to explore their own individual passions to support and develop the school. However, whatever the nature of the role, no-one should be expected to take on significant leadership roles without training and support, and it was to this end that Wells Cathedral School put together a day of activities to support students at the beginning of their formal leadership roles in school. The day kicked off with an inspiring reflection by Tessa Munt, previously MP for Wells (2010-2015) reflecting on the lessons she has learned both within and outside

of politics. Reminding us that sometimes you are required to show leadership in areas which aren't of significant importance to you, but are to others, but that we must never let this distract us from those issues which we are personally passionate about. An important message for everyone in leadership roles.

Across the course of the morning the focus was on exploring some of the key practical aspects of leadership. Thinking about the importance of being a visible leader, carefully planning your day to ensure you interact with as many different people as possible; then we took some time to think about how we can make the most of meetings by ensuring they are well chaired and thereby making sure that we hear a balanced set of voices; next came the challenge of delegation and the crucial difference between handing work on to others, and real delegation; and finally we explored some project management techniques.

Around lunch the group split into two halves to look at two more practical sessions. The first was the one which seems to make everyone nervous as we explored the art of public speaking. Here we focused

on the key aspects of pace and tone, giving the students a chance to practice in front of their peers.

Before the conference students had been sent a link to complete their Belbin Team Roles profiles. This next session, which was led artfully by a colleague from Belbin, focused on helping the students understand their own preference to team working, but also the importance of building a balanced team who complement each other.

The afternoon was given over to discussing some practical questions through considering various situations and scenarios taken from the past experiences of head boys and girls in previous years. These varied from the obvious – 'How will you manage the balance between your school work and your leadership role?'; to the classic challenge of all leadership roles in 'How would you deal with a disaffected member of your team?'. Ending with the crucial question of 'How will you say no when it all becomes too much?' It was clear from this session that our Heads of School used this opportunity to reflect on how they were going to go about their roles, and ensure they have the necessary support systems in place.

The final session of the day was a Question & Answer session with staff and past Heads of School, and focused on the details, with the majority of the questions being addressed to those past Heads of School who had done what was still ahead for those in the room.

The feedback was fantastic with one student remarking that this event was "a head of school essential"!

This event marked a significant moment for many of these students, not only in their time as Heads of School, but also on their own leadership journeys which will continue well beyond their time at school. I believe that schools are the ideal places for students to develop their own leadership potential, and I believe that we must all explore what we can do to provide opportunities for all our students to develop their individual leadership capacity, whether they are Heads of Schools or taking on other roles and responsibilities.

Plans are already underway to make the event even bigger and better for next year, so that we can continue to support the leadership development of students across the south west.

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Elyse Conlon, Head of EAL and ISC Director of Studies, Moreton Hall School, Shropshire.

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'Passive smoking effect' of public austerity on pay in independent schools

John Richardson, the National Official for the independent schools sector, National Education Union (NEU), reports on the 2018 NEU Independent Sector Pay & Conditions Survey. The survey was conducted last month (October), with approximately 1,200 independent school staff taking part.



An oft-stated maxim for independent sector employers, is that they match or better the cost of living award made in the state-maintained sector. An easy task in the years of public austerity since 2010.

However, September 2018 is different. The 3.5% headline increase for state-maintained teachers has changed the dynamic, leaving many independent sector employers way behind the curve.

So, what percentage of independent sector teachers received a cost of living increase of at least 3.5% this September? The 2018 NEU survey reveals a meagre 1% of respondents.

Of course, the headline increase in the state sector needs to be put into context. Only those on the main pay scale will receive the full 3.5%. Though, according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies, this is 40% of all teachers. Those on the upper pay scale received 2% and leadership positions 1.5%. In a separate award, support staff received 2% in April 2018, with the same amount agreed for April 2019.

In their 2018 Census, the Independent Schools Council proclaims the highest pupil numbers since "records began", while noting that fee increases are at their lowest since 1994 – at 3.4%.

Both statements bring into sharp relief the belief of many NEU members that public sector austerity has been used to hold down wages in the independent sector. And this year, it just got worse.

The 2018 NEU survey records the most common cost of living award received in September was in the range of 1.1-2%.

Worse still, 21% of independent school teachers reported that they received no cost of living increase whatsoever.



Dr Mary Bousted, joint general secretary of NEU, said:

"Independent school staff are being undervalued. Employers need to refocus on their biggest asset: their hard-working staff. Staff morale is being damaged by below inflation salary increases and burgeoning workloads. Employers can demonstrate how they value staff in two ways. Firstly, by carrying out a workload audit of all staff to ensure manageable workloads, adequate rest periods and appropriate recompense. Secondly, pay should be increased, as a bare minimum, in line with the Retail Price Index."

While the state sector is an important benchmark, there are more than two horses in the race. Salaries in other industries are becoming incrementally more attractive as living standards for teachers and support staff in the independent sector fall in real-terms, year after year.

Inflation, as measured by the Retail Price Index [RPI] was 3.3% for the year to September 2018. A cost of living award below that figure means that your living standards fall in real terms.

RPI has traditionally be used to calculate inflation for wages as, unlike the Consumer Price Index [CPI], it includes housing costs. It is used by the government when they want to increase revenue, such as train fares or, as just announced in the autumn budget, to increase the duty on wine!

Unfortunately, wage increases below inflation for independent school staff has been the norm for several years now. So, what is the cumulative effect?

If an employee had received 1% pay awards since 2010, they would have had the equivalent of a 14.1% pay cut in real terms when adjusted

for IyRPI, or an 8.8% pay cut if measured against CPI.

If an employee had received 2% pay awards since 2010, they would have had the equivalent of a 7.1% pay cut in real terms when adjusted for RPI, or a 1.3% pay cut if measured against CPI.

While salaries are falling in real terms in the sector, there is one area which seems to always outstrip inflation... workload!

As one London teacher described the imbalance: workload has dramatically increased by small increments year by year but pay has not reflected this.

Teachers working in the evenings when they get home from school is now the norm. 65% of respondents stated that they worked 3 or more evenings every week.

Sadly, weekend working is not far behind. 41% of teachers who responded to the 2018 NEU survey, reported working every weekend.

A teacher in Scotland summed up a common experience: I regularly work 7.30am to 6.30pm at school, plus an hour at home three evenings a week and every weekend.

And a proper lunch break to recuperate is becoming less and less prevalent. Less than half of all teachers and support staff reported that they enjoyed a lunch break of more than the statutory minimum of 20 minutes. As one teacher put it, No place to relax at lunchtime, expected to eat with the children, meaning no brain break.

The lack of an adequate lunch time rest break for many independent school staff should be of grave concern to employers and to parents.

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

39% of support staff responding to the 2018 NEU survey, stated that they were paid to work term-time only.

At the same time, over 70% said that the demands of the job required them to work extra hours, with 63% doing so without any remuneration.

Full details of the survey are available on the NEU website.

Independent sector real terms pay change Sept 2010-Sept 2018

Inflation	vs RPI	vs CPI
Annual 1% award	-14.1%	-8.8%
Annual 2% award	-7.1%	-1.3%

The Hammond



Since its beginnings as a dance class in 1917 under the direction of Miss Irene Hammond in the Ballroom at The Grosvenor Hotel in Chester, The Hammond in Chester has provided a supportive and nurturing environment for talented young performers.

Whether that performance is in dance, musical theatre, music or academically, The Hammond shows each individual the importance of being the best that they can be, and that performance really matters.

In recent years, significant investment has enabled The Hammond to expand and develop into the unique establishment it is today. The Hammond Theatre (seating over 400) in the Performing Arts Centre, The Music Faculty with its recording studio, individual practice rooms and Apple Mac computer suite, plus state-of-the-art dance studios, all offer excellent performance opportunities for the school's talented students.

Most recently, the school has completed construction of The www.thehammondschool.co.uk

Centenary Studios, opened by HRH The Duchess of Gloucester. The new building includes dance studios, a Jazz Café for Senior students, plus a Learning Resource Centre which will play a vital role in ensuring that Hammond students are properly prepared for their future in performance, helping them to achieve academic success in addition to their vocational training.

The Hammond is based on the edge of Chester and is recognised and funded as a centre of excellence by the Department for Education (DfE) under the Music and Dance Scheme (MDS), and is one of only nine residential schools nationally within this scheme. Additionally, The Hammond receives financial support through the Education Funding Agency's (EFA's) Dance and Drama Award Scheme (DaDA) for some of its post-16 students. The Hammond caters for pupils in its Preparatory School from the age of 6-11. The main part of the school takes Senior students from 11 to 19 years, providing Post -16

Vocational Training leading to the Diplomas in Professional Dance and Musical Theatre. Many Hammond graduates work in the West End or with professional dance companies. The Sixth Form Drama Course combines a BTEC Diploma Level 3 in Performing Arts (Acting) with the study of two 'A' Levels.

The school has a strong commitment to Performance Education – both on the stage and in the classroom. Admission to The Hammond is based on both talent and potential, regardless of personal circumstances, with many students relying on financial support from the MDS or DaDA schemes in order to attend the school. Whilst many of the School's Alumni go on to successful international

stage careers, The Hammond is enjoying a growing national and international reputation as a school for performance excellence.

The Hammond offers carefully structured artistic training in Dance, Musical Theatre, Music and Drama; aiming to help prepare students for a career in the world of the theatre.

This is evidenced by Ofsted (Outstanding in all categories in both 2011 and 2015), and The Independent Schools' Inspectorate who found The Hammond to be 'Fully compliant' in March 2018 and

"The Hammond offers an excellent quality of education." The Independent Schools' Inspectorate (2014)

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Photography by Brian Slater

The Commission on Religious Education: What does it mean for the independent sector?

The Commission on Religious Education (CoRE) recently reported its findings after a long period of consultation with stakeholders. CoRE was set up by the RE Council, but was run independently of it. As independent schools, we are unlikely to feel the full force of CoRE's effect, but times are changing for Religious Education, and Independent Schools will surely find themselves influenced by the findings, writes Clare Jarmy.



These key recommendations are likely to have the biggest effect on independent schools:

1. Religion & Worldviews

CoRE recommends that 'Religious Education' should be renamed 'Religion & Worldviews'. Do not be fooled: this change of nomenclature is no mere window-dressing. The Commission recognises the huge change that has taken place in religious affiliation in the last fifty years, and argues that the subject must evolve to recognise this. Around 50% of adults in the UK have no religion. 41% identify as Christian. Focussing on 'The Six World Religions' does not reflect the religious (or increasingly non-religious) nature of the UK. By introducing 'worldviews' to the subject, and requiring students to handle concepts such as secularism as well as religion, it is hoped that the subject will be useful in reflecting the conversations students will need to have in their lives as well as at work.

Even though most schools in the Independent Sector tend to call this subject 'Religious Studies' and not 'Religious Education', this name change, and everything it implies, is causing controversy. The term 'worldview' is defined by the report, but not closely enough. Couldn't a worldview mean any set of beliefs that are in some way foundational to the way someone sees the world? As Philip Robinson, the RE Advisor to the Catholic Education Service puts

it, "communism, libertarianism, capitalism, nationalism and socialism are just a few non-religious worldviews; should they be taught in RE too? It...seems hugely ironic that the answer to declining religious literacy should be to teach less religion."

2. National Entitlement

Provision for RE has been found to be patchy in recent years, and increasing academisation of maintained sector schools has diminished the amount of RE being taught. 34.1% of academies with no religious character were not teaching any RE in KS3 in 2015; 43.7% at KS4. CoRE recommends that a National Entitlement is created to ensure that all students can access the subject. This might cause some independent schools to examine the provision they have in place themselves. Whilst there is no suggestion that independent schools will have to conform, the National Entitlement confirms the importance of the subject, and some independent schools might see fit to follow suit.

3. An 'Academically Rich & Rigorous' subject

A key aim that has come out of CoRE is a call for an "academically rich and rigorous" approach to the subject. Religious Education has historically served many goals: community cohesion; spiritual development; formation of world view; tolerance and understanding of others. Academic rigour has not always featured at the top

of priorities in RE for successive governments. In the independent sector, there has been a longer history of an academic approach as the term 'Religious Studies' implies. The sector has a wealth of expertise amongst its teachers: expect to meet lots of textbook authors at the ISRSA Conference!

Having argued that this is a challenging and academic subject, CoRE recommends that Religion and Worldviews is finally given the status that, as such, it deserves. For its whole history, RE has been a bit different, in its legal status, in its provision, in its locally agreed syllabuses, and, many would argue, this was for some good reasons. Yet, its unique place on the curriculum has also made it a bit of an outlier, difficult to categorise, and difficult, for some, to take seriously as an academic pursuit. Recent government decisions, namely the exclusion both of RE from the EBacc and of short-course RE from schools' performance figures, have hugely undervalued the subject and led to a dramatic downturn in uptake nationally at GCSE. The

Russell Group's list of 'facilitating' subjects, where Religious Studies A Level is conspicuous by its absence, also hugely underestimates the usefulness of the subject for all sorts of areas of further study. CoRE requests that the Russell Group re-examines its list. Here, CoRE could have direct implications for the independent sector: some Heads of RS feel under an unfair amount of pressure to justify their subject, purely because of its seemingly arbitrary exclusion from that list.

If CoRE's recommendations are taken up, we can hope for better resourcing for teacher training, and hence higher quality applicants for jobs in both sectors. We can hope that students expect RS to be taught, and to be taught well, as it so often is by colleagues in the independent sector. More than this, we can hope, finally, to be understood for what we are. We are teachers of a valuable, viable, challenging and rigorous academic subject: so much more, but nothing less.

About the ISRSA

The ISRSA affirms that Religious Studies is an academically rigorous subject of vital relevance with a challenging and timeless voice. It exists to support RS teachers in British independent schools, to provide networking and training opportunities. It is also the voice for RS teachers, defending the value of the subject and presenting views to educational decision makers.

ISRSA is always keen to welcome new members to the organisation or Council. Please contact ISRSA at admin@irsra.co.uk



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Town Crier receives a big cheer

Oyez, oyez, oyez! Warwick School students received a public news announcement in true historical style when Town Crier Michael Reddy visited and requested that the Head Master grant permission for an extra week's holiday at half-term. This was greeted with huge cheers from the gathered pupils!

Mr Reddy also collected for his chosen charity – The Warwick Town Christmas Lunch. This was created last year to provide a Christmas Lunch to help combat Festive Loneliness and in addition Christmas dinners were given to Leamington Night Shelter to hand out. Last year was a great success and the hope is that donations and support will enable this year to be equally successful.

Michael Reddy commented, "Incredible generosity from the pupils and staff at Warwick School, as we were taken from classroom to classroom, me holding out my Tricorn hat for the charity that will bring together and feed 80 local people that would otherwise be on their own this Christmas Day. As it got heavier and heavier I knew it was a big amount, but was blown away by the final count £595. Thank you all so much."

Traditions at Warwick School are of particular importance and the invitation to the Town Crier is one that has been kept for many a year, dating back to at least 1912.

In the middle ages a Town Crier would have been the main means of important news communication, announcing in public as many people couldn't read or write.



First wedding for over 200 years

New Hall School, Essex, hosted the first ever wedding in its Chapel for over 200 years when former student and Head Girl Alexandra Grainger married Daniel Meyeron.

Since 1799, the school has resided in the former Beaulieu Palace, which once belonged to Henry VIII. Miss Grainger relished the opportunity to celebrate her special day in the school where she studied from the ages of 11 – 18, before studying English at the University of Exeter.

Katherine Jeffrey, Principal, said "The New Hall Chapel is part of the magnificent Tudor palace of Beaulieu. The sheer scale, beauty and history of our grounds will

provide a marvellous and memorable venue for Alex's special day. It is lovely to welcome former students and their families back to New Hall, as they celebrate important milestones and achievements in their lives beyond the school. We wish Alex and her partner Daniel every good fortune and happiness as they embark upon this new chapter of their lives together."

Pictured: Nine New Hall Alumni at the wedding, from left to right: Florence Swift-Oliver; Eleanor Grainger; India Rich; Alexandra Grainger; Ellie McCrea; Jessica Grainger; Phoebe Lane; Danielle Argent; Gabriella Inwang



CONFERENCE CALL!

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No VAT on fees – for now anyway

The government has no plans to change the VAT treatment of independent schools.

This policy was revealed to Lord Lexden, chair of the Independent Schools Association, in a written answer in the House of Lords last month (October).

The clarification followed some weeks of press reports that the Treasury might be considering including such a move in the recent Budget.

Julie Robinson, ISC general secretary (pictured right), said at the time: “The sums for a policy such as this do not add up. A third of pupils at our schools are on reduced fees and most of our pupils are from families where parents work hard to pay for an independent school education. Putting VAT

on school fees would make this an unaffordable choice for many families. Smaller independent schools would certainly close, resulting in a sudden increase in the numbers of young people needing places at state schools – driving up costs to the taxpayer. Currently, 600,000 children are educated in independent schools, saving the taxpayer the cost of educating them. For every child forced out of the independent sector, the impact on the Department for Education’s budget would be approximately £6,310 per pupil per year, with a further one-off capital cost associated too.

“In addition to the impact on costs and capacity in the state sector, a drop-off in the number of independent school pupils would

result in staff redundancies. This would not just be teachers; many would be catering staff, cleaners, grounds-people and classroom assistants. Along with job losses, there would be negative impact on many local suppliers, who rely on independent schools as part of their supply chain.

“Ultimately, putting VAT on school fees would cost the Government money, not raise money, and heap more pressure on the state system when it is already stretched. Working in partnership with the Department for Education, we have been making huge strides to develop and strengthen partnership projects between independent and state schools, which benefit tens of thousands of pupils every year. And, independent schools have been



doing more and more to widen access in recent years, increasing the amount of means-tested bursary provision for lower income families and providing a growing number of free places to looked-after children and young people on the edge of care. All of this important and life-transforming work will be diminished if a VAT on fees policy were introduced.”

Labour announced last year that it might impose VAT on school fees in an effort to raise more money for free school meals.

Time capsule buried

Bishop’s Stortford College have continued their celebrations of their 150th anniversary with a Time Capsule burial and a visit from the Lord-Lieutenant of Hertfordshire.

Members of the College community including Old Stortfordians, parents, staff and pupils gathered in the Memorial Hall for a service to celebrate the changes in our lives over the last 50 years and what pupils in 50 years’ time might look forward to experiencing.

The Time Capsule was the idea of

Old Stortfordian (OS) Committee Member Michael Baim ('58-'62). All three sections of the College put forward ideas for content and helped to pull the box together which included poems, a quilt made from College ties, newsletters, theatre programmes, menus from the Dining Hall, drawings and artworks, DVDs of Senior School House Music and a Prep School play, copies of the current prospectus and other items that illustrate College life today.



Pictured: Bishop’s Stortford College also welcomed the Lord-Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, Mr Robert Voss CBE who represents Her Majesty The Queen and supports the Royal Family in the county. Pictured: Paul Stanley, Bursar; Guy Baker, Chairman of the Board of Governors; Mr Robert Voss, Lord-Lieutenant of Hertfordshire; Heather Collier, Head Girl; Oliver Lewis, Head Boy; Jeremy Gladwin, College Headmaster



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Dealing with Data Subject Access Requests

Data subject access is not a new concept for schools and burdensome requests have long caused administrative headaches for bursars and data protection officers. However, important changes to the regime introduced by GDPR earlier this year, together with growing public awareness of data protection issues and individual rights, make it advisable for schools to keep how they deal with subject access requests ("SARs") under review, writes Louise Smyth...



Step One Identify a SAR

The GDPR does not specify how a SAR should be made and has largely removed the ability to charge a fee (unless the request is manifestly unfounded or excessive). Valid requests can therefore be made verbally, as well as in writing, to any member of a school and schools should therefore ensure staff are trained to recognise and flag any potential SAR. Whilst schools cannot insist that individuals use a prescribed format to make a SAR, a clear and easily accessible data protection policy that sets out a sensible process for making a request will help to ensure that requests aren't missed.

Step Two Consider the Identity of the Data Subject

Schools may request proof of identity if there is any doubt as to the identity of the person making the request.

Additionally, where a SAR is made in relation to personal data held about a child, schools need to carefully consider to whom they need to respond. If the school is satisfied that the child is mature enough to understand his or her rights, it should

respond directly to the child. This is often a "grey" area and should be determined on a case by case basis with reference to a particular child and it may be sensible to seek input from the school's legal advisers.

Step Three Consider the Scope of the Request

Individuals have the right to obtain a copy of their personal information as well as supplemental information about the way in which their data is processed and who personal data is disclosed to. Schools can front-end much of their obligations in respect of supplemental information by ensuring they have issued comprehensive privacy notices to employees, pupils and parents detailing this information.

SARs are often broad and burdensome in nature. Schools are entitled to ask an individual for more information to clarify their request but ought to do so as soon as possible. This can be a useful tool to get to the heart of what an individual is really seeking to access but there is no obligation on an individual to provide any additional

information or narrow the scope of the request.

Step 4 Respond Within the Requisite Timeframe

Under the GDPR, schools must respond to a SAR within the shorter deadline of one calendar month of receipt of the request. This can be extended by up to two months if the request is particularly complex but schools wishing to rely on this extension are required to write to the individual setting out their reasons within one calendar month.

Responding to a SAR can be a time-consuming and labour-intensive exercise. Personal data can be held in a plethora of mediums such as emails, paper files, databases, word processing systems, CCTV records, telephone records, internet logs, automated systems and log-in records. Once all personal data has been collated, it will need to be reviewed and often redacted to remove reference to e.g. third-party data and legally privileged information. Where personal data includes both information about the individual who is the subject of the request

and information about someone else, schools will need to seek third party consent but even if this is withheld, they will still need to conduct a balancing exercise and determine whether it is nevertheless reasonable to disclose that information.

Given the tight timeframe, it is therefore advisable for schools to have a process in place to allow them to search for and collate information expeditiously. Practically speaking they may wish to consider approaching their legal advisers for support in dealing with a particularly onerous request. Law firms will often be able to supply paralegals or trainees to boost forces on the ground, as well as advising on tricky issues such as whether to disclose third party data.

Finally, the information needs to be provided in a clear and intelligible manner. There is a particular requirement to use clear and plain language if disclosing information to a child. If a SAR is submitted electronically, schools should respond to the request in an electronic format, unless the individual requests otherwise.

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white long-sleeved blouse and dark pinstriped culottes, stands on a wooden post on a pebble beach. She is smiling and shielding her eyes from the sun with her right hand. A dark navy jacket is draped over her left arm. The background shows a vast pebble beach leading to a grassy dune area under a clear blue sky.

Amelia, Oundle School Collection.

Amelia wears the distinctive bespoke striped culottes of Oundle and a performance cotton fitted blouse. Worn with a navy four button polywool fitted jacket.

schoolblazer

Inspecting the Inspectorates

As Ofsted published its annual reports on the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) and the School Inspection Service (SIS) this month (November), Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman said she is concerned that the reports are of 'increasingly limited value' because Ofsted's ability to monitor the work of the inspectorates is 'seriously hampered' by the existing commissioning arrangements. She wants new monitoring arrangements to be put in place.

It is now the third consecutive year that the monitoring activity commissioned by the Department for Education has provided insufficient evidence to provide a reasonable level of assurance about the quality of the inspectorates' work, according to Ms Spielman.

In total, over the past three years, Ofsted has been commissioned to conduct on-site monitoring visits of only two ISI and two SIS school inspections. Ms Spielman said: "The only other source of evidence available to inform my annual reports has come from reviewing inspection reports; my inspectors have not had access to the evidence bases gathered during these inspections, and as such, have been limited to making an assessment about whether the report is internally coherent. They cannot make any assessment of how the inspection was conducted, what evidence was gathered,

and whether it supports the judgements made. Additionally, the two inspectorates have not provided Ofsted with sufficient management information of their inspection activities, for example the profile of grades being awarded to be able to review overall inspection outcomes. This level of evidence and information is clearly not sufficient to provide for an objective assessment of the quality or standards of their inspections."

Ms Spielman wants to conduct more monitoring visits to allow more evaluation of inspection practice. She also suggests termly safeguarding focused checks, to verify that any safeguarding issues were followed up and reported on appropriately, and a requirement that ISI and SIS provide her with management information.

ISI inspects selected registered independent schools with membership of the associations

that make up the Independent Schools Council, including their registered early years provision and boarding provision.

SIS inspects selected registered independent schools that are

members of the Focus Learning Trust; the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship; and the Cognita Group, where its schools do not belong to an Independent Schools Council association.

Extracts from Ofsted's quality-monitoring of the inspectorates:

ISI carried out 459 inspections during the academic year 2017/18, from which OFSTED evaluated 17 reports. Four of the 17 reports sampled and evaluated by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) were for regulatory compliance inspections. The remaining 13 reports were combined inspections of schools' regulatory compliance and of their educational quality. Eight of the combined inspection reports were for boarding schools. These inspections reported on the school's compliance with the national minimum standards as well as the quality of the school's educational provision.

All of the reports reviewed comply with ISI's inspection guidance. In four of the reports, the recommendations to improve the quality of the school's educational provision lack sufficient precision. In two of these reports, the recommendations do not make clear the specific actions leaders must undertake to bring about improvement.

SIS carried out 17 standard inspections during the academic

year 2017/18 from which OFSTED evaluated six reports. Of these, five were reports from full inspections of each school's educational provision. The remaining report was from a progress monitoring inspection. Ofsted also evaluated two inspections on site.

In two of the reports, inspectors' qualitative judgements are not fully supported by the commentary within the report. On one occasion, the reported evidence within the report's summary does not support the judgement of 'good' that has been given. It is therefore not clear in these cases how inspectors have arrived at their judgements.

Two of the reports do not contain recommendations which directly address the main weaknesses that each report's summary identifies. In these cases, it is not clear what actions school leaders should take to bring about the necessary improvement.

ISI statement:

We note the publication of Ofsted's annual report to the Secretary of State for Education about the quality of ISI's inspections. We are delighted by the recognition of the many strengths of our work. We very much value open and constructive professional dialogue with Ofsted as part of our regular process of self-improvement. To that end, we look forward to continuing our discussions with them and the DfE about the most useful form of monitoring, including peer review, in order to ensure that our inspections are of the highest quality, focusing on safeguarding the welfare of children and the quality of their education.

Mathsteasers: A welcome challenge for advanced learners

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

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

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

The Problem with Praise

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

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

Ready to take your advanced learners further?

Find out more at: www.mathsnoproblem.com/independent-schools



Embracing Struggle

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

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

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

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

Celebrate Failure

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

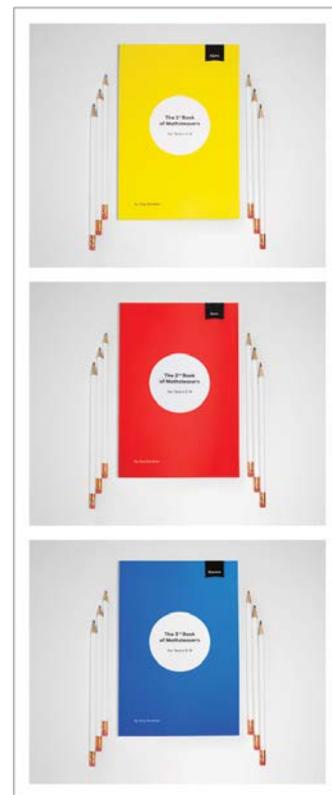
Seeing struggle in a positive light encourages children to go as far as they can with a maths problem, and explain their thinking. It shows them that failing isn't the end of the world, because they have the opportunity to try again, and go further next time.

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

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

Tools for Success

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



Is it the Elephant in the room or the Rhino in your minibus?



Chris Maynard, Managing Director of Castle Minibus gives an insight into the contentious issue of light weight minibuses and the consideration schools need to give to both the vehicle and the driver.

Did you know that you can legally drive a minibus with a standard B category licence?

This single sentence piece of information might seem like the answer to a school's prayers when it comes to training their teachers to drive a minibus; so long as the driver is;

- Over 21
- The driver receives no payment or other consideration for driving – therefore you are a volunteer
- The journey is for social purposes only
- The minibus with up to 16 passenger seats has a gross vehicle weight of less than 3,500kg with an extra 750kg allowance for specialised equipment only.

There are two issues with the conditions above that schools need to consider. One is the grey area, which is open to interpretation, of what is social purposes.

Are school journeys social? Can teachers be classed as volunteers?

Castle Minibus recently launched the Minibus Compliance Course, a course supported and recommended by the ISBA, approved by RoSPA and written in consultation with Beverley Bell, a former Senior Traffic Commissioner. Beverley Bell's advice on this point is;

'In summary the current DVSA view is that if your driver (including teachers who drive) is a volunteer then they can drive a 16-passenger seat minibus if they got their licence after 1997. So, for example, if a teacher chooses to drive a minibus when doing extra duties which they choose to do but are not required to do in their contract then they can drive the 16-passenger seater minibus.

BUT if they have a contract which states that they are required to drive a minibus then they are not a volunteer. An example is; if they are a geography teacher and it is part of their contract that they are required to take students on an annual geography field trip. The DVSA view is that they are paid for this and are therefore not volunteers and therefore need a full PSV driver licence.'

So, it is up to individual schools to look at the contracts of their staff and determine whether they are required by their contracts to drive the minibus for field trips, excursions or sporting fixtures, as in that case they are NOT volunteers and would need a full PSV licence or a D1 licence if the school operated its minibus under a Section 19 Permit.

Adding the weight of a Rhino to your minibus

The second issue when driving a minibus on a standard B car licence is the weight of the

vehicle. 'Lightweight' minibuses as they are commonly called are in fact vehicles that leave the factory as vans and are then fitted with seats and windows to turn them into a minibus. They can stay under the weight limit of 3,500kg by not including heavier safety elements such as side impact bars, which amazingly are not a legal requirement.

This weight limit can be increased to 4,250kg for the addition of specialised equipment only; namely wheelchair access which must always stay in the minibus. The gross vehicle weight is the maximum operating weight of a vehicle as specified by the manufacturer including the vehicle, fuel, driver, passengers and cargo.

So, what schools need to understand is what 'payload' you can add to your lightweight minibus. Payload is the gross weight of the vehicle (GVW) minus the unladen or kerbside weight (ULW).

You need to know therefore what the vehicle weighs unladen, which can vary depending on who and how the vehicle has been converted from van to minibus and also how heavy your passengers, luggage and equipment is likely to be.

If an average 14-year-old boy weighs 59kg and the average adult 68kg and you're filling a

17 seater minibus and adding 20 bags at 8kg each you're looking at a payload of 1197kg which is the weight of an average black rhino.

Don't do the maths: Get the right vehicle to carry your 'precious cargo'

No major manufacturer, like Ford or Mercedes, produces a factory-built minibus with a GVW of under 4250kg because of the safety and comfort features considered necessary when transporting passengers for any reason. Drivers of this type of vehicle who drive for their school under a Section 19 Permit need either a D1 (101) an entitlement on standard driving licences obtained before 1 January 1997 or an unrestricted D1 licence that requires both a theory and practical test.

A solution to the confusion

Vehicle weights, correct licenses and permits along with driver training, maintenance and regular safety inspections are all responsibilities a school needs to manage when they are running a minibus. Therefore, Castle Minibus developed and launched the MCC Minibus Compliance Course to give legal clarity to schools and provide them with a 'best practise' system to create a safer and compliant minibus policy moving forwards.



A LOT HAS CHANGED

How long has it been since you updated your minibus management, training and policies?
70% of schools* surveyed did not understand their obligations under a Section 19 Permit

*survey completed in 2018 by Castle Minibus of 300 UK schools

MINIBUS COMPLIANCE COURSE (MCC)

Developed in consultation with the ISBA and a former senior traffic commissioner the course is delivered by Castle Driver Training's highly experienced ADI instructors. The UK's only school minibus compliance course covers;

'The law in this area is complex and not always easily understood by schools and their teaching staff with severe penalties for non-compliance – as well as the risk to the safety of your pupils. It is therefore vital that your school gets it right'

Beverley Bell, Former Senior Traffic Commissioner for Great Britain

Licencing and permits
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Vehicle safety
Journey planning
Onsite assessment

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John Murphie, Chief Operating Officer.
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Supercharged performance

A team from Ardingly College, Sussex, raced past the finish line at Circuit Zolder, Belgium, as they took part in the prestigious iLumen European Solar Challenge.

Thirty five students from Ardingly who were representing GB & Northern Ireland, were involved finishing tenth of twenty in the big race – after speeding through a 24-hour circuit in particularly testing conditions.

During the race, the Sussex competitors managed to complete 140 laps and a total of 590km.

Ardingly are the only school to have ever entered this event and were competing against prestigious university and industry based teams.

The event was the culmination of years of hard work, with pupils designing and building their competing car with the very latest of eco-technology so that it can harness power directly from the sun.

Dr Andrew Spiers MBE, Director of Science & Technology, said: "The Ardingly Solar project is really about engaging young people with environmental engineering. It is our hope that by building this car and refining its performance, our students will feel a sense of responsibility about the environment, learn about cutting-edge technology, and take away a determination to make a positive difference."

Over the past eight years, more than 300 students have been involved in the Ardingly Solar project with local businesses Cirrus Laser, Cordek, Tracmaster, Time24, Lincoln Binns & XBex, industry professionals, and universities from the South of England.

With success under their belts, the solar project team will now turn their attention to preparing the car for the Australian Bridgestone World Solar Challenge in October 2019. In 2015, they made it to 6th place.



Rocketing along with Tim Peake

Pupils from Babington House School, Kent, came face to face with astronaut Tim Peake at a special event in London recently.

The six students were invited to meet the astronaut by Empiribox during a visit to New Scientist Live. Taking place at London's Excel, the event is the world's

biggest science exhibition and attracts visitors from across the globe.

Year 11 pupils spent time chatting with Tim and telling him what they enjoy about science at school. They even joined him in building a mini NASA space rocket, which they took home after the show.



Science Council Award for Teaching Innovations

Dr Diane Molyneux, Team Leader of Primary 6 at St George's School for Girls, Edinburgh, has won a national award from the Science Council for her work in teaching Science.

Diane's award is in recognition of her continuing professional development (CPD) efforts and achievements as a Chartered Science teacher (CSciTEach). Chartered status involves an annual submission of the CPD activities, which is reviewed by the awarding body, in order to maintain chartered status.

She said: "My passion is for Science and Maths teaching. What really makes me tick is finding ways to engage children with science – developing their scientific capability, their way of looking at things, and encouraging them to be scientifically critical about topical issues such as the war on plastics

and the debate about fossil fuels. I am particularly keen to promote science as a career choice for girls, and to promote positive role models for girls in science."

Mark Ashmore, Head of Science at St George's commented; 'Diane has developed the Primary 6 science course over the last year, with significant self-reflection and evaluation of the lessons. This has led to an effective and engaging science course for the P6s making full use of our lower school laboratory facilities, and provides an excellent grounding in skills and knowledge for girls to study science further up the school.'

Members who have attained chartered status, from 29 professional national bodies of Science, are eligible to enter the CPD Science awards and Diane was nominated by the Association for Science Education (ASE) for the Chartered Science Teacher

category. Other awards are for Registered science technicians and Chartered Scientists. To win the award, Diane had to demonstrate commitment to undertaking work-based and self-directed learning at a high, exemplary standard in order to enhance the quality of her practice and to benefit colleagues, and the students she teaches. Substantial initiative and evidence of reflection on the impact of her practice are expected. She is the only teacher in this year's list of UK award winners. The Award ceremony was held last month (October) at the Royal Society of Chemistry, Mayfair, London.

Over the last year, girls in her Primary 6 Science lessons have benefited from an increase in practical hands-on work focusing on problem solving with projects such as Time, Trees and Forces as part of the BBC Terrific Science programme. Children submit

their results that are used in universities as part of real research. Establishing an international EcoSchools link with a school in India on environmental issues made the children's research really come to life. Diane's science lessons are just as likely to be outdoors as in the classroom or laboratory, and the pupils have enjoyed using resources for the RSPB birdwatch, the BTO study of bird habitats and distribution of worms, the RHS gardening programme and from many other organisations.

During the year, Diane has also experimented with different techniques to encourage verbal responses rather than written responses from pupils to help cater for dyslexic children. This has involved using photography rather than asking the girls to complete written worksheets.

Paper V People? Wellbeing needs to become REAL in your school



Wellbeing for all needs to become number one on the agenda in education. Until wellbeing has pride of place on a leaders agenda things will not change. Today, it is time to get REAL!

It is time to be Responsive

How responsive is your organisation in managing the wellbeing of your staff? Take time to have a look at your policies and procedures for the management of your staff wellbeing? Is it paper or people? Choose one day and do an honesty check of your organisation.

It is time for Early Intervention

Yes, I know that you do not have a crystal ball but you know the life events that will affect staff. It could be a bereavement, an ill relative or situations to do with staff children. Take time to look at your systems to act early when staff need it.

It is time for Accessibility

How accessible is the information your staff need to be well? Are they expected to fend for themselves without support? If you asked your staff this question, what would the response be? When things go wrong, the first step solution needs to be near and simple. How can you make that happen?

It is time for it to be Lasting

Your staff have two contracts in your organisation – a written one and an emotional one. How they feel determines how long they stay. As John Maxwell says, 'People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.' For L you could also have learning. What does your organisation need to learn to put wellbeing at the front of the agenda?

It is time for you to take real action now! Where will you start?

For more information contact: info@simplyboarding.com



Profile

In conversation with Antony Spencer

Born: 1971

Married? To Suzanne, who also teaches. Four children, one currently studying at Oxford, one on a Gap Year, one in the Upper Sixth and One in Fourth Form.

Schools and university attended: Chesterfield School (now renamed Brookfield Community School), then Queen's College Oxford.

First job: Paper round, then collecting Pools Money (remember that!) in a tough estate in Chesterfield. I'd be walking around the estate with a bag filled with cash and betting slips.

First management job: I qualified with Ernst and Young, and worked on a team supporting high tech SMEs.

First job in education: Teacher at Eastbourne College, 2002.

Appointed to current job: 2013

Favourite piece of music: An obscure band called This Mortal Coil, and their album "Blood"

Favourite food: A perpetual battle between Italian and Thai.

Favourite drink: Coffee

Favourite holiday destination: France

Favourite leisure pastime: Hockey

Favourite TV or radio programme/series: Radio 4's "Today", for all its faults. Box set binges: 24, Walking Dead, The Killing etc.

Suggested epitaph: By Grace Alone

Q St. Lawrence College opened in 1879 with just 5 pupils, as an evangelical establishment with the purpose of combining "careful religious training with a sound, liberal education". How, if at all, has that central purpose changed today?

A *Whilst society has become more overtly diverse and secular, we think the vision of the founders remains very relevant today. As a community, we benefit from having pupils from a wide range of faith backgrounds, but the continuing strong Christian foundations of the School do make a palpable difference to its culture, which is marked by kindness, tolerance and compassion.*

Q Part of the College ethos says: 'People with different world views are part of our family, bound together by mutual respect and recognition of the importance of faith and morality'. How do you instil a sense of that importance in your pupils?

A *It has to infuse everything that goes on in school, because when seeking to support the value of faith and morality within education, we set a high standard and need to guard against any hint of hypocrisy; pupils are very adept at exposing pompous claims of high standards that aren't reflected in reality! So we support these values by what we say but especially by what we do, in the way all staff should model good behaviour to pupils. It also comes from open discourse, from a willingness to talk about issues of faith and morality in a balanced way, in contrast to those who want to banish such topics from the school arena, which seems rather limiting to me.*

Q The College commenced its journey from boys-only to all-through co-education back in 1968, completing the transition fifteen years later. Does the trend to the so-called diamond-model - where boys and girls are taught separately in early teenage years - hold any attraction for you?

A *Not to me personally. I respect the views of those who argue for this model, and no doubt it can be done well, but I think schools should be preparing pupils for a coeducational world, rather than preserving some*

gender based cocoon. Despite the current focus in some parts of society upon gender fluidity, boys and girls are clearly different, but there is a greater range of variation within one gender group than there is between boys and girls, for example in areas like intellectual ability. Practically this means a top Maths set combining boys and girls is generally better than a single sex top set of more mixed ability. The notion that the early adolescent years are different, presuming boys and girls are too distracted by each other in class to make progress, simply isn't my experience. To take a broad stereotype, girls can have more mature study habits at an earlier age, and the boys benefit from this example, whilst the girls can benefit from a more grounded approach by the boys. Above all else, parents should worry less about what is going on in the controlled confines of the classroom between boys and girls of this age, and be more concerned about what they are doing online at home in the evenings!

Q Yours is one of the medium-sized schools in HMC membership, with around 650 pupils aged between 3 and 18 of whom about a third board. Some might say this is an ideal size - small enough for you to know everyone personally yet large enough to offer a wide curriculum. Could you see any advantage in growing further? Is that your aim?

A *We've seen significant growth in recent years, with numbers in the Senior School up by 50% in the last five years. We're a better school as a result, but partly because we didn't make growth an objective but simply responded to the demand for the type of education we were providing. There are financial and academic economies of scale in schools, but I would be concerned that if we grew much more we would lose the closer sense of community that is possible in a school of our size.*

Q You are a qualified accountant, and worked in finance before switching into teaching Economics. Why did you make that career move? What - or who - inspired you to get into teaching? Do you still teach the subject?

A *I was always attracted to teaching, and had some great role models at the state school I went to, but they were*

Antony Spencer has been Principal of St. Lawrence College, Kent, since 2013. He was previously deputy head of Clifton College, Bristol.



somewhat demoralised and encouraged me to do something else first. By the time I was qualified as a Chartered Accountant, working in finance and with a growing family, the cost of change to teaching grew considerably, but I took the plunge, sold the house, halved my salary and have no regrets. I don't currently teach, and I miss it, but it is hard to synchronise the role of Head with the demands of teaching examined classes without the pupils suffering.

Q How has that financial background assisted you in your role as Principal? Given the number of short-notice closures of independent schools in recent years - usually citing financial difficulties as the principal reason - should a professional level of financial competence be a pre-requisite of headship?

A *The financial experience has been invaluable, but more important for Heads is to be commercially savvy. Schools are complex organisations with many stakeholders, and the image of a Head sitting in a dusty office only considering academic matters is completely anachronistic. Most new Heads feel that financial matters are the weakest part of their skill set, compared to academic and pastoral areas, and I think more can be done in preparing them, but I wouldn't make it a pre-requisite; there are some very commercially minded Heads out there who didn't have my level of training.*

Q You took a Gap Year between A-levels and your time at Queen's College, Oxford. What did you do? Is a Gap Year something you would advocate for today's sixth-formers, and, if so, why?

A *I had a Gap Year both before and after my time at Queen's, and I thoroughly recommend them for most sixth-formers. I think the reasons are even stronger today, in that a Gap Year before university allows a period of work experience and the raising of finance (the maintenance loans for university today are inadequate).*

University students are much more focussed upon graduate employment opportunities than in my day, and the breadth of work experience possible in a Gap Year can be a considerable help. It's also a chance to do things and meet people that may not come again. I made pizzas, worked as a gardener, worked in a legal office and managed waiting lists in an orthopaedic hospital; great life experience!

Q You have played hockey for town, county, and university with considerable success, and still turn out occasionally for a local side. The College water-base hockey pitch is Olympic-sized. You must surely be tempted to show your pupils how the game should be played as well as cheering them on from the sidelines?

A *The pupils exhibit a level of athleticism and skill that far surpasses mine, and we have an incredibly strong set of coaching staff, so I mostly restrict my time to the sidelines; one of the perks of my job is that I get paid to watch sport! There are two staff v's pupil matches per year, and I do play in those. It always makes me think of Monty Python's "Meaning of Life" comedy sketch of the masters v's pupils match, without the cheating.*

Q At the October HMC Conference chair Shaun Fenton presented his 'top ten tips' for creating happy and successful young people. If you were asked for just three you consider most important, what would you choose?

A *That's tricky, because they are intertwined, but I would go for Joy, Moral and Ethical Purpose, and Knowledge. The first two are core to our humanity, and goodness flows to ourselves and others from a focus upon them. Knowledge is a counterbalance, and in a world of fake news and extremism, it's important that young people are armed with knowledge to defeat ignorance. It's also important that schools remain*

focussed upon the core task of academic development, when there are so many other pressures upon their priorities.

Q St. Lawrence College is in the port town of Ramsgate, which played a significant role in the evacuation from Dunkirk in World War II. One of the Dunkirk 'little ships' still moored at Ramsgate and open to the public is the Motor Yacht Sundowner, (built 1912) once the private yacht of the second officer of the Titanic, C.H. Lightoller, who succeeded in bringing home 127 members of the British Expeditionary Force in just one trip. How does the College mark Remembrance Day?

A *It's a big and solemn occasion, with a formal Chapel service but also a whole school Act of Remembrance. We use assembly talks to explain why this isn't just a commemoration of an historical event but a warning to be vigilant against its repetition, as the warning signs grow ever louder in today's uncertain world.*

Q After the war, the 'Jennings' author, Anthony Buckeridge, came to St. Lawrence College as a master and taught in the school for five years. It was during this time that he began to write books and radio plays about the character at the fictional Linbury Court Prep. How would a mischievous, impulsive, undisciplined, but rather likeable young man like Jennings fare in school today?

A *I fear that some schools are inadvertently applying straightjackets to such creativity, as education becomes a clinical system of data management at times. I'd like to think that Buckeridge would find a welcome home at St Lawrence; the undisciplined trait we'd work on, the impulsive we'd try to direct, the mischievous we'd try to smooth and the likeable we'd rejoice in; the mix makes for great creativity.*

BBC's Young Choristers of the Year

Emilia Jaques from Queen Mary's School, Yorkshire, has been announced as one of the BBC Radio 2 Young Choristers of the Year 2018, alongside the boy winner, Cassian Pichler-Roca from Dean Close School in Gloucestershire.

The prestigious competition included two preliminary rounds and a final in the studios of the BBC's Philharmonic Orchestra at MediaCityUK.

The final was hosted by Blue Peter's Radzi Chinyanganya and composer and conductor, Bob Chilcott, was chair of the judges. He was joined for the occasion by organist, composer and musical director, Simon Lole and the founder and director of the Rock Choir, Caroline Redman Lusher.

Since the final was recorded Emilia and Cassian have already taken on their first commission – a CD recording with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra. They will now go on to appear on various BBC television and radio programmes in the next 12 months including BBC Radio 2's Good Morning Sunday, BBC Radio 4's Daily Service and Sunday Worship, along with special events for Christmas and Easter.

Simon Bell, Director of Schola



Cantor and Director of Choral Music at Dean Close School said, "I am immensely proud of Cassian, he has worked incredibly hard and is a valuable member of the choir, always performing to an outstanding level. Winning this award will hopefully inspire other boys to consider Choristerships, which offer children so much more than just a first class musical education. Being a Chorister means they not only learn to sing to a professional level, they also learn valuable life skills such as team work, organisational skills, resilience and a sense of responsibility".

Carole Cameron, Head at Queen Mary's School is also delighted: "I am so proud of Emilia, she has a beautiful voice and performs with confidence and composure. As a school, we have strong traditions in both choral singing and instrumental music and it has been wonderful to see Emilia blossom." Emilia will be singing this Christmas at Ripon Cathedral, and in a Candelit Concert on Saturday 1 December at 19:00 at Baldersby St James Church. The repertoire will include a performance of 'A Ceremony of Carols' by Benjamin Britten and other seasonal music. Tickets are available by calling 01845 575000.

Prize for duo in Hispanic Festival

Two King's Ely Senior students have won an award in recognition of their Spanish and theatrical skills.

Annie Moore and George Collier, both Year 10 students, participated in the VI Hispanic Theatre Festival held at North London Collegiate School last month (October).

The festival, organised to celebrate Spanish language and culture in the curriculum, consisted of 14 short original Spanish plays which were performed on the night by students in Years 11-13 – and all in Spanish of course!

Annie and George were the youngest students to participate in

the festival and they made King's Ely proud with a performance which saw them win the prize for the 'Best Unique Theatrical Experience'.

Head of MFL and Spanish at King's Ely Senior, Esmeralda Salgado, said: "This is an outstanding achievement for Annie and George, who were competing against some very well-known schools, especially given their young age and the amount of Spanish they had to learn while bringing their performing skills to the test. This experience is all part of King's Ely's MFL Department's aim to take languages outside the classroom!"



Pictured: George and Annie with Arancha Lorente, Teacher of Spanish at King's Ely Senior, who helped to prepare them for the competition

Inspiration from theatre director

GCSE and A Level Drama pupils at Abbey Gate College, Cheshire, were lucky enough to have a talk from top theatre director, Loveday Ingram.

Loveday trained with John Barton at the Royal Shakespeare Company, who she then assisted for 4 years. She has directed musicals and plays in the West End as well as having worked extensively in the UK and Ireland and was Associate Director at Chichester Festival Theatre for 3 years. She worked as an Assistant and Senior Assistant Director at the National Theatre and was Assistant Director on the original production of Mamma Mia. Pupils also saw her dynamic interpretation of Julius Caesar at Storyhouse last year.

The pupils were given an insight into how the industry works and the many processes one goes through when creating a piece of theatre. Loveday also explained the work involved in taking a production from page to stage. They were also given a chance to work on Othello and share their own directorial ideas for one of Iago's famous soliloquies.

Head of Drama and Theatre, Charlotte House said: "Loveday's talk was an absolute inspiration for both the pupils and myself. They will be able to take so much from her wealth of knowledge and put it into their own performances and exam pieces. We would like to thank Loveday for giving her time so generously and look forward to seeing the pupils using her ideas in their performances and the upcoming production of Lord of the Flies."

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Mirella Bartrip, Director of Dance

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Singing day

Children from Ealing and west London primary schools were invited to join pupils at St Benedict's School for a wonderful day of singing with VOCES8, acclaimed as one of the finest a cappella groups in the world.

A day of singing workshops ended with an evening concert in Ealing Abbey, giving 270 children aged 9 to 12 the opportunity to perform the songs they had learned alongside VOCES8, who also sang music from their wide repertoire.

The Abbey was packed for the concert, which opened with the inspirational VOCES8 singing a wide range of choral music – from the 16th anthem Sing Joyfully by William Byrd, and Rachmaninov's Ave Maria, to Nat King Cole's Straighten Up and Fly Right, and Simon and Garfunkel's Homeward Bound.

The youngest singers, all in Year 5, then took to the stage to perform three gospel songs and Great Day, dazzling the audience with their enthusiastic singing in two- and three-parts, led by VOCES8 and Sixth Form singers from St Benedict's.



Children in Year 7 then sang an arrangement of Jessie J's Price Tag, which built up to four parts, and Freedom is coming, another great choice for young singers, which also grew in complexity as the choir split into four groups. All the children had a great time, filling the Abbey with their wonderful singing and doing accompanying actions as they sang.

The concert ended with two Celtic arrangements from VOCES8 – Caledonia by Dougie MacLean and Danny Boy, with the lively

Latin American song Sway leaving everyone with a spring in their step.

As well as giving concerts around the world, VOCES8 are part of an extensive education programme which encourages children to enjoy singing. Voces Cantabiles Music (VCM) promotes the vital role music can play in academic progress and life chances, and has worked with more than 300,000 young people worldwide since it began in 2006. The programme includes a Young Leaders scheme which trains sixth form students

to lead young children in a range of musical activities. St Benedict's students have long been associated with this scheme and assist with music workshops in London primary schools each year.

The Headmaster of St Benedict's Andrew Johnson said: "VOCES8's perfectly blended voices, expressive singing and sense of fun were hugely inspiring for the children and the audience alike. It was a great privilege to have this wonderful choir with us once again."

Into the spotlight

Tockington Manor School, Gloucestershire, has stepped into the spotlight with the official opening of their brand new Russell Music and Performing Arts Suite. The new dedicated facilities feature a multi-use music and dance studio plus individual music practice rooms for one-to-one music lessons provided in school time by peripatetic teachers. Accompanied by state of the art technology, pupils will use the latest music and multi-media software as part of a fully rounded curriculum.

At the official opening Mr Stephen Symonds, Headmaster, announced a new partnership with The Bristol Hippodrome. This unique partnership supports the school's music and drama curriculum and offers many opportunities for the school. Building on objectives within arts and music, pupils will attend a careers insight morning at the theatre which will give them the opportunity to explore behind the scenes, experience lighting and sound demonstrations, hear

first-hand from people working in theatre and gain a true insight into the many career paths the theatre industry has to offer.

Jenny Hutchinson, Theatre Director at The Bristol Hippodrome said: "We are passionate about inspiring and developing theatre audiences for the future by engaging with as many people as possible. We are incredibly excited and proud to be working in partnership with Tockington Manor, particularly with the launch of their new music and performing arts suite. This partnership is a great way to help ignite pupils' interest and encourage participation in theatre."

The Russell Music and Performing Arts Suite has been made possible thanks to the fundraising efforts of the Friends of Tockington Manor (FOTM) and with support from Clifton College. Parents and friends of the School and Nursery were given the opportunity to support the development by purchasing a named brick. All of



L-R: Rebecca Hughes – Director of Music at TMS, Naomi Killeoyne – Sales and Development Manager at The Bristol Hippodrome and Mr Symonds – Headmaster of TMS

which are now proudly placed on the external building.

Dr Tim Greene, Headmaster of Clifton College said: "We are delighted to have been able to support the Russell Music and Performing Arts Suite. We hope that it will expand the Music and Drama opportunities for pupils and give them great enjoyment."

Miss Rebecca Hughes, Director of Music, Tockington Manor School

said: "It is fantastic that our Music department can now boast the technology to broaden music education in spectacular ways, and enable pupils to learn how to share and collaborate on various platforms. Having such modern facilities will equip their minds to create, perform and succeed at a higher level in subjects such as Music production, composing, TV production, film making, animation and web design."

Opera debut

A Yorkshire school pupil will be making his singing debut for Opera North later this month (November) at the world premiere of a performance centred around the Second World War.

Will Johnson, an Ashville College music scholar, successfully auditioned for the Leeds-based organisation's Young Voices over the summer, and since then has

been busy rehearsing with his fellow vocalists.

He will take his place in the choir for the opening night of Will Todd's *Songs of Love and Battle*, a micro opera depicting the conflicting emotions of war through the words and poems of Maggie Gottlieb.

Whilst this will be the first time the 11 year old has sung in a professional setting, Will - who is a member of his school choir - hopes it won't be his last, as he has his sights set on a career in the arts.

The Opera North Young Voices (ONYV) offers a perfect transition between the Children's Chorus and the Youth Chorus and continues to provide expert training to enable young people to perfect their vocal technique and musicianship skills.

Remembrance Feature
- see pages 44 and 45



Creative dancers

A group of dancers from Ballard School, Hampshire, have been recognised at the Independent Schools Association (ISA) National Dance Competition. Held at Reddam House Berkshire, the ISA Dance Competition brought together youth dancers from schools across the UK.

Showing off their skills in the KS4/ KS5 competition category, Ballard School's Senior Visions Dance Company received the 'Highly Commended' Award for their F.E.A.R. (Forget Everything and Run or Face Everything and Rise) performance.

Sharon Ladbury, Head of Dance at Ballard School, said: "It was a great day with many schools performing across all

key stages in a variety of styles. Our girls were very professional throughout, including Megan and Jordan Tapsell who also entered the 'Dance-Off'. The whole team flew the flag brilliantly for Dance at Ballard!"

The Ballard School Visions Dance Company is a programme for the ablest dancers in Years 6-11. They meet weekly for intense dance tuition, which gives them an opportunity to develop their dance vocabulary, technique and choreography skills. At the tournament, the girls also got to see Maisie Wignall perform the Lindy Hop. Maisie is a former pupil who left Ballard in 2016 to study Dance and Performing Arts at the Arts Educational School in London.



Choir sing at St Paul's



The Royal School, Surrey, Senior Choir sang at the Annual National Service for Seafarers at St Paul's Cathedral last month (October).

The Service was attended by a 1,000 strong congregation with seafaring connections.

The Royal School is one of only five schools in the UK to be invited to participate in this special service. After a picnic lunch in the Cathedral garden, The Royal School was joined by the four other schools that form the massed choir and rehearsed a series of anthems and hymns that they had been preparing throughout the last year.

The service was attended by representatives of many seafaring organisations and charities including the Admiralty Board, The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, The Honourable Company of Master Mariners and The Royal National Lifeboat Institution. The sermon was given by The Reverend Andrew Wright, Secretary General of the Mission to Seafarers, and the Naval Prayer was led by The Venerable Martyn Gough RN, Chaplain of the Fleet, who has recently joined the Governing Body of The Royal School.



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Never too early to focus on wellbeing

Pilgrims Pre-Preparatory School, Bedfordshire, is working with The Mind Map Charity to support the well-being and resilience of their pupils. Their new initiative will include a range of parenting workshops as well as a number of classroom-based programmes. The initiative was launched recently to parents at a special information evening at school.

Headteacher, Jo Webster (pictured below), said: "They may only be little, but the health and wellbeing of every child in our school is incredibly important to us and we understand that, because they are so young, they are at a vulnerable stage of their development. We will



be working closely with The Mind Map Charity, as well as parents and staff to teach our little people how to recognise and communicate their feelings, in a manner which is easily understood by them."

Pilgrims' Pastoral and SEND Coordinator, Jacqueline Morales, introduced 'Casey the Caterpillar' to the children and Liz Fordham and Natalie Tillett from The Mind Map charity delivered the first Caterpillar Club to each class. The school will be focussing on a different feeling each week and every year group will be participating in 'Casey calm time', which will encourage pupils to take a moment to reflect and relax. The children and staff have even made their own 'Casey the Caterpillars', with lots of brightly coloured wool pom-poms, sewn together.

Each child has also been given a 'feelings flower' to give them the opportunity to express their feelings visually, enabling staff to easily identify those children who may be feeling 'sad', 'worried' or 'nervous'. Positive feelings can also be expressed, such as 'happy', 'excited', 'confident'. For Year 2 pupils, the school will also be introducing special 'talk time' sessions each week, and these will allow a child to meet up with a specially trained grown-up to talk through any worries or concerns they may have.

The charity will be hosting three parent workshops over the next few months.



First independent school to attain Wellbeing Award

Woodhouse Grove School, Yorkshire, has been awarded the Wellbeing Award for Schools – making it the only independent school in the UK to achieve this accolade.

The Optimus Education Wellbeing Award has been developed in partnership with the National Children's Bureau with a focus on ensuring effective practice and provision is in place within schools to promote the emotional wellbeing and mental health of both staff and pupils. It centres on the long-term culture of a school, embedding an ethos where mental health is regarded as the responsibility of all.

The school's Learning Support and Pastoral Teams offer provision and interventions that match the needs of students, and staff and pupils can also seek advice and support from each other at a pupil-run drop-in centre "The Hub".

A more recent development that demonstrates Woodhouse Grove's commitment to promoting mental health as a part of school life is

the appointment of a Head of Wellbeing, Rebecca Vernon. She said: "It is vital that the whole school community is engaged to support emotional health. As well as having systems in place to support all different types of emotional and mental health needs, we encourage pupils to take responsibility for each other. We have also recently established an online resource, the Student Support Alphabet, offering information and advice on a huge amount of topics, which is accessible to students 24 hours a day."

James Lockwood, Headmaster, said: "We are tremendously proud to have achieved the Wellbeing Award for Schools – a testament to our staff and pupils and their commitment to our school ethos regarding the importance of mental health. Woodhouse Grove is not just a school, we are a community – and, as in any community, we take responsibility for each other's wellbeing. It is wonderful that this has been acknowledged."

Pictured: Mr Dan King (Director of Sport), Mrs Rebecca Vernon (Head of Wellbeing) and Mr Anthony Cadman (Deputy Head Pastoral)

Wellness centre opened

Farnborough Hill School, Hampshire, now has a well-being centre – St Raphael's – at the heart of the School encompassing the Rennie Surgery, St Luke's mindfulness space, St Catherine's (Learning Support) and the School Counsellor's room.

This has come at a time when Mental Health is at the forefront of people's minds; universities have been criticised for providing inadequate support and recent news reported universities' concerns that they risk "failing a generation" unless students get better mental health care. There is a necessary movement toward supporting the

whole person: Farnborough Hill has had this as a core value for over 125 years. The new wellness centre will provide additional advice so that pupils leave with sound strategies for nurturing and looking after themselves physically, intellectually and mentally.

The opening was attended by the School's Sisters, the Chair of Governors, pupils, and staff. In her speech Head, Mrs Alex Neil, commented, 'St Raphael's was named after the Patron Saint of Healing; he was also Patron Saint of Travellers and of Happy Meetings. As we are on life's journey, travelling alongside one another,

I hope we will have many happy meetings here which enrich us and provide us with love and support. This Centre will be key to providing extra care for the girls; it will be an area of positivity, emphasising and accentuating feeling good about oneself, developing strategies to self-heel and become more resilient. I am delighted that an idea discussed so fully in School Council has come to fruition.'

St Raphael's was officially opened by Sister Rennie, (pictured) who was a pupil at the school in the 1930s, subsequently became a Sister and was later the School Nurse.



It's time to take part!

School's 'freshers' fair' initiative

Giggleswick School, Yorkshire, pupils enjoyed a taste of university life with a 'freshers' style fair event showcasing the 72 clubs, societies, clinics and academic enrichment activities available to enjoy outside lesson time.

Staff and pupils involved in the various clubs – covering every interest from beginners Greek to

taekwondo – set up stalls in the school's Richard Whiteley Theatre to entice new and returning students to sign up for their favourite hobby or try something new.

Seasonal sports sat alongside swimming, cycling, squash, strength and conditioning and many other active, competitive and physical training activities. Music was represented with clubs for flutes, ceilidh band, concert band, orchestra and choirs while budding thespians can immerse themselves in a Shakespeare Festival or major drama productions.

Senior master, Neil Gemmell, said: "It was a big success and the staff did a fantastic job in promoting their clubs along with a number of sixth formers who were also on

stalls. It created a lot of interest and excitement for pupils and many signed up for things on the spot. Lots of pupils were keen to try something new whether it was mountain biking, young enterprise or a new language."

Crafts, art, life drawing, cookery, electronics, robotics, computing, photography and videography are all active clubs along with, shooting, Combined Cadet Force and any number of outdoor pursuits options.

Neil said: "The co-curricular fair was aimed at getting all pupils to see what was available to them in a format where they could actually see, try, test and find out more.

"Our co-curricular programme is a really important part of life and

learning at Giggleswick. What happens outside the classroom is just as important as what happens in it. It's about personal development, helping our pupils to build confidence, take responsibility and learn important communication, team work and leadership skills."

Sixth formers were keen to sign up for responsibility roles within activities both to bolster their profiles and have a go at being a leader. This has particularly helped lower sixth formers be more ambitious in their choices and committing to new activities.

Neil added: "The whole thing felt a lot like a university freshers' fair giving an interesting and exciting atmosphere."



Building project success

One of the bigger challenges facing a Bursar or Head Teacher is the delivery of a new building. If this is the first time that you have been involved with the process the task is particularly daunting – there is a complicated industry to understand, many interested contributors, and a very substantial budget to manage effectively. Buildings are normally the largest single items of capital expenditure in a school and their operation and maintenance costs are a large element of ongoing expenditure, so they should be a key focus of good educational and business planning.

It is common for projects to be seen in isolation, but to function effectively a school's buildings need to be considered in relation to the whole estate – its context, ethos and character. The initial task is to gather good baseline information. Documenting your sites' legal constraints, utilities, condition, planning policy context and obtaining dimensional surveys at the outset, will substantially de-risk the design process.

Commissioning (or updating) a Master Plan allows the factors affecting development to be documented and understood

and for the long-term spatial development of the site to be aligned with the School's Development Plan. Although this can feel like a substantial investment at the outset, ultimately it will improve value by reducing abortive design work and highlighting risks, as well as aligning large projects and small estate improvements alike with the overall vision. Master Plans allow stakeholders to understand the broader objectives over the long term and assist in planning strategic fundraising.

Schools are complex communities, with numerous participants. A building is only ever as good as its brief and so the briefing process is critical to the success of your project. Defining the brief is best seen as an iterative process during the early design stages, ideally starting from the Governing Body's vision and developed through consultation led by your architect; gathering information, steering group validation, and testing through design. The design team should 'stress-test' the brief at the early stages and ensure this is documented clearly and signed-off by the Governing Body.



Explore Floor at Kensington Prep School © Benedicte Ausset-Drummont

Almost every building is a prototype, forming a bespoke response to the school's site, brief and budget. The delivery of a building has been likened to the assembly of a car, by hand, by people who have never worked together before, in a muddy field. The risks of this process can be reduced by working with people who have done it before, using 'standard' processes and structures, and ensuring there is sufficient client resource to contribute to the process effectively.

The RIBA Plan of Work forms a framework for design, procurement

and delivery of projects which is understood by the whole construction industry. Using this to define the activities at each stage, and what needs to be signed-off, will help mitigate the risks of unsatisfactory outcomes. Appointing a design team familiar with the education sector and organising your client team to work with them, closely, will maximise the chances of creating useful, enjoyable and long-lasting buildings that will serve your school well.

James McCosh, Partner
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The great outdoors...

Pupils and families 'go wild' at launch of new outdoor learning facilities

120 pupils along with their siblings and parents attended the launch of Gresham School, Norfolk, new OWLS (Outdoor Wild Learning School) programme, at which a new open sided wooden classroom, spaces for campfires and an outdoor theatre were introduced to a captivated audience of pupils' families.

From the start of the school year, all of Gresham's Nursery and Pre-Prep pupils have been participating in the OWLS programme and the event provided them with a chance to show their families the sort of activities they have been enjoying. Every child produced their own

model of an owl using a piece of clay and the natural resources they could find around them. The youngest children also created some dinosaur art using natural materials and, working together, children and parents constructed model Celtic villages, lit fires and cooked s'mores.

Pre-Prep Headmistress, Mrs Sarah Hollingsworth, said: "We are so fortunate to be located between the coast and the countryside of north Norfolk and to have so much space on site. We wanted to develop an outdoor learning programme tailored to our pupils in our own



back garden; unveiling our new facilities and sharing some of our favourite activities with pupils' parents has been fantastic. The pupils loved the fact that their parents were at school with them, getting stuck in to the sorts of activities they do every week, and

the parents equally love that their children are able to regularly enjoy these experiences. The parents have been very complimentary about the facilities and activities, and we are really gratified with how well received the OWLS programme has been in just its first year."

Sixth formers are 'ground force' for good

Sixth Form students from Rendcomb College, Gloucestershire, spent a day at Stratton Church of England Primary School working on a 'Ground Force' project to clear and create a new outdoor learning area for the primary school's pupils.

Students in the Lower Sixth transformed an overgrown section of the school's site from unwieldy undergrowth into a new campsite area with seating, a small fire pit and path through to the pond.

Headmistress of Stratton Primary, Ceris Towler, said: "I can't believe the transformation. It is so important to have links with schools like Rendcomb College who give so much back to the community.

"We are so thankful for all the effort put in by the pupils; they have done such an incredible job. The children cannot wait to use the area and are so excited to see their new campsite."

The project was managed by 17-year-old students Eve Harker

and Tom Finch who led their team of Year 12s in designing the layout of the area and completing the various tasks throughout the day.

One group were tasked with sanding and painting the fencing at the front of the school while another group cleared the overgrown area and prepared seats and decorations.

They cut back the trees and bushes and moved large logs to uncover a huge amount of space for a campsite. Once cleared, they began outlining and digging a path through the site to the sections where the seating would be placed.

Alice Wyndow, Deputy Head of Sixth Form at Rendcomb College, said: "I am so proud of all of the students involved. Their teamwork and dedication shone throughout the day and really showed what the Rendcomb College mind-set is about; being thoughtful about their community and ambitious in the tasks they set themselves".

Helping grow swift population



Lockers Park Preparatory School, Hertfordshire, pupils have been putting their design and technology skills to good use in a special project launched by local charitable organisation The Box Moor Trust.

The endeavour is aimed at increasing the local swift population whose numbers have been gradually decreasing every year. Lockers Park Year 6 pupils have cut templates and constructed some of the 50 nest boxes needed as part of their Technology course, while the Box Moor Trust Junior Rangers will complete the rest. Residents living around Lockers Park School in Boxmoor with two-storey houses are being asked if they will house a nest box to help encourage swifts to thrive once more.

David Kirk, Chair of The Box Moor Trust observes: "Research on swifts suggests that the surviving young prefer to nest near their original site. The trouble is that they often cannot find a suitable roof. I have watched youngsters repeatedly searching under eaves for holes and flying away unsuccessful. The answer is to erect wooden swift nest boxes as close as possible to an existing site."

Christopher Wilson, Headmaster at Lockers Park says: "Our Year 6 pupils relished the opportunity to get involved in this worthwhile local scheme while honing their DT skills in the process. We hope to see an increase in swift numbers over the coming years as a direct result of the programme. The Box Moor Trust is a fantastic local resource and we frequently utilise its facilities to enhance our pupils' learning."



Five Green Flags

The commitment to caring for the environment demonstrated by pupils at St Mary's School, Essex, has earned recognition as the first school in the UK to be awarded five Green Flags.

St Mary's is one of a handful of Ambassador Eco-Schools in the country and has its own pupil-led Eco Team, which spearheads recycling and sustainability activities within the school, while also sharing its eco experience and expertise with like-minded organisations in the community through conferences and seminars. The school was awarded its first Green flag in 2008 and has been assessed every two years by Eco Schools in order to be re-awarded.

"Achieving the Green Flag for the fifth year in a row is a great achievement and one no other school in the country has managed," said Mrs Sarah Wilding, St Mary's Eco Co-ordinator. "Our students are certainly passionate about looking after our environment for future generations and their energy in spreading this message to other students and throughout the wider community is so impressive."

In fact, St Mary's has recently been invited to twin with a school in Australia, which has just received its first Green Flag, in order to show students on the other side of the world

how school initiatives can make a positive difference to our planet.

Earlier this year, St Mary's Eco Team responded to David Attenborough's shocking revelation of the choking of our oceans by plastic and pressed the school to implement a ban on all single-use plastic water bottles. A re-fillable water bottle is now included in the list of essential school equipment for every student.

The school recycles as many materials as possible and initiatives are in place across the school to 'reduce or re-use', including:

- recycling all packaging and reusing for art projects
- making good use of the local Freecycle in order to obtain items for School use such as water butts and plants/seeds for the School Gardening Club as well as offering items the School no longer needs
- supporting Bras for Breast Cancer
- being part of the organisation Virtual Skip
- uniform recycling for cash to re-invest in Eco Projects
- considering environmentally sound options, such as timed lighting and installation of photovoltaic solar panels, when carrying out refurbishment at the School



New eco-garden promotes positive wellbeing

Felsted School, Essex, have opened a new eco-garden for the youngest years, with the aim of building awareness of the environment and creating a love and responsibility for everything in nature.

The project was a collaboration between staff, parents and pupils with some help from outside creatives including TV's Lloyd Warbey (Disney's Art Attack). Lloyd helped the children plan various zones within the garden area for the children to explore, including fairy houses, a bug hotel, toadstool stepping stones, pebble insects, plants to care for and 'play stations' made from electrical wire reels each personalised by the nine classes from Reception to Year 2.

The original nature garden was largely destroyed in a storm last year which brought down the willow tree. In memory of their tree, the children worked with willow-weaver Suzanne Lynas to create insect sculptures for the garden.



The garden was officially opened by Deputy Headmaster, Mr Tristan Searle who retired at the end of the summer term after 33 years at Felsted. His wife Nicky, also a teacher at Felsted Pre-Prep, who was heavily involved in the project, comments; "The garden is a great opportunity for calm play in an inspiring environment, promoting positive wellbeing for our youngest children. It has also helped encourage independence, as the children contributed to the building environment, recognising that their ideas had been listened to and respected."

Pictured L to R: Nicky Searle, Tristan Searle and Lloyd Warbey with Felsted Pre-Prep in the Eco-Garden



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Tasty lessons

Pupils from Bromsgrove Pre-Preparatory School were treated to a demonstration on nutrition when Sally Crewe, a nutritionist from Holroyd Howe, used the story of Peter Rabbit to talk to the young

pupils about the importance of trying new foods, particularly fruit and vegetables.

There were lots of willing volunteers to try the healthy smoothies, as well as a homemade pea dip.



Roast dinner celebration to put great school food in the spotlight

The Great Roast Dinner celebration has been launched aiming to encourage more pupils to eat a healthy school dinner.

The celebration, led by the Soil Association's Food for Life programme and Knorr Gravy, will put great school food in the spotlight through a series of Roast Dinner themed events taking place throughout the academic year.

Schools will be encouraged to invite parents and other family members through the gates to share a delicious and healthy lunch with their children, so they can see just how great school food can be, inspiring them to select school dinners as the regular lunchtime choice for their kids.

Schools and caterers can register to join the free celebration at www.greatroastdinner.co.uk

James Cashmore, Director of Food for Life said: "It has never been more important for us to make healthy eating easy and normal. It is far easier for children to get the nutrients they need to stay healthy

from a cooked school meal, which is why we are putting great school food in the spotlight with the Great Roast Dinner celebration.

"The celebration will give pupils and their families the chance to see just how enjoyable and easy it can be to eat a healthy meal at school and we hope it will inspire them to opt for school meals and take that first step towards a healthier and happier lifestyle."

Food for Life works with schools across the UK, supporting them to deliver a programme of food education that has a positive impact on pupils and the wider community. All pupils at Food for Life schools have the opportunity to grow their own food, and pupils in Food for Life schools are twice as likely to eat five a day and a third less likely to eat no fruit or vegetables than pupils in comparison schools. The Great Roast Dinner celebration aims to build on this work, creating a generation of children who see eating fresh, healthy and nutritious food as the norm.



Ready, set, bake for Macmillan

The children at The Ursuline Preparatory School, Essex, swapped their pencils for whisks in a bid to compete in the Great Ursuline Bake Off.

Miss Amelia Allen, class teacher and a keen baker, hosted a bake off competition that was open to children from Pre-Reception (Nursery) up to Year 6 (aged 10-11). Depending on their age group, the children were given the task of baking Signature Cupcakes, Technical Biscuits or Showstopper Sponges (with a sport theme decoration or hidden surprise inside!) Nearly 100 children entered

the competition. A donation was made by everyone that entered.

The judges had the impossible tasks of deciding the winners for each category. The children produced some phenomenal bakes with an array of delicious flavours, tantalising textures and daring designs with not a soggy bottom in sight.

Pupils, staff, friends and families of the school all supported the day, which culminated in a coffee morning and bake sale. In total, the school raised over £1,200 for Macmillan.

GBBO-inspired competition

To mark the end of the Great British Bake Off, New Hall School staff members have been baking up a storm after being inspired by the show.

Taryn Dodd, PA at New Hall, organised the competition which saw experienced and new bakers making millionaire's shortbread and bringing them in to school for Bake Off style judging.

Staff gathered in the refectory at lunchtime, to see their own 'Paul' (General Catering Manager – Bruno Milin) and 'Prue' (Anneli Brown – Senior Sous Chef) examine and taste the cakes lined up by the nine amateur bakers. While the audience could see the cakes and photographs

of each baker, the judges didn't know who had prepared each bake.

Admissions Officer, Julie Keylock, was crowned the winner and awarded a trophy for her delicious Crunchie millionaire's shortbread. Senior Housekeeper, Helen McCullun, was placed second while third place went to Cleaner, Lisete Gouveia. All the contestants were briefed to produce 12 identical shortbreads, with judging based on taste and presentation. Other entrants came from the Teaching, Admissions, Boarding and Administration departments. Most contestants had put their own stamp on their shortbread, ranging from Maltesers to Chocolate Orange and White Chocolate feathering.



L-R: Helen McCullun, Senior Housekeeper; Anneli Brown, Senior Sous Chef; Julie Keylock, Admissions Officer; Bruno Milin, General Catering Manager; and Lisete Gouveia, Cleaner

Catering to fulfil a vision and meet commercial objectives

Faced with a 'canteen-feel' dining hall in need of refurbishment, St Columba's College, an independent Catholic day school for boys in St Albans, rose to the challenges that a non-compulsory dining policy can bring.

The school's vision was to create a contemporary and welcoming dining facility and a new Sixth Form café to encourage more of its pupils to eat in.

Working closely with its new on-site caterers, Chartwells Independent, and commercial kitchen and restaurant designers, Catering Design Group (CDG), the transformation took place throughout the summer months to ensure minimum disruption to school life.

St Columba's School now has a fresh, contemporary dining room design based on four key colours to reflect the school's vibrant branding. These are also mirrored in cluster lights, furniture legs and frames. A bespoke central 'cross' design conduit lighting ties in the servery and seating area.

The CDG team also designed and installed a 6th Form café, providing a small but modern facility for the pupils to meet, eat and mingle.

The result? Just one month into the autumn term, sales were 10% higher than budget and 29% higher than the same time last year.

Paul Daly, bursar of St Columba's College, said: "Our goal was to enhance the dining experience for our pupils and staff and we now have a vibrant space with improved flows and new counters that

showcase our food. Our dining hall has become the heart of the school. Not only has it enhanced the eating experience for our boys; in doing so, the investment is helping us to meet our long-term commercial objectives, and that's important too."

Kathryn Pell-Walpole, partnership director of Chartwells Independent, said: "The success of a project like this can only be down to one thing – the people behind it. The school, CDG, Chartwells Independent and our amazing operations team worked seamlessly together to make this happen.

"From a design perspective, CDG understood our operational requirements, such as ergonomic flow and counter flow, as well as being on trend with design elements, finishes and lighting.

"Operationally, our team really gelled with everyone on-site and understood what we were trying to achieve. From the outset, they did their utmost to make it a success so all credit to them for their support."

Food also had a complete overhaul. Chartwells Independent has introduced a complete meal plan, offering a main course, three sides and a dessert for a set price.

"As well as making the dining environment more visually appealing, we have made food

choices easier and far more attractive to our young customers who continue to 'pay as you go' but now the flow is faster, and the tills are ringing more often," said Kathryn Pell-Walpole.

The salads bar at the school has also had a complete revamp, with an emphasis more on fresh, seasonal choices. Snacks are less of the bought-in sugary type and more home-made and savoury.

Susan Accorsi, operations manager with Chartwells Independent, said: "St Columba's is a perfect example of how a school can generate more income but at the same time, ensure its pupils have better nutrition during their school day and a happier and more sociable lunch-time experience.

"Anything that can support and encourage young people to sit

down and eat together is a step in the right direction."

The school's new Sixth Form café is already scoring high marks from its client-base, with a full barista service and freshly made sandwiches and cakes on offer.

"St Columba's had an eye on the commercial necessities of a school dining service but also had the ability and imagination to know the positive impact this would have on the school community," said Susan Accorsi.

"This is more than a facelift; it's about investing in pupils' wellbeing, supporting pastoral care and being mindful of how a positive dining experience can influence young, impressionable minds and eating habits."



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Arts & culture provision receives accolade

Bolton School Boys' Division has received the Platinum Artsmark Award, confirming that the School's arts and cultural provision is of the highest possible standard.

The School's Director of Creative Learning and Partnerships Miss Naomi Lord said: "We are very proud to receive this level of recognition for our work in School and with the wider community. It represents our ongoing commitment to arts and cultural education at a governing body level and to the provision of opportunities that stretch our whole School setting.

"Our pupils are offered equal opportunity to influence, lead, experience and evaluate a broad range of high-quality arts and cultural activities across a wide range of media. We enjoy strong partnerships with arts and cultural organisations and the long-lasting positive impact of this collaboration is evident across school life. We are looking forward

to establishing our position as a regional and national opinion former within arts education, as further progress to the leadership role we have established locally."

The Platinum Award has been achieved following two years of development, which began with an assessment of the arts and cultural experiences already on offer. This process revealed interesting interdisciplinary opportunities and openings for collaboration, which have in turn helped to enhance under-represented areas.

Provision has been refined: all Years 7 pupils are now invited to design and fulfil individual creative projects through Bronze Arts Awards over the course of Lower School, with the option to progress to Silver and Gold. The school's technicians and librarians as well as teachers are trained as Arts Award advisors and support pupils with research skills and technical expertise. Boys can weave together interests across different

strands of the curriculum, echoing the school's ethos of 'education all round'.

In response to the increased scope of arts and culture, Headmaster Philip Britton created new roles: in addition to the pre-existing Director of Community Music Mr Bleasdale, a Director of Creative Learning and Partnerships, Miss Lord, and an Arts Award Co-ordinator, Miss Sherry, have been appointed. Governor Helen Critchlow is the dedicated caretaker of creative arts in school. Amongst other projects, she has been involved with planning the upcoming Open Arts Exhibition, which will showcase artwork by current and former pupils, parents and staff.

Alumni links are key for pupils interested in pursuing a creative arts career. Old Boys frequently return not just to speak to pupils, but to offer masterclasses and mentoring. Most recently Ralf Little worked with drama students (pictured); boys have also worked with Andy Patterson (film producer), Brian Appleyard (journalist and author), Barney Pilling (film producer), Mark Radcliffe (broadcaster) and Robin Partington (architect). In 2015 Sir Ian McKellen returned to meet pupils, lecture in the Great Hall and ratify the school's work as Stonewall Champions. Through teachers and specialised careers days, boys are able to access

feedback from and ongoing contact with alumni.

External partnerships have developed exponentially since the school first applied for the Artsmark, and the school is part of the Arts Council's Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP) programme.

Each area of the creative arts is well resourced: pupils use the school's multiple on-site theatre venues, studio spaces, screen-printing equipment, kiln, dark room, soundproof booth and recording studio. Young musicians perform both in school and beyond in local primary schools through the Community Music Programme, at Bolton's Victoria Hall and at Manchester's Bridgewater Hall. Further engagement with arts and culture is provided through extensive regional, national and international theatre, concert and gallery trips.

Artsmark is a standard mark reviewed every two years. On that basis, planning is already under way to capitalise on the strong foundations of the Platinum Award to inform education in local, regional and national contexts. To this end, the school is part of a regional digital arts initiative and the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) cultural learning working group, focused on reimagining the creative curriculum for the 21st century.

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"Brexit negotiations hitting a standstill? Send in the kids!"



...says Mr Warren Honey, Headmaster of Hydesville Tower School, West Midlands

How long has it been going on now? It feels as if there has never been a time when radio or television was not carrying a Brexit story. As the anchor introduces the European editor, I find myself twitching nervously: never helpful when driving a car! Trembling, I await the inevitable doom-laden message of hard borders, backstops, belligerent negotiators and mutinous cabinets (new range, soon to be released by Ikea).

Indefatigable. It is the word that comes to mind when considering a child's persistence. At the school gates on Friday, as I wearily looked forward to a fortnight's holiday, a Year 2 pupil approached me. "How old are you?" came the innocent question, which with the artistry of the chronologically-challenged, I evaded. Again it came. Parried. Using the sort of techniques usually only seen in television shows portraying extreme interrogation, he switched to good cop: "My dad is bigger than you." I'm used to this one, partly because it is a favourite of children, and partly because most dads seem to be bigger than me. But it was simply a ruse, a masterstroke, a coup-de-grace. Three more requests of my age and I was revealing my date of birth, address and probably PIN numbers and National Insurance details. Satisfied, although intrigued about how such a large age was possible, he went on to peeling leaves off the bushes and seeing how high he could jump.

Anyone dealing with young children regularly will recognise that persistence, recalling similar cross-examinations they have experienced as the child looks to discover everything about the world around them. Resilient, determined and optimistic: typical features of the young, and crucial to how they start growing up. Sadly, this emotional strength is not guaranteed throughout childhood, with mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression arising in some children towards the end of primary education and gathering pace towards the age of 14. Some

studies have suggested that this age can be a turning point for many children in terms of their emotional resilience: the nadir of their challenges and self-doubt; but even that is not a guarantee, and high quality professional support can be slow to arrive or limited in its impact in certain cases, especially with the funding squeezes that have occurred.

This is too important an issue to risk getting wrong. In reality, there is unlikely to be a single factor responsible for the increase in mental health issues in the young. The pressures being experienced by our children are multi-factorial, and can impact regardless of economic status, education, family situation or availability of technology. As a part of Cognita, Hydesville Tower School is increasingly well-placed to help support children and families when difficulties are encountered. Mrs Kingston is the Mental Health Champion for the whole school, and is readying a variety of initiatives that are being rolled out across the UK schools to maximise our understanding and resources. Indeed, at the recent Cognita Global Conference, mental wellbeing of pupils (and staff) was the main focus point, with sharing of best practice from around the world and Heads working hard at determining what would fit in their own school contexts.

Our first step in all of this has to be prevention. There are no certainties in life, but with school and home working together, we can create an environment that lowers the risk of emotional issues arising in the first place. Anyone watching the recent Fashion Show in the Prep School will understand what I mean when I describe the boost in confidence and the character development arising from such events. Seeing children from 4 to 11 years old strutting their stuff was to see grit and resilience at its best. This is how we want our children to feel throughout life: ready to go and certain of their brilliance! When Rory spoke to a full house at the

Senior School Information Evening, he was described to me by listeners as an orator, as a deeply impressive character; as a...politician!

If things do go awry, however, the best chance we have is for children to admit to their struggles early. This can be hard, despite celebrities like Stephen Fry and Ruby Wax coming forward to describe their own difficulties. As a society, I believe we are moving into a time when physical health and mental health are regarded as being equally important and as likely as each other to suffer challenges. Once the stigma of mental health has diminished, we might have children quicker to talk to staff or parents to share their fears. Any red flags raised should always be treated as a call to arms: working together, we will always have a greater chance of success in helping the child back to emotional stability. Neither family

nor school should regard a mental health issue as a negative aspersion on themselves – the causality is often too complex for this – but the solution is more likely to come from our teamwork. Although we may never recapture that innocence of childhood, when everything seemed possible and no hurdles were insurmountable, maybe this is the zone we need to recreate: not mollycoddling them or preventing any form of failure, but keeping them grounded that the love and appreciation of them remains unconditional.

Back to Brexit. Will there be a deal? Will anyone give ground through the negotiations? If Theresa May needs some help in wearing down Donald Tusk and Michel Barnier, I know the right child with the resilience and gusto to do so. I just hope his dad is taller than them both.

Don't take our word for it...

“ Congratulations to your team- the prospectus was the **best I've seen** in 11 years which made both Prep and Senior School Open Mornings **so successful**. The parents I spoke to were also **very impressed!** ”

Susan Hogan

Director of Communications, Rydal Penrhos School



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Gaining a Global Perspective

Following last month's round-up of student experiences around the world, here are further examples of initiatives by independent schools...

Charitable adventure

The summer of 2018 brought an incredible charitable adventure for 21 girls from **Farnborough Hill School**, Hampshire, when they travelled to Borneo to help with the extending and modernisation of a school.

Having spent the past year fundraising to be able to donate new classroom chairs, new tables, stationery supplies and building materials for Nalapak Primary School in Ranau, the girls were thrilled when the opportunity arose to travel there themselves to help with an ongoing project. The girls' adventurous spirit and willingness to learn were called upon when they were challenged with cementing a drive from the road to the main building, building an extension for

a new kitchen, and painting the hall – all of which were undertaken with joy. A particular highlight was being able to spend some time with the children in their classrooms between the sessions of heavy labour, assisting the teachers and entertaining the pupils.

Mrs Alexandra Neil, Head, commented, 'I am thrilled the girls had this extraordinary opportunity to help others while experiencing a country and culture so different from our own. The wonderful generosity of the School community enabled fundraising for the supplies needed by Nalapak Primary School; for the girls to then be able to travel there and offer themselves as helpers was a real bonus for this adventurous group.'

Support for Romanian orphanage

A group of Lower Sixth pupils and staff from Dauntsey's School, Wiltshire, have recently returned from a visit to the Romanian town of Cernavoda to support Nightingales Children's Project. Over a period of ten days, the pupils worked with local street children and orphans, ranging in age from six months to 24 years, to run a week-long play scheme. On some days there were as many as 120 children attending the scheme.

The Dauntsey's pupils provided a real treat for the local children with craft, sports, drama, dance and team-building activities as

well as parties and themed days. Most of the Romanian children live in poverty and have hugely complex emotional and sometimes behavioural problems. Some are quite severely disabled and many have HIV.

To ensure the trip was a success, the pupils started fundraising in January. They raised more than £12,000, which financed the week's activities and will fund further projects at the orphanage. The money was raised through a range of initiatives including a Bond themed Charity Auction, cake sales, crepe and chip sales, a netball tournament, the sale of candles made by the girls from the project and sponsorship of pupils who took part in the Devizes to Westminster canoe race.

Nightingales Children's Project was set up by the current director, David Savage MBE, who came to Romania in 1992. David has since settled in Romania and, in 2003, was awarded an MBE in recognition of the work he has done to highlight the plight of under-privileged and vulnerable young people in Romania.



Conservation efforts

Endangered turtles in Costa Rica are enjoying cleaner beaches and safer waters, thanks to the latest conservation efforts by pupils at Lewes Old Grammar School (LOGS), Sussex.

Eight students from Years 10 and 11 travelled to the Playa Tortuga reservation in Central America recently for a once-in-a-lifetime excursion that saw them monitoring turtle movements during the start of the breeding season.

Conservation work included making regular night patrols to check for female turtles coming ashore, retrieving eggs to protect them from poachers and predators and constructing a turtle hatchery. They observed an Olive Ridley turtle at close range, before helping local conservation workers measure and tag her.

The three week trip was organised by Lewes-based Working Abroad, which matches volunteers with environmental and social projects across the world. Playa Tortuga is a non-profit biological research and education centre founded by two citizen scientists to promote research, data gathering, species monitoring, and community education and outreach programmes.

Among the students' other tasks was to place cameras in the rainforest to track mammals, including racoon, agouti and ocelot, make 'monkey walks' to observe capuchin and howler monkeys, and assist rangers in finding and measuring tree boa and caiman. They also became involved in an ambitious project to record every species of bird on the reserve.

But it was a clean-up operation at Ojochal beach at Playa Ventanas and another near their reservation that really opened their eyes to what the world's most powerful species is doing to the planet.

"At first, the rubbish on the beach was inconspicuous", said Bursar, Tim Laker. "But as we went on, we realised there was everything from shoes to straws, cans to sponges, wires to fishing net, to polystyrene and endless plastic bottles. The students really came away with a renewed awareness of the impact their actions could have on ecosystems around the world."

Excursions included a boat trip off Uvita, where the visitors saw three humpback whales with calves alongside a pod of bottlenose dolphins, and a boat trip through some of the 70,000 hectares of mangroves which account for 2.5% of the world's biodiversity. Here they were greeted by three different species of monkey and a two-toed sloth with her baby as well as a large number of species of birds and reptiles.

After weeks of hiking, snorkling and exploring, the students gave a presentation to the staff of the Playa Tortuga reserve on the discoveries they had made.

The trip was the second that LOGS had made to Costa Rica in an effort to inspire young people to help the environment and demonstrate man's impact on it.

"The amount of plastic pollution on the beaches was an eye-opener and really brought home why the school is committed to reducing plastic consumption over the next few years," said Tim Laker.



Malawi experience

Students at Derby High School have spoken of a life-changing World Challenge trip to Malawi.

Twenty-three students and four staff spent four weeks in Malawi where they took part in challenging treks, climbed Mount Mulanje – which stands at 2,319 metres high – and carried out voluntary work in the local community.

Each student had to raise £4,500 to fund the trip and students were also tasked with organising accommodation and finances once they arrived in Malawi.

Student Sara Azeem, of Derby, said each team member was given a role and she was responsible for finance and budget.

She said: “It was quite stressful as we were handling the money but it was good experience and really helped me to improve my organisational, teamwork and communication skills.”

The 17-year-old said the trek was a challenge.

She said: “We climbed Mount Mulanje on the first day. It was quite difficult as we got ants in our clothes and it was cold. I don’t think we had expected to be climbing properly, we had to use our hands and it was quite challenging.”

Lauren Stanley, 17, of Derby, said the trek was quite demanding.

She said: “There were a lot of 5.30am starts but we coped quite well. It was a lot more physically demanding than I expected especially with the conditions, we kept sliding down. It was amazing though, especially when we got to the peak.

“Our project was to build part of a shower block at a school. The children there were lovely and I remember us all watching the World Cup together in a tiny room in someone’s house. About 30 of us were crowded in there and the TV was solar powered.”

Varunika Elangovan, 17, of Derby, said the whole trip was the best experience of her life.



She said: “I think it really opened my eyes and I definitely learnt a lot about myself. I feel like I view life in a different way now.”

Annie Allum, Derby High School teacher who led the trip, said: “The experience that all of the girls had on our trip to Malawi in July was just truly fantastic and unforgettable! We were all challenged beyond our comfort zones, staff and students alike, and the girls took ownership of their experience by taking on different roles and responsibilities throughout the trip, from budgeting to cooking on open fires to leading treks. All the girls thoroughly enjoyed experiencing



the Malawian culture and certainly made memories for life.

“The skills that the girls gain from a completing a World Challenge expedition, as well as the 20-month run up to departure, are long-lasting. It was just lovely to see how far they had come and how much they had developed by the end of the trip. Malawi was a wonderful country to visit and the girls certainly enjoyed exploring ‘the warm heart of Africa!’”

Global citizenship research

A group of enterprising Bedford Girls’ School (BGS) Sixth Form students were honoured to be invited to present their research into global citizenship at the recent Cambridge Festival of Ideas. Established in 2018, the Festival is one of the most exciting events on the Cambridge calendar with over 200 talks, debates and workshops celebrating the arts, humanities and social sciences.

Inspired by the Cambridge-based charity, Aradin, whose work is concerned with the preservation of endangered linguistic and cultural heritage, the students carried out an in-depth action research project into the question of how young people view their own cultural identity, in particular British culture and how this conflates with other cultural identities.

Working under the guidance of BGS English teacher, Mrs Claire Barrett, the research team conducted extensive research with a cross section of young people, before presenting their finding entitled Young Britain: Culture and Identity at the Festival.

The research found that young people view culture as something that gives ‘vibrancy’ and ‘colour’



both to the individual and a community, as well as giving people a ‘freedom to be themselves’. The findings also concurred with research projects in Canada and Australia, which show that a strong sense of cultural identity is vital for good mental health. The BGS team concluded by suggesting that the link between cultural identity and emotional well-being should be addressed in schools.

Upper Sixth student, Beth English explained: “The project allowed me to develop new ways of learning and researching. I never thought I would be able to carry out this level of

study whilst I was still at school and it has been an invaluable experience that I am sure will come in extremely useful at university and beyond.”

Dr Amal Marogy, Affiliated Researcher in Neo-Aramaic Studies at the University of Cambridge and founder of Aradin, expressed her excitement about BGS’ part in the Aradin collaborative project, she said: “I am so excited about the work of these young women. Getting young people to think more deeply about issues of culture and identity is vital for the creation of a peaceful and healthy society for our next generation. It is evidence of this kind

of deep thinking of how academic study interfaces with the issues in the real world that universities are looking for now in future students and what our future world really needs.”

Dr Jennifer Walters, Director of Sixth Form at Bedford Girls’ School added: “We aim for students to grasp all opportunities and use their time in Sixth Form to prepare effectively for the wider world, undertaking this type of independent academic research is a perfect example of how students can widen skills and gain insightful understanding in new areas of academic study”.

School smashes fundraising target for Tanzania

Derby Grammar School has smashed its target to raise £50,000 in 10 years to help improve the lives of schoolchildren in Africa.

The school launched the Tanzania fundraising project in 2013 with the aim of raising £50,000 by 2023 for Gedeli B School in Mwanza but students and staff have already raised £83,000 after just five years.

The aim of the project, which has been shortlisted for a national award, is to supply Gedeli B School with educational resources, such as pens and paper and even actual classrooms, and students from Derby Grammar visit every year.

When the project was launched in 2013, Gedeli B School had 1,357 children in five classrooms – an average of 270 children per class – they had no water, electricity, text books, sports or educational equipment.

With the £83,000 raised so far, Derby Grammar School has built four classrooms, installed electricity and running water, built toilet blocks, supplied classroom equipment and specific resources for children with special needs, provided sanitary items for older girls in the school, supplied every child with school books, pens and pencils and given the

headteacher a laptop, printer and a photocopier.

Dr Ruth Norris, Head at Derby Grammar School, in Littleover, said the school was extremely proud of what had been achieved in Mwanza.

She said: "We are extremely proud to have forged this link with Gedeli B School and to have helped improve the lives of children there. The visit to Mwanza is an unforgettable and often humbling experience for Derby Grammar School students, and our partnership has a life-changing impact on the children at Gedeli B School. We hope that it continues for many years to come."

This year, 26 Year 12 students visited Gedeli B School where they taught lessons and improved classrooms. They also visited an orphanage for children who attend the school and a home for babies who have been orphaned. Students could also choose to either go on safari or climb Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa.

Freya Lockley, 17, said it was the trips to the orphanages that affected her most.

She said: "Going to the orphanages was really emotional, seeing children who had been abandoned perhaps



because they were disabled, mixed race or albino.

"Having been out there it confirmed for me that I want to study midwifery at university because a lot of universities have the option of spending part of the course in Africa. I came back absolutely sure that's what I wanted to do so for me, the trip has been life-changing."

Matt Simpson, 17, said: "I think the children at the school loved having us there because they have such big class sizes they wouldn't normally have that level of attention and they really wanted to learn. "I think being out there was quite surreal and seeing how different the world is was quite overwhelming."

Arvin Suddhi, 17, said: "The trip is probably the best thing I've ever done in my whole life. My brother had been before but I couldn't imagine how much of an impact it would have on me. We worry about so much and look at how much we

have got. It's definitely the people you are with who make you happy."

Vicky Charnock, Head of Upper School, and April Sly, Head of Junior School, organise the trip for the students.

Mrs Charnock said: "I think what we have done is amazing, it's like a different school compared to when we first started going out there. It's fantastic to see the new classrooms that we've built and the toilet block and just the overall impact that we've had."

The school will find out in November if it has won the Independent Schools Association Award for Outstanding Contribution for International Understanding.

Students' next trip to Mwanza in the summer of 2019 is already being planned, if you are an organisation or individual who would like to donate or support the schools' activities contact April Sly at sly.a@derbygrammar.org

Helping to empower women

Girls from Queenswood School, Hertfordshire, are selling homemade Botswanan jewellery to raise money for an inspiring new women's charity.

Since 2016, 20 pupils from the school have enjoyed the opportunity to spend time in Botswana as guests

of Maru-a-Pula independent school in Gabarone. The trips have had a key focus on community service and how a relatively affluent school like Maru-a-Pula is reaching out into the local community.

Both visits to Botswana involved spending time with a charity called

Ray of Hope, which was formed four years ago by a group of Maru-a-Pula Sixth Form students. Since 2016 the partnership has raised money for a day care centre for orphans and vulnerable children in the village of Gamodubu that is supported by Ray of Hope.

Queenswood girls are now looking forward to establishing a charity link with another initiative of the Ray of Hope team, entitled 'Hope for Her Botswana'. This is a women's empowerment enterprise, which aims to tap into the artistry and industriousness of destitute women at Gamodubu village. All proceeds from the sale of jewellery produced by these women are ploughed back into the local community.

The school welcomed former Maru-a-Pula student Thato Mauco and member of Ray of Hope to Queenswood, who came to chat with girls about Hope for Her Botswana. The Queenswood girls now plan to raise funds for this new initiative through sales of jewellery produced by the women of Gamodubu and the occasional bake sale.

Pictured: Thato with the girls who will be supporting Hope for Her Botswana.



£51 million in fee assistance

Figures released by the Scottish Council for Independent Schools (SCIS) have revealed that Independent Schools in Scotland have provided in excess of £51 million in fee assistance during the current academic year (2018 / 2019).



The data, collected from SCIS's 74 member schools, shows that 24.6% of mainstream pupils (7204) received means tested assistance (£30,807,706), with 573 pupils (3.2%) benefiting from 100% fee assistance. A further £20,301,772 was awarded to children on non-means tested basis.

The figures show an increase of £2,473,121 on the previous year and brings the total fee assistance provided by the sector in the last ten years (2009 – 2019) to £404,495,065.

Commenting on the results, John Edward, Director of SCIS, (pictured) said: "These results of the research into fee assistance in the independent sector demonstrates our absolute commitment to widening access to independent education in Scotland. We are responsible for educating 30,000

children around the country and the availability of fee assistance is something the sector is hugely proud of and works hard to achieve. We have seen a steady and significant increase in the bursaries available rising from £24,588,023 in 2009/2010 to the current figure of £51,109,478.

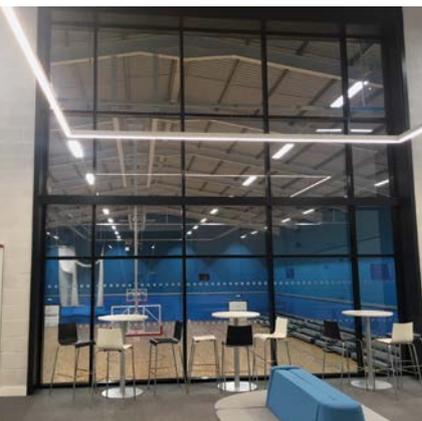
"This is a significant financial commitment for schools – all of which are not-for-profit – as the budget for fee assistance must come from cash reserves once salaries and other operational expenses have been paid."

John added: "Scotland's independent sector provides choice, diversity and excellence for Scotland's young people and we will continue to work hard to safeguard fee assistance despite the impact of the Barclay review which will cost the sector £5 million a year."

Sports investment

A £6m programme of work has started to transform the sports facilities at Repton School, Derbyshire.

Contractors Davlyn have just completed phase one of the works



to create a new strength and conditioning gym and a 1250m² state-of-the-art sports hall, designed by Matthew Montague Architects. The new facility will be used for indoor hockey, netball, basketball and football along with new squash courts, changing rooms, seating and sports storage area. The contract also included the demolition of the old 1960s squash courts.

The second phase of works will see the existing Tanyard Building extended and refurbished to create a new entrance, changing rooms, briefing room, link corridor, social area, viewing gallery and a bigger car park.

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Cricket stars return to school

Pupils of West Buckland Preparatory School, Devon, were thrilled when Somerset and England cricketing twins Craig and Jamie Overton, returned to their former school accompanied by Chairman of the North Devon Youth Cricket Association.

The players presented young cricketers with their league and district cricket awards and were

happy to take part in a lively Q & A session and a quick game out in the playground, facing some impressive U11 bowling.

Deputy Headmistress, Jan Witheridge, was delighted to see the pair. "The twins are great supporters of the school and are always willing to give something back to grass roots cricket in North Devon."



Riders make school history

The King's Ely Equestrian Team made school history at the National Schools Equestrian Association's (NSEA) National Championships.

The three-day event took place at the College Equestrian Centre in Keysoe, Bedfordshire, last month (October) and saw riders from some of the UK's top equestrian schools battling it out in competitive classes.

King's Ely riders were not only crowned National Champions but were also placed in every class that they had qualified for. The National Champions accolade was secured by Eleanor Fairey, Emily Gredley, Katie Cameron and Adele Shaw in the finale of the competition, where

they represented King's Ely as a team in the 1m Jumping with Style (JwS) Arena Eventing category. Fast and stylish rounds from all four girls resulted in them securing first place.

Manager of the King's Ely Equestrian Team, Sue Cameron, said: "Whilst we have had teams and individual riders go to previous championships and secure some individual placings, we have never in the history of the school had a team win at the championships! To not just have won, but also secure placings in every class our riders qualified for is phenomenal. The riders were exceptional in their support for each other and an absolute credit to the school."



Reaching new heights at climbing challenge

Highlighting the growing interest in climbing as a sport, more than 60 pupils from twelve schools across six neighbouring counties took part in the first Bredon School, Gloucestershire, Inter-school Climbing Challenge.

This was the first climbing competition of its kind in the region and involved participants from 15 to 18 years of age taking part in different climbing challenges including bouldering, speed and top rope climbing competitions. The event took place at the Redpoint Climbing Centre in Worcester which boasts 1500 square metres of climbing and bouldering walls.

Organiser of the event, Andrew Lister, climbing instructor at Bredon School, said: "We were delighted with the huge interest shown for this competition from schools and participants stretching across six counties from Shropshire, Leicestershire and Warwickshire to Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire.

"With our own climbing wall at Bredon, climbing is a very popular

sport here for girls and boys. We decided to launch the competition as there is no event of this kind in the region and we wanted our pupils to benchmark their own climbing skills and ability against others. It is great to put the spotlight on climbing as a school sport; it is rapidly growing in popularity and is making its Olympic debut at the Tokyo Games in 2020."

Participating schools were: Bredon School, The King's School Worcester, John Masefield High School, Malvern College, Leasowes High School, Cheltenham Ladies' College, Bromsgrove School, Dixie Grammar School, Twycross House, Kington High School, The Evolution Centre and Weobley High School.

Schools entered teams of up to six students and the best four scores made up the team's total score. A range of prizes, including vouchers for climbing sessions at Redpoint, DMM climbing bags, Mammut water bottles and gift vouchers for Dick's Climbing in Bristol, were awarded for both individual and team successes.



Rugby tour to Canada & USA

Thirty-six St Benedict's School, London, rugby players enjoyed a two-week tour of Canada and the USA, visiting British Columbia, Victoria Island and Seattle.

The tour began in Vancouver, with the first session at the iconic Stanley Park, followed by visits to the Capilano Suspension Bridge (see picture) and Grouse Mountain.

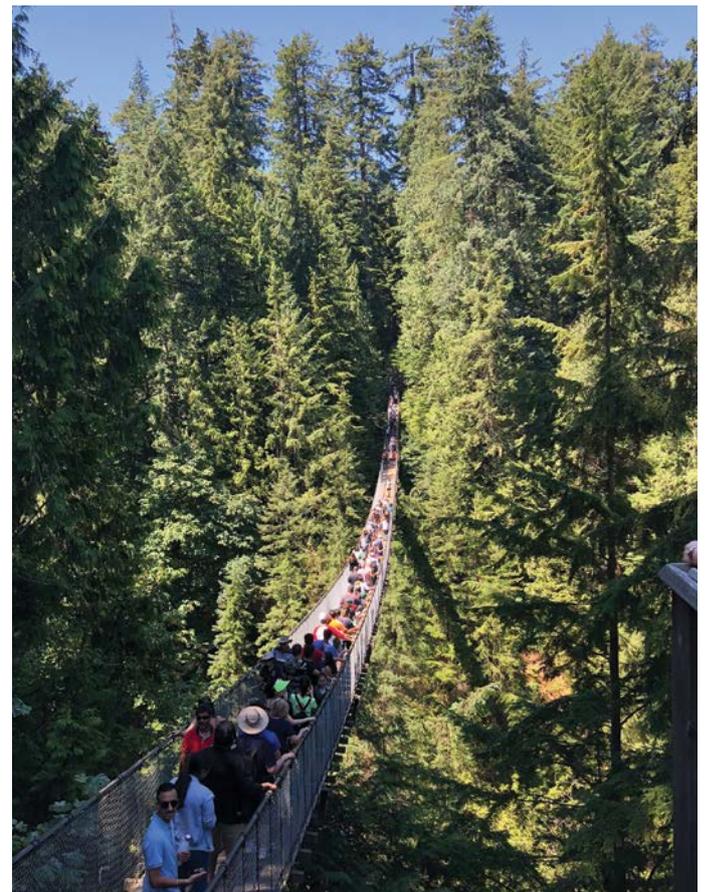
The first fixture was just three days into the tour: two St Benedict's teams lined up against British Columbia A and B teams. The St Benedict's B team (mainly Year 11 students) played first, in a fast and frantic game played with great spirit, and won 25-15. The A team then played against their counterparts, a team which included three current Canadian U18 Internationals, which provided quite a challenge: the game started

fast and hard and St Benedict's eventually went down 8-24.

After an early morning swim and sea recovery session, the boys then travelled to Victoria Island for their second game. They had the opportunity to go whale watching just off the coast before heading off to the rugby club, where they played Cowichan Bay teams: St Benedict's won 21-15 overall.

It was then time to make the long journey back to Vancouver and down to Seattle. The B team lost to a very strong Washington Crusaders representative team. The A team rounded off the tour with a 27-26 win in an incredibly tough game.

St Benedict's rugby coach Myles Stringer said: "The tour set us up for what we hope will be a season full of positives and gave a strength to the squad that they will always remember."



New hockey pitch opened

The new hockey pitch at Rendcomb College, Gloucestershire, was officially opened by South African former hockey professional, Robynne Jacobs.

The sports pitch was resurfaced during the summer by NottsSport, the official surfacing partner of England Hockey, and the school celebrated the new facility with a morning of hockey skills sessions for all ages followed by an exhibition match.

Robynne, along with coaches from the school, led the sessions with children as young as 3-years-old getting involved. Talking about getting into the sport, Robynne

said: "Having this new facility is a blessing and it is so great to see so many people of all ages getting stuck into the coaching. I started playing hockey when I was 10 and I went on to play for South Africa so you really can pick up a stick whenever you like."

Speaking about the new facility, Head of Rendcomb College, Rob Jones, said: "We have had great support from our Trustees, the Dulverton Trust and the Friends of Rendcomb, among others, who have ensured this wonderful new facility has become a reality. This pitch will be much enjoyed and used by all the pupils across the College."



School welcomes Wales Hockey Captain

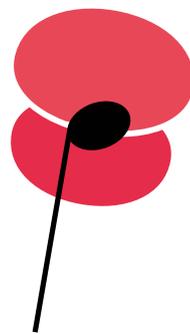
Cottesmore School, Sussex, welcomed Leah Wilkinson, Wales' hockey captain, to provide coaching for the Cottesmore staff and pupils.

Leah has collected over 150 caps for Wales. Making her Wales debut as a teenager in 2004 and, more recently, being appointed Assistant Director of Coaching for Woking Hockey Colts, this was a real occasion for the Cottesmore girls to learn. The afternoon was spent coaching staff on the Astro Pitch, with the sports staff

participating, followed by the girls' hockey teams. Leah's visit was concluded by enjoying supper with the 1st Girls' hockey team.

Sian Kerr, Head of Girls' Games at Cottesmore School said, "Leah is an exceptional role model for our girls; they thoroughly enjoyed their time with her and embraced the opportunity to train with an international player, who imparted words of wisdom on winning matches".

In Remembrance



Independent schools across the nation have marked the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War in a wide variety of ways, including a major concert in Birmingham. Here is a flavour of some of the occasions, the research done by pupils, the tributes to the fallen in so many conflicts...

Concert of Remembrance and Hope

Twelve schools, 360 talented young musicians aged from eight to 24, 60 teachers and a sell-out audience brought the generations together in a concert of 'Remembrance and Hope' in the Birmingham Symphony Hall on Remembrance Sunday to mark the 100th anniversary of the armistice.

250,000 boys under the age of 19 fought in the First World War. To honour their sacrifice and bravery, the event was organised by the Merchant Taylors' Company, one of the 'Great 12' livery companies in the City of London, and brought together performers from its associated schools across the country.

The music in the first half was a combination of classical and upbeat numbers, including 'What a Wonderful World', 'Amazing Grace', new classical composition 'Everyone Sang' based on the poem by Siegfried Sassoon and a compilation of WW1 songs titled 'War Time Radio'. There was a particularly rousing performance of 'Do you Hear the People Sing' from Les Misérables by the younger performers (aged 8 – 13 years old).

The second half was more muted, with acts of commemoration being carried out to the first movement of 'The Armed Man' by Karl Jenkins.

In addition to the music there were art displays, readings from real letters from the front line and poetry.

The last post was played by students on the top balcony of the Symphony Hall as poppies cascaded from the ceiling onto the audience. The concert culminated in an outstanding performance of Mozart's Requiem from a combined choir and orchestra of over 300 students.

The programme, which was a colourful collection of artwork, poetry and letters from WW1, listed the names of alumni and staff from each school who had served or sacrificed their lives during the war.

The Master Merchant Taylor, Duncan Eggar, said, 'All of these schools and colleges have their own histories of pupils and staff who have given their lives in defence of our country. Thanks to the sacrifice of so many, we are able to celebrate our freedom at such an extraordinary event. This

concert is not only an opportunity to showcase some of the rich and varied talent of our schools but is also a chance for our students to give thanks for their sacrifice.'

Diana Watson, Education Manager at the Company added, 'We like to provide our associated schools with opportunities to collaborate, to help them achieve what a single school is unlikely to be able to do in isolation. The Company's motto is Concordia Parvae Res Crescunt, which translates to With Harmony Small Things Grow. This seems particularly fitting on this particularly poignant occasion.'

This open concert included performances from 12 of the 13 schools associated with the Merchant Taylors' Company, which were:

1. Merchant Taylors' School, Northwood
2. Merchant Taylors' Prep School, Northwood
3. St John's Prep School, Northwood
4. King's School, Macclesfield
5. Wallingford School



6. Merchant Taylors' Boys' School, Crosby
7. Merchant Taylors' Girls' School, Crosby
8. Merchant Taylors' Junior Boys' School, Crosby
9. Merchant Taylors' Junior Girls' School, Crosby
10. St Helen's School, London
11. Wolverhampton Grammar School
12. St Saviour's and St Olave's School, London

They were joined on the day by local school Bournville Junior School and students from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.

The boat crew that was lost to the Great War

It is an iconic image: Wednesday 4 March 1914, twenty-one past and present members of the Abingdon School, Oxfordshire, Boat Club posed beside the Thames prior to their annual boat race; the 1st IV rowing crew taking on former pupils from the School. The School's crew – Hilary Donkin, Arthur Davenport, Frank Lupton and Alan Eason – beat the Old Abingdonians 'easily'.

Five years later nine of the young men in the photograph were dead. Donkin was the only member of the 1st IV from 1914 to survive the war.

It was this photograph and the ensuing loss of such young lives

that gave Keith Hoult, father of current Abingdon School pupil, Matthew Hoult, the idea of making a commemorative film for the centenary of the Armistice. It is based on the 1914 1st IV and their coach, the science master Sidney Harold Baker, who was killed in March 1918.

Narrated by the School's archivist, Sarah Wearne, the film intersperses contemporary footage of Abingdon's current rowers with images of those who died, creating a poignant reminder of just four of the young lives lost during the First World War over a hundred years ago.



Memorial lanyards

Staff and students at Bedford Modern School commemorated the centenary of the end of World War 1 by 'adopting' one of the 1,100 Old Bedford Modernians (OBM) who served during the war. They were issued a card on a commemorative lanyard detailing the identity of one of these men which included their name, who



they served with, dates of birth and death and a link to a personal profile on the Imperial War Museum's (IWM) Lives of the First World War Digital Memorial which will give more information about their OBM's life.

More than 1,100 OBMs and former staff, who attended BMS somewhere between 1875 and 1918, contributed to the war effort and some 80% of them served and survived. Once the war finished they returned to their families, took up civilian employment and helped shape the environment we know today. The youngest OBM to serve was just 14 (having volunteered under age) and the oldest was 59.



Pebbles in memory

The whole New Beacon School, Kent, school plus guests lined up on the playing fields in front of a flagpole for the traditional act of remembrance. Each pupil had also painted a pebble in memory of those who died in WW1 and these were laid out in a 100 formation as a visual reference for the day.

The school's memorial garden – created this summer as part of the Sevenoaks Town Council entry in the Britain in Bloom competition – commemorates the 100th anniversary of the end of WW1. A plaque with the poem 'Base Details' by Siegfried Sassoon, one of the foremost poets of WW1 forms part of this display as does a list of the names of the Old Boys who were lost in WW1.

Seven Hundred and Two

That's how many former Cheltenham College, Gloucestershire, pupils and staff died during World War One. As a fitting tribute the school is spending this half term remembering the 702 and sharing some of their poignant stories.

The stories of all 702 have been brought together for the first time in a new book, *College Echoes* by Patrick Stevens, published by Silverdart, to be celebrated at a memorial dinner hosted by Rageh Omaar at the Imperial War Museum.

As part of the memorial four pupils studied the school records of four former pupils, those at the school around the time the war broke out and all with one thing in common, they lost their lives in battle during World War One.

They discovered young people, with bright futures, who had similar interests and traits as themselves and ambitions that they never had the chance to live out. They found

cricketers and rowers, athletes and aspiring leaders, often forgotten when looking back at a war that ended 100 years ago.

Speaking about the research the pupils undertook, General Sir Michael Rose KCB, CBE, DSO, QGM said: "I am so very pleased to see the pupils of today discovering the stories of the brave Cheltonians killed in the First World War. Like them, I often sat in Cheltenham College Chapel wondering what sort of people they had been whose names were now inscribed on the highly polished brass memorials lining the Chapel walls. I wondered where destiny would have taken them had their lives not been so suddenly cut short by war. The actions of the fallen may in some ways remain unsung, but they are not forgotten, – nor ever should they be. I hope that the pupils have discovered valuable lessons and insight that they can take on into their own bright futures."

Friends in Flanders

Staff and pupils at Sibford School in Oxfordshire marked the 100th anniversary of the Armistice by welcoming Linda Palfreeman, author of the book 'Friends in Flanders'.

Linda spoke to pupils about the work undertaken by the Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU) during the First World War.

"Most Quakers were of the opinion that any war was directly opposed to their beliefs and to the 'law of love'," she explained. "However many of the younger men in particular were anxious to carry out work in the war zones. They wanted to share the dangers and the deprivations being suffered by their countrymen who

were risking their lives at the front and they believed that one way of being able to do this was by creating an ambulance unit."

Linda went on to outline some of the work undertaken by the FAU, particularly in Ypres where the men worked tirelessly to try to alleviate the suffering of the townsfolk and where they faced the added challenge of a typhoid epidemic.

Anna Jo Mathers, Assistant Head, Learning and Teaching, at Sibford School said: "Not only did she inspire our pupils but she also stayed on to give a second talk at which we were joined by parents and members of the public."

At the Cenotaph

Bromsgrove School, Worcestershire, held a number of Remembrance activities in the lead up to Armistice Day. The School's biggest project was the creation of an outdoor field of acrylic poppies, each one unique



to the Old Bromsgrovian who lost their life.

Amongst those killed was Victoria Cross recipient, Eustace Jotham whose actual VC is kept at the School. This display provided the inspiration for a collection of smaller events for 'Remembrance Week'.

Mrs Jacqui Deval-Reed, Headmistress of Bromsgrove Preparatory and Pre-Preparatory School attended the Service of Remembrance in London on November 11th as part of the People's Procession – a nation's thank you. Mrs Deval-Reed joined ten thousand others in The Mall before they processed down Whitehall and past the Cenotaph, and laid a poppy wreath to honour the ninety-four Old Bromsgrovians who died. Mrs Deval-Reed, (pictured), said "It was extremely moving and a privilege to represent Bromsgrove School in this way".

Continued overleaf...



Huge wall of poppies



Hornsby House, London, pupils have made a wall of poppies, which went on display in the school playground to mark 100 years since the end of World War I.

The event formed part of an extended Remembrance week to commemorate the centenary, which included an external drama company delivering workshops that brought war poems to life.

Each pupil made their own poppy and attached it to the wall, making an eye-catching display which evoked the scale of loss of life in the war.

The whole school congregated in the playground for a special centenary edition of the annual Remembrance service, led by Headmaster Ed Rees.



Aerial tribute

Pupils at Solihull School have staged their own unique display to mark the 100th anniversary of the Armistice with a stunning aerial photograph.

The whole school took part to create an innovative "1918-2018" human montage in honour of the heroes of the First World War.

Headmaster David EJJ Lloyd said: "The photograph was an imaginative way of saluting the service and sacrifice of all those involved in World War One. The entire school took part and I think

the result is very effective and poignant."

The photo was the start of a series of school events to commemorate the centenary of the end of the Great War, with the centrepiece being the annual Remembrance Service in the school's quad.

Guest of honour was former pupil and RAF Squadron Leader Dan Jones, who also inspected the school's Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and attended the traditional wreath-laying ceremony.

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