Solihull School has welcomed the arrival of three Steinway grand pianos with an exclusive performance from internationally renowned pianist Peter Donohoe. Peter, who lives in Solihull and opened the school’s new music department four years ago, has produced a series of CDs and performed with hundreds of orchestras all over the world, including at the BBC Proms where he played the largest of the pianos purchased by the school.

The accomplished pianist, who was awarded a CBE in 2010, was joined by several of Solihull School’s most promising pupils, who performed a series of solos and duets. Members of staff also played, performing the premiere of a piece for three pianos, specially composed by the school’s own Head of Academic Music, Simon Phillips.

International pianist marks Steinways arrival

Three-storey sculpture for new Science Centre

An artwork weighing over a ton and spanning the three floors of Abingdon School’s new Science Centre, which opens later this year, has been commissioned from sculptor Matthew Lane Sanderson. Intricately designed to combine art and science, the sculpture, made possible through a donation from a former pupil of the Oxfordshire school, will be the centerpiece of the new building.

Abingdon School’s Head, Felicity Lusk - who has announced that she will retire in 2016 - said, “It is a very rare and very special opportunity to be able to create something truly beautiful that will be a legacy to the School and become part of Abingdon’s remarkable history. It will be an inspiration to all who see it.”

Don’t be afraid to be different. Be afraid to be the same as every other school.
WISE woman gets top slots

Not only has Assistant Head Kathryn Boulton-Pratt from Sheffield High School been interviewed on BBC TV regarding her win of the WISE (Women in Science and Engineering) Advisor of the year award last year but she was also invited to speak at the Institute for Mechanical Engineers as part of the ‘Engineering4Teachers’ conference last month (February). Mrs Boulton-Pratt was interviewed about her achievement on the BBC Breakfast programme where she was invited to speak about how schools can address the skills gap in the area of engineering, and particularly how to encourage more girls to consider careers in the field. She also spoke about several of the projects that are offered to the girls at Sheffield High, including the annual Go4SET Challenge and the Engineering Development Trusts scheme for involving Sixth Formers working with engineers on real life projects. A current example of these projects is four Year 12 girls who are working with the construction and civil engineering company AMEY on a project to re-design the frontage of the Bridlington Railway Station.

Mrs Boulton-Pratt spoke at the Institute for Mechanical Engineers as part of the ‘Engineering4Teachers’ conference. She had the exciting opportunity to talk further about encouraging more students to consider careers in Science and Engineering. She spoke alongside Professor Patrick Knottson (Head of Engineering at Rolls Royce and Immediate Past President of IMechE), Jane Simpson (Chief Engineer at Network Rail) and Patricia UK (Director of Research Design and Development at Dyson). Mrs Boulton-Pratt has described the event as being very fast paced and “having a real buzz”, where opportunities for young people within the engineering field were showcased and keenly discussed throughout.

England cap in six nations

England women’s national team secured a 17-0 victory over Wales in their latest international fixture, with a variety of players earning caps for the first time. Captain Katie says the team has come a long way since their first match together, and she is excited to see how far they can go.

Presidential visit

The President of Malta, Her Excellency Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, visited Leicester High School for Girls. She met with the Y4 Junior Debating Club, and debated with them the motion: “3 year olds should be given pocket money.” She listened to every girl’s opinion, and then took a vote. The motion was not carried.

Why then would an independent school opt back in? St Hilda’s School, Bushey, Hertfordshire, has chosen to publish their SATs results for the second year running.

Head, Miss Sarah Jane Styles, explains:

A successful independent school will always put the needs of the children first. St Hilda’s is a very small prep school where every child is known by every member of staff, and teachers strive to create stimulating, individualised paths of learning as a matter of course: as far from any Orwellian dystopia as is possible. The Year 6 children who completed the SATs were not ‘taught’ SATs; the tests were slotted into an already busy, demanding and broad timetable full of sport, art, music and languages, as well as common lessons, which you would expect from a highly regarded prep school.

Thus reassured that the SATs have been complemented – not dominated – the curriculum, the tests have afforded us all an insight into how well the school is performing on a national level. This is a useful tool as it is easy to become a little too introspective. There is a great deal of emphasis on this and we are mutually respectful buzz of purposeful students and talented staff packs a far more powerful punch than dry statistics, yet it is naïve to think that SATs results do not comprise a vital, objective role in the information gathering of perspicacious parents.

The decision to enter the children into SATs testing will be reviewed on an annual basis, as I consider the needs of the school, and the needs of individual year groups. I was very impressed with the changes to the English curriculum two years ago, as well as the new numeracy standards.

SATs – why we opted back in

SAIs have been subjected to a barrage of criticism from both the independent and maintained sector. They are roundly perceived as straw-jackets which constrain and inhibit children’s natural creativity; as the reason why all fun and spontaneity have been taken out of the classroom, and instead children are uniformly drilled in SATs expectations. Beleaguered teachers claim the government has scant regard for their professionalism and that they have been forced to swap curriculum autonomy for 1984-style regulation and standardisation.

Wonder no wonder independent schools, less constrained by government diktat, withdrew from SATs many years ago.

New pre-prep school

Lockers Park School, Hertfordshire, has announced plans to open a co-Pre-Preparatory School in September. Established for over 140 years, Lockers Park currently offers education for boys from the ages of 5-13. The new purpose built Pre-Preparatory School for children from 4-6 will complement this with up to date facilities and dedicated staff.

The new Pre-Preparatory School building will take children from Reception, Years 1 and 2. Headmaster Christopher Wilson says: “We believe that welcoming pupils from the first year of primary education allows us to offer a full and excellent solution for children and their families. We anticipate that this will cement Lockers Park as a unique educational offer in our region.”

Small class size has always been a hallmark of Lockers Park and the Pre-Preparatory School will be the same, with a maximum class size of 15.

The President of Malta and the Headmaster with sixth from politics students Y12 in 13.

KATHRYN BOULTON-PRATT

Science teacher

PGE qualification at HMSG, has been assessed in the set up since she was 17-years-old. She was in the Talent Development squad for two years and won the U12 squad.

“I also lost the 7-a-side game and would love to represent England in the World RIB Series which takes place all over the world.”

Juggling teaching with professional rugby playing can be demanding, but Katie says HMSG encourages her to fulfil her goals.

Tim Arndt, Deputy Head at HMSG, said: “Katie is an outstanding sports coach and role model to the girls.”

England girls aged 13 – 0. Said Katie: “The women’s team won the World Cup in Paris this summer and sitting in the stands watching, I had no expectations but I put the work in. In my first cap and now I feel that time has come.”

Fullback Katie was on the squad for the first game in Swansea and said it feels “amazing” to have been selected for the national match, despite Wales winning 13-0. Said Katie: “The women’s team won the World Cup in Paris this summer and sitting in the stands watching, I had no expectations of being involved in the next Six Nations. Once selected into the Elite Performance Squad (EPS) in October I started to believe that if I put the work in I might be rewarded with a chance to earn my first cap and now I feel that time has come.”

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The Pre-Preparatory School welcome girls, while the existing Prep School (aged 7-13) will remain boys only. Christopher Wilson explains: “As we welcome young children to their early school life, we are very confident that we can offer the best education and outstanding facilities to both boys and girls. In addition, our research showed that in the early years, families appreciate the opportunity to educate boys and girls together. From the age of 7 years (Prep 1) and above, we remain wholly committed to a boys-only education. This is our heritage and we believe that the older boys thrive in this environment, both educationally and socially.” Girls will move across to the co-educational Year 12 to a range of local girls and co-ed schools.
Girls perform well in science – bucking the national trend

Girls in independent girls' schools perform well in science, in direct contrast to data for the UK as a whole published recently by the OECD.

Said Alan Jones, president of the Girls’ Schools’ Association and head of St. Gabriel’s School, Bognor: “There is a problem here between poor performance in science and learning environments that, however unintentionally, promulgate age-old stereotypes about what girls should study and how well they are likely to do.”

“The relative lack of stereotypical expectations and presumptions rooted in gender that girls enjoy in educational terms, are now afforded the same opportunities as boys in science and learning environments.”

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The Girls’ Schools Association (GSA) schools achieve a 99.9% pass rate for GCSEs. Girls performing at least one language at GCSE comprise 15.9% of the A* and 20.5% of the A or A* grades. In physics, 13.4% of all entries come from girls' schools, (above the 5.2% baseline), but they are awarded 25.9% of the A* and 20.5% of the A or A* grades.

Independent Schools Magazine

Pupils taught that hug their monsters.

Two schools from the independent sector had caused an event last month (February) when they revealed the issues at the Mental Health First Aid England Awards, presented to them at the House of Lords.

Bradford College, Berkshire, received the Winners' award in the Youth Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) category and City of London School for Girls in the Youth Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) category. Both schools have made a significant commitment in increasing mental health literacy within the school community through the use of Youth MHFA training.

Bradford College has, to date trained 78 members of staff in MHFA, with plans to increase this to 100 school employees. Bradford College also intends to introduce the Youth MHFA training to its senior pupils. City of London School has trained 25 staff in two day Youth Mental Health First Aid course and by the end of April 2015 will have trained a further 65 members of staff in the half-day MHFA course.

With children’s mental health high on the political agenda and debate around the need for better mental health training for teachers, MHFA England is making important inroads with schools. With a training product which equips teachers to spot the signs and symptoms of common mental health issues and gives them the confidence to support the person affected to appropriate support, Youth MHFA receives consistently high scores amongst teachers for its innovative approach to taking mental health literacy in schools. The Youth MHFA training covers topics specific to young people that include child and adolescent development, bullying/ cyber bullying, substance misuse and promoting positive factors and good parenting.

The Awards were presented by Lord Patel of Bradford OBE who was joined by special guest, Derek Brewer, the CEO of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC). Other schools nominated in the youth category included Seven Vale School in Gloucestershire and Saffron Walden County High School in Essex.

Lord Patel of Bradford OBE and patron of MHFA England said: “These awards give national recognition to some of the many inspiring individuals and organisations who are using MHFA to increase mental health literacy and lift the stigma still too often felt around mental ill health.”

Derek Brewer, MCC Chief Executive & Secretary added: “The work being led by Mental Health First Aid in this field is ground-breaking. In recent years, mental health has come to the fore within our sport, as we have seen numerous cricketers, who have reached the highest levels of the game, be affected by mental health.

Early intervention support that can be provided to assist people experiencing mental distress cannot be underestimated and could in fact be a life-saving act. Equipping more people to recognise signs and symptoms is highly valuable and something which has MCCL’s full support.”

An established Community Interest Company, MHFA England has trained 18,500 people in mental health skills so far, with the physical first aid, MHFA is designed to equip people with the knowledge and confidence to spot the signs and symptoms of mental distress and offer help on a first aid basis.

MHFA England is part of a growing international movement, active in 23 countries around the world and with 740,000 people MHFA trained worldwide.

Mental ill health affects 1 in 4 people in the UK and is often not disclosed due to the stigma that continues to be attached to it. MHFA breaks down the barriers that prevent people from seeking help and gives people the ability to assist someone who is experiencing mental distress.

MHFA is the mental health equivalent of physical First Aid training and provides participants with the skills and confidence to recognise the signs and symptoms of common mental health issues and effectively guide a person towards the right support services.

To date over 85,500 people in the UK are Mental Health First Aid trained.

The core principles of MHFA include: spotting the signs of a mental health problem, helping to stop the distress from getting worse and give confidence in helping someone who is experiencing a problem.

More information about MHFA England and its courses can be found at www.mhfaengland.org or by emailing info@mhfaengland.org

Schools celebrate mental health awards at House of Lords

Manquehue community settle at Downside

Five young women from Chile have set up a lay Benedictine Community close to Downside School in Somerset. They are members of the Manquehue Apostolic Movement, which is a movement that originates in Chile but which has always had close links with the English Benedictine Congregation.

They bring two special evangelical practices. One is Lectio Divina, a way of encountering Christ through the prayerful reading of Scripture with shared responses to what is read. The other is spiritual friendship, where communities discover that the true foundation of their life together is friendship in Christ.

Downside School is inevitably the main beneficiary of their presence, as the St Scholastica team supports the active work of the chaplaincy. Head Master Dr James Whitehead said: “What is truly special about the contribution of the Manquehue team is the way in which they communicate Gospel values to young people with a sense of energy, friendliness and joy.

There is a real sense of the Holy Spirit working through them to communicate the Gospel message. The practice of Lectio Divina has therefore become an established part of our school routine and is seen to be both spiritually uplifting and useful by our pupils and staff. The benefit to the pastoral life of the school is also tangible in the high quality of the relationships formed between our pupils, based on prayer and reflection, as well as upon all the other aspects of a busy school life. As we focus on the principle of Servant Leadership within the school, and encourage our young people to consider opportunities for service as an enriching part of their lives, the St Scholastica community embodies a living example of this principle. In an engaging, joyful way, our Chilean team helps to make living a Christ-centred life seem accessible and relevant.”

Pictured: Dom Leo Maidlow Davis, Prior Administrator of Downside Abbey, pictured with the St Scholastica Community.

Closure looms

Stoodley Knowle School, Devon, is scheduled to close at the end of the academic year.

The Congregation of Les Filles de la Croix was founded by Madame de Villeneuve in 1641, for the education of girls. Stoodley Knowle was de Villeneuve in 1641, for the education of girls. Stoodley Knowle was Scheduled to close at the end of the academic year. Stoodley Knowle School, Devon, is scheduled to close at the end of the academic year. Stoodley Knowle School, Devon, is scheduled to close at the end of the academic year.

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Admission interviews ~ how to conduct them

Interview questions posed to candidates for admission to senior schools seem to vary from straightforward general knowledge and opinion questions to other more esoteric ones, such as:

Do you like esoteric questions or prefer more straightforward ones?

What are you looking for in answers, and do you frame your questions accordingly?

Do you have a favourite question?

Since the best schools are built on trusting relationships between adults and children, the interview is the first opportunity to begin to develop that rapport. I now conduct an admission process, Holistic Review, to emphasise that our education is not narrowly defined by academic process and so unless it is a scholarship interview, the more rigorous academic assessment is done outside the interview. If they are a top musician or sportsperson or artist that information is already on the forms or report, so I do not have to discover it. I am then free from a preoccupation with differentiation only.

Generally speaking, what I want to achieve is an appreciation of what excites the batting for his county; another has opened competition; another has just won a wildlife photography competition; another builds computers; another has doing most. Even the shyest begins couple of minutes what they love about themselves. I always ask them within the first minute what they are for and develop a story. This can provide a very useful starting point and allow several opportunities to tease preferences, reading habits, and enthusiasm from the child. From that point, questions are intended to gauge intellectual curiosity, breadth of interests, thinking skills and strength of character.

Rather than asking children what they want to board, they might be asked about the challenges they might face by joining a boarding school. These answers can be very revealing - not just about motivation, but also about tolerance, flexibility and independence. Rather than asking whether they might get homesick, they might be asked how they would deal with homesickness as everyone feels it to some degree at some time.

With some children there is the challenge of encouraging them to devise from a prepared script that fits their successes and outlines future academic ambitions. In these situations they might be gently urged ‘off stage’ by a seemingly random question. What is your favourite vegetable? If you were in charge of the world, would you be vegetarian orvore? What animal are you most like?

If all attempts at encouraging children to talk and develop their own understanding fail, we might redirect the discussion to what life might be like at Oundle for the child so that they feel less pressure to respond or worry about giving the ‘correct’ answer. For a few overwhelmed children, this will be a life-line to which they will cling gratefully as their interview draws to a close.

Creating

Independent Schools Magazine

Minister visits

Following tea with Grace Dieu Manor School, Leicestershire, Headmaster Peter Fisher, the Education Minister Nicky Morgan had an appointment with the Debating Society. The pupils chatted with Nicky about how politicians debate on different subjects and how new laws are passed in the Houses of Parliament. They were keen to learn about her life and work as well as the complexities of Parliament protocol.

After the session Nicky commented on how the Grace Dieu debates were ‘far better behaved than most of the MP’s that attend Prime Ministers Questions.’

Cranleigh School, Surrey, Head, Martin Reader:

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Stunning three-storey sculpture commissioned for new Science Centre

A stunning artwork standing 10m tall and spanning the three floors of Abingdon School’s new Science Centre, which opens later this year, has been commissioned from sculptor Matthew Lane Sanderson. Intuitively designed to combine art and science, the sculpture, made possible through a donation from a former pupil, will be the centrepiece of the new building.

Talking about his creation Matthew said, “Standing as tall as a three-storey house and over a ton in weight, this sculpture could be considered Big! Whilst its purpose and conceptual ‘keys to life’ within the structure and discernible for those who are prepared to find them. By identifying these keys, and linking them to each other, I hope all who visit the Science Centre may enjoy both the visual and cerebral challenge presented for years to come. It is my aim, not merely to decorate a building, but to inspire many generations of pupils to take up the challenges of science at Abingdon.”

The sculpture, which is to be installed by the end of the year, will rise through the stairwell depicting Biology then Physics and finally Chemistry on each of the corresponding floors.

Made from recycled zinc coated steel and enamel the artwork illustrates a range of scientific themes from nuclear fusion to the tree of life. Beginning with Biology, on the ground floor, the piece combines the millions of species on earth, the root network of a tree and lightning and plasma sources. The middle section becomes Physics with a sculptural interpretation of the Tokamak Fusion reactor and the top floor is Chemistry represented by a canopy of diamond inspired by the structure of graphene.

Matthew continued, “This entirely hand-crafted totem will champion the three sciences. As you go up the stairs in the building it will reveal a fresh perspective as you look up and down at the artwork.”

Speaking about making the donation Martin Iredale said, “When I joined Abingdon in 1951, Headmaster James Cobban had just opened the School’s first dedicated science building and so it seems most fitting for my family to contribute to the new Science Centre, specifically by commissioning the sculpture, brilliantly conceived by Matthew Lane Sanderson and matching in every way Felicity Luck’s exciting vision for the building.”

Matthew’s design was chosen from 63 applications. 63 is an auspicious number for the School which was endorsed by John Ryssie in 1563 on his 63rd birthday and he intended the school to have 63 free scholars in a schoolroom that was 63 ft long. Current pupils from the school will be involved in the creation of the sculpture in workshops run by the sculptor.

Learning Centre officially open!

The new Junior School Learning Centre extension at The King’s School, Chester, has formally opened.

The event welcomed invited guests and governors, parents, staff and pupils. The pupils released 250 balloons. Author of award-winning series Horrible Science and guest of LVS Ascot’s day in the Junior School leading workshops with pupils.

The £1.5m building has added additional facilities for the Junior School which has seen increasing academic achievement. The programme has been so successful a small sample of Year 11 will undertake the Emotional Intelligence test in April and LVS Ascot are training staff to deliver this at the start of next term.

Headdmistress addresses MPs in Whitehall

The Headmistress of LVS Ascot Senior School, Berkshire, addressed an audience of MPs in London as a speaker at the Westminster Education Forum.

Christine Curellie was invited to provide a voice from within education to many of the forum’s partners, who include the Rt Hon Kenneth Clarke, Chris Grayling, Andy Burnham, Linl Baker and David Blunkett. She presented her experiences and vision regarding raising the standard of education provision for 14 - 19 year olds. Other speakers on the subject included Professor Jeremy Higham from the University of Leeds and Brenda Yarendol, UK School and Education Development Manager at Siemens.

Christine spoke about the work LVS Ascot does with The Thomas Education. She was attracted to their product after seeing them at the Society of Heads conference. LVS Ascot had stopped using their previous careers service because it was very expensive, quite vague in the feedback it gave and the catch-up interviews were reported not to be too inspiring. The Thomas Education EPA test (EDC profile) provided a very straightforward and simple means of identifying student characteristics and how they react to their environment. Thomas Education had many examples of how this information had helped improve behavioural and academic issues in other schools. LVS Ascot current Year 11s took the test during their Sixth Form experience week in the summer term of Year 10. 10 members of staff were trained to deliver feedback which although costly initially, proves a cost effective means of providing a good service at an affordable price to parents. Students were surveyed following the feedback. There were many examples of how students have acted on this feedback including modifying their behaviour and improving friendships, and taking risks with creativity enhancing academic achievement. The programme has been so successful a small sample of Year 11 will undertake the Emotional Intelligence test in April and LVS Ascot are training staff to deliver this at the start of next term.

The Westminster Education Forum is an influential, impartial and cross-party forum which organises senior-level seminars on public policy, and is structured to provide policymakers and implementers with a sense of the way different stakeholder perspectives inter-relate.

Christine Curellie said: “It was a great honour to be invited not just to be part of this forum, but also to speak and share our beliefs here at LVS Ascot. It is testimony to our own progressive policies and strategies that the invitation was received, and one which I was delighted to accept. The forum is crucial in driving education policy forward as it provides a cohesive approach and gives stakeholders the opportunity to engage with policymakers.”

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• suitable for children of all abilities
• ideal for those who dislike team sports
• designed in conjunction with professional Parkour practitioners and climbers
• encourages discipline, concentration and control

From L-R: Nick Arnold, Headmaster Chris Ramsey, Head of Junior School Simon Malone and pupil Toby Ellis

Lappset’s equipment can be designed to suit any site, whatever its size or situation, and tailored to the needs of users. We handle everything from the initial project design and manufacture through to installation.

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Contact us to find out more
01892 881 5352  |  chris.jones@lappset.com
www.lappset.co.uk  |  www.lappset.co.uk
Teaching the whole child? Obviously!

There's nothing worse than stating the obvious and then pretending something a lot more deep and meaningful than it really is, in a bid to coin an 'over-used' pointless phrase and score a few brownie points, writes Ben Evans, Headmaster at Edge Grove School, Hertfordshire.

"Teaching the whole child? Let's hope so; after all it's not as though we aim to teach an arm, leg or just from the shoulders up. Unfortunately, like many before it, 'teaching the whole child' (or other personal favouring 'holistic') has become an over-used, meaningless phrase across the education sector. One has to question, what do any of these terms actually mean? As educators, it goes without saying that we should be teaching a broad and engaging curriculum that encompasses a full spectrum of academic work, sport, art, music, drama and social skills. We don't need a special 'phrase' to tell us that. Actions speak louder than phrases.

But like many other sectors we like to follow the 'Pied Piper' and pay lip service to these phrases regardless. It sounds good, like we're offering something rather complex and cutting-edge. The truth is any good school will be doing the same thing in terms of providing a full and engaging curriculum. But it's also true that many schools simply use this phrase to attract parents even though they continue to follow 11+ exams and Common Entrance to dictate their curriculum, teaching and learning ethos; i.e. using instruction and retention to allow pupils to achieve success in exams by simply regurgitating what they have been told and have managed to retain in their short term memories.

The whole concept starts from valuing pre-school education for education's sake, rather than viewing it as a stepping stone to the senior school of choice. Pre-schools are responsible for the formative years of a child's education. They are laying the foundations for future academic success and ensuring children acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to develop a life-long love of learning. But we are also teaching children essential social skills so that they learn how to treat people with kindness, respect and consideration. We need to help them to develop good manners and the ability to conduct themselves properly in a variety of scenarios. We also want our children to be confident, articulate and well-rounded individuals.

An equal emphasis on all subjects

Instead of latching on to pointless phrases, we should be focusing on what really works; a broad, integrated, balanced curriculum with equal emphasis on the importance of all subjects. We should be following the principles of Professor Claxton's Building Learning Power to ensure we are preparing children for the 21st century with traits such as resilience, the ability to think laterally and independently, to question everything and seek answers.

What we shouldn't be doing is to allow the terminal exams to dictate the curriculum, ethos and pace of teaching. If we slavishly follow a programme of summative assessment which doesn't allow the children to explore, take risks and make mistakes how can we expect to help shape a well-rounded individual who is adequately prepared for the challenges of life?

Discovery, application and construction are essential elements of the curriculum which make teaching and learning creative, active and engaging. If children can talk articulately and with confidence about their understanding having followed an exciting and engaging process, they have learned in the best way and very differently to simply memorizing and regurgitating information.

Realizing what's important

We must also ensure that curriculum subjects aren't divided into 'academic equals important' and 'non-academic equals less important' categories. All subjects must have equal parity if we are to deliver a truly rounded curriculum that develops the child completely. For example, the skills of communication, listening, team work and creativity can be developed in drama, music and sport are transferable to maths and English.

If schools include a full programme of extra-curricular activities to develop risk taking, independence, courage and spirit of adventure, then they will be well on track to making a real change to teaching children in a more complete way (and not a cliche phrase in sight). But we mustn't forget the other attributes that make up a person too; ensuring good table manners is important, as are good social skills, the ability to hold a conversation, look someone in the eye and have something worthwhile to say.

One has to question, how much sport, music, art, technology and drama do the children actually do? What is in place for them to develop socially and become more responsible and mature? How are we helping them to question their learning and be excited by genuine open-ended and non-curriculum related challenges?

Walk away from the 'herd'

Of course, things are seldom black and white and there will be schools out there who genuinely believe they are doing the right thing with their 'teaching the whole child' approach. Of course, they'll probably be focused on their pupils scoring highly in exams, VR and CAT tests but can the pupils think on their feet? Can they cope with disappointment or getting things wrong sometimes? Are they resilient, independent and questioning? Do they really get genuine opportunities in drama, to make lots of noise during music and to create messy 'big art' for instance?

If schools really want to make changes and help to shape well-rounded individuals they need to walk away from the 'herd'. Examine their curriculum, ask whether it does have inbuilt creativity and innovation? Does it support children to develop socially and become more confident and articulate (and more importantly, can this be properly evidenced)? Can you test their growing resilience and their independence? Do they get muddy and enjoy exploiting the outdoors, are they afraid of making a mistake or are they encouraged to have a go, get things wrong and learn from them?

Making the right changes

Schools need to make changes if they are going to 'walk the talk' of providing a more complete education. Making sure that outdoor learning is firmly embedded (not just an add-on) is important, PSHE, circle time, peer reading and vertical mentoring all help to ensure that children develop socially.

Having positions of responsibility such as head boy/girl, prefects, house captains, eco-warriors, pupil council reps and charitable committees inculcate a sense of responsibility, leadership and maturity.

The great thing about inclusive music, sport and drama is that there is an expectation that all participate. A ‘no put down’ zone should extend to every classroom and to every subject. A ‘no put down’ zone should extend to every classroom and all subjects.
Independent Schools Magazine

New head at your school?

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

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

Contact CReSTeD on 0845 601 5013
lesley@crested.org.uk  www.crested.org.uk
Registered charity no. 1052103
Council for the Registration of Schools
Teaching Dyslexic pupils

Parents make many decisions every day, one of the most difficult and time consuming is choosing a school for their child. As Education Professionals we all know this.

So why is it that schools ignore the small problem of Specific Learning Difficulties? We all know they exist, even the lowest estimates suggest 50% of the population are dyslexic, with many putting the estimate far higher, and let’s not forget dyscalculia, dyspraxia...

However, we should remember that children with one or more SpLD’s aren’t alone; they are the brothers and sisters of children who do not have an SpLD. If you want to bring in all the siblings from a family ignoring SpLD’s can cost you your income.

As the Administrator for CReSTeD (the Council for the Registration of Schools Teaching Dyslexic pupils) by far the most common question I am asked by parents is: Can you recommend a school suitable for both/all of my children?

When does 3+1 = 0?

This prompted me to do a little research and I discovered the ONS statistics from the 2011 Household Census, specifically “Cohort Fertility, England and Wales, 2011” shows that on average a woman born in 1965

• 36.25 are or have looked for a school for 3 or more children
• 10% of women have 4 or more children
• 19% of women have 3 children
• 13% of women have 1 child
• The average number of children in families is 1.91 children

Parents tell me that they are looking for a school that can cope with all of their children. However, it seems simple to me, parents make an SpLD to feel singled out and, just as importantly, they do not want their child’s education to suffer.

Parents want the best for all their children, whether they be gifted musicians, highly intelligent or just plain loving. They do not want the one child with an SpLD to feel singled out, and just as importantly, they do not want that child’s education to suffer.

I have to confess I am biased; my working life revolves around helping parents to find a school for a dyslexic child. However, it seems simple to me, any school ignoring dyslexia is ignoring a huge section of the population. It isn’t only the children with dyslexia they are potentially missing but their brothers and sisters too.

I hear all the time that Head teachers do not want to be associated with Special Needs; equally parents tell me they don’t want a Special School environment for their child. What we can all agree on, is that both parents and schools need to offer all of our children the support they need. Of course Specific Learning Difficulties can be severe, we need schools with extra facilities to offer the support in those circumstances, but for the vast majority of children they need only a little extra support, often just a few hours a week. No-one can tell me that our independent school network can not cope with that.

CReSTeD asks is when it comes to SpLD’s you use our criteria as a framework and then we tell parents.

Parents tell me they don’t want a Special School environment, they want a school that provides the support their child needs. CReSTeD has over 15 years of experience helping parents find suitable schools for their children.

Parents are now realising the importance of dyslexia, which is why parents are looking for a school which has the experience and the ability to help their child.

How good is your provision for dyslexic pupils?

We exist to help you find out, and then we tell parents.

We offer:

• For your school a visit by a dyslexia expert
• For parents a free Register of schools approved for their dyslexic provision

All the information you need is available on our website: www.crested.org.uk or telephone 0845 601 5013 for further information.
Learning through technological innovations: The iPad

First the video machine... then the DVD player ...then the interactive whiteboard – did these technological innovations improve teaching and learning? Any lessons for the introduction of iPads?

Richard Brown, head of Dorset House School, Sussex, discusses...

There were some teachers who enhanced the learning experience of their pupils by using these 'tools' effectively and there were others who just turned the video on and let the pupil watch whilst they got on with some marking! Have these innovations made a difference to exam grades? Are we just trying to 'keep up with the Joneses'? Have they made a difference to the learning experience in the classroom?

We have now moved on to the next stage where tablets, predominantly iPads, are the latest technological innovation to be introduced into schools. It is important, however, that schools are very careful about how they introduce this technology into their classrooms. I have been too many schools with iPads and tablets lying unused in the back of the classroom with teachers unwilling to embrace this technology in their lessons.

At Dorset House, I was really keen to explore the benefits of the iPad before we spent any of our limited IT budget. I was also clear about what age the students would be using them, turned on, totally engaged?'

Finally, I would suggest that anyone that is interested in using this technology in the classroom should read: 'Learning in a Digitized Age – plugged in, turned on, totally engaged!' (edited by Lawrence Burke, 2014).

There are a variety of topics that are considered in this book ranging from 'blended learning', 'iPad therefore I am', 'key challenges in BYOD teaching and learning', 'the future is now, the future is flat', 'overuse on child sensory development' and 'accessible technologies for students with learning difficulties'.

Overall, at Dorset House, we have embraced this technology as a 'tool' for teaching and learning but not a replacement.

Global coding win

A group of Chester schoolgirls has triumphed over international competition in a recent computer programming competition.

A number of girls studying computing at The Queen’s School entered the Girls Learning Computer Science Challenge competition in the autumn.

For a number of weeks they undertook 32 increasingly complex tasks to test their skills and knowledge of the Python coding programme as well as their problem-solving abilities.

After leading the way for much of the competition against groups of pupils from as far afield as Australia and Hong Kong, five girls eventually all finished joint first.

The Queen's School’s Head of Computing, Damian McKeown, said: “These sorts of competitions are a fantastic way for us to gauge our pupils' ability from an international perspective – which is ultimately who they will be competing with for those top university placements and jobs. I am obviously therefore very pleased with this result!”

Winners!

Sheffield High IT staff and students came back as winners from the GDST (Girls’ Day School Trust) Digital Leaders Conference.

Six students (from KS2 – KS5) in three staff took part in a day of challenge, creativity and collaboration at South Hampstead School, London. The brief was to develop an idea for a new digital technology product or service.

Their idea was for a dream pillow to capture dreams, allow them to be watched back, shared with friends through social media or even have been analysed by psychologists!

They have won a prize of a two day staff and student journalism workshop with Discovery Education in London.

The new 2015/16 Design & Technology Catalogue from Technology Supplies is now available
Embracing technology and iPads – conference for teachers

Members of the Science Department at Bolton School Boys’ Division were delighted to welcome teaching colleagues from across the North to an E-Learning Conference for the North East and North West Standing Committee for Science (NENWSCS). Teachers at Bolton School shared their experience and wisdom as they spoke about how the Science Department has embraced technology and iPad use by all students.

Headmaster Mr Philip Britton, himself a Physics teacher, opened the conference by explaining how Bolton School had come to adopt mobile technology and e-learning. He reminded the audience that there is a difference between trendiness and trends and that, in his view, “e-learning will happen.” Having contemplated it for a while, it was whilst sat on a rock in the North Yorkshire Moors during the Easter vacation of 2011, he decided it was something that the school simply must do. Having secured Governing Body sign-off a year later, iPads were then gradually deployed to all pupils from the Infant School to the Sixth Form. Now they are an integral part of learning for over 2,000 pupils throughout the campus.

The Head said one of NECTA’s maxims had been to ask “what learning can be achieved that is impossible or very difficult to do with another device?” and he said this was something that teachers at the School are still very mindful of. Whilst Mr Britton felt the introduction of e-learning had been an enormous success, he did point out that there would be hurdles to overcome, the first of which is to ensure that the School’s Wireless system works – this can take time and there is a cost to bear! However, many of the concerns that had worried people pre-roll out had proven unfounded, including children playing computer games and never exercising, disengagement to households and the “social media beast”.

Technology and apps are merely tools for learning, the Headmaster explained. Notability is the modern day equivalent of a jotter and file, iTunes U is the former textbook and handout, Showbie is the projector and One Drive, the locker. He highlighted other key apps that have helped teachers make a difference, including Socrative, Edublogs and Explain Everything.

Then followed further presentations and workshops from Science teachers who shared their first-hand experience of e-learning and offered lots of practical tips. Students also teachers running workshops and talks throughout the conference also considered alternative devices; they showed attenders other apps which work on android devices as well, proving that these techniques and methods of working can be transferred across for use on all tablets.

The focus throughout the day was on how technology can enhance the experience of pupils. Dr Kitty Turner speaking about “flipping classrooms” with 14-16 year olds, explaining that note-taking and extensive teacher talk is removed from the classroom and is replaced by note-taking by students pre- and post-lesson. Pupils can then enjoy more time in class focusing on experiments and practical activities, whilst filming and making notes at home, which help consolidate their learning. These short films can then be referenced during revision periods. Often the School will make the video and pupils write the notes on the video.

Mr Teasdale said students at Bolton School were also beginning to make resources and share them with students or members of their department to share resources. He currently accesses individual files through WebDAV but the School will shortly move to Cloud Storage. He demonstrated the Showbie app, which allows teachers to directly write on students’ work or private via iTunes U. The one app that he “could not live without” is iBooks – a great organise and mark book. Many teachers, he said, found Keynote was a good app for delivering presentations. Notability allows students to work on worksheets (PDFs work best) and then to send their work back to the teacher.

Dr Kitty Turner offered a practical workshop showing how tablet technology can be used in Chemistry. Utilising the tablet camera and the Rob camera app she conducted research in colorimetry. She explained how the tablet app offers a viable alternative to buying a colorimeter for the department, which can cost around £100.

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Profile

In conversation with Heather Hanbury

Q: You entered teaching in your thirties, having previously worked in management consultancy and voluntary sector fund raising. Who, or what, inspired you to join the teaching profession?

A: I left school and university convinced that I certainly did not wish to become a teacher. In 1985 I was equally convinced that I didn’t want to continue in business. I was seeking a career which would give me enjoyment and satisfaction; something to which I could commit years of energy and enthusiasm. An old friend, herself a teacher, convinced me that teaching would tick all those boxes and be hugely rewarding. And she was right!

Q: Part of your time in management consultancy involved travelling to Japan on behalf of EU trade negotiations. This must have given you a fascinating insight into how global business is conducted. How can schools best prepare pupils for the challenges and realities of the commercial world?

A: Global business has changed a lot since the early 1980s, when I worked for the EU. I would like to imagine what it will be like in 20, 30 years from now. However, there are two really valuable things we can instil in our young people to help prepare them for any future career.

Flexibility: grab opportunities as they arise; don’t imagine that your first job will define your career forever. Every job you take will enable you to learn more and develop skills in different directions, not close doors on yourself, keep on learning.

Resilience: things don’t always work out as you hope but this won’t matter as long as you take the right action and really make a difference to help them or their friend. Parents must trust the school if it ever expresses concerns about their child. I would rather offend or upset parents and be proved wrong, than hear speaking to them in the first place and thus fail to support their child.

Q: Innovation goes beyond the traditional pursuit of teaching and learning in a school. What is it that makes coming into school, day by day, exciting, stimulating and enjoyable experience for everyone: students, teachers and support staff alike? This means reviewing all aspects of LEHS’s day-to-day activities. No school succeeds by continuing to do the same thing, even when this ‘thing’ is very successful. We have just begun a major strategic planning review by asking the girls and the staff what they wish to improve LEHS yet further. Their ideas will feed into all our decision-making over the next few years, and I think this in itself is innovative.

A: On the curriculum front, and in common with all schools, we are also considering the range of languages we offer, how to shift from ICT to computing, and how to develop further our delivery of STEM subjects.

Q: The original LEHS charitable foundation now owns the buildings and land from which the school operates, and LEHS itself runs as a charitable company limited by guarantee. What benefits have such a move delivered?

A: What you have made of the renewed charitable-status debate prompted by the recent suggestion from Labour’s Tristram Hunt that business rate relief be removed from charitable independent schools unless they fulfil certain criteria is something the LEHS sector is extremely well at times of stress. Where LEHS’s processes can be strengthened, they will be.

Q: LEHS has strong links with its neighbouring schools, most of which are in the maintained sector, through an Independent Schools Partnership (ISP). These links bring together a broad range of benefits, from a type of mutually supportive link is very valuable and long-lasting and anything enforced from above. We come up with our own ideas for working together to support students and staff across all the schools. Last term we hosted a Model United Nations Conference to introduce all the schools in our local ISP to the MUN concept.

Q: Given that parental recommendation is the most powerful marketing tool of all, how can schools keep their ear to the ground for any hints of parental dissatisfaction and counteract it before it runs rampant? It seems that reliance on the traditional mealie of ‘Parents Evening’ is waning.

A: It is important to be open to parental comment and to listen to concerns or complaints with an open mind. It is human nature to exist who worries you or your school, but try very hard to hear your group carefully even if I don’t agree entirely they may be making a point which it would be wise to notice. It is also important that parents realise that, just because I listen, doesn’t mean I will do (or will be able to do) what they have asked, and this in itself can be a cause of dissatisfaction.

Q: Increased incidence of eating disorders and other mental health issues among pupils are presenting new demands on school staff. Some schools now employ dedicated counsellors to spot and address such issues before they become serious problems.

A: How is the LEHS pastoral team responding to these challenges?

Q: We have a school councillor at LEHS, and a school nurse, as well as a strong, many-layered pastoral team. We all rely on girls, parents and each other to notice things. I have in the past worked with senior colleagues to develop the pastoral processes which supported the girls extremely well at times of stress. Where LEHS’s processes can be strengthened, they will be.

Q: At the heart of all of this is trust. Girls must trust their teachers to do the right thing, and tell the right people, take the right action and really make a difference to help them or their friend. Parents must trust the school if it ever expresses concerns about their child. I would rather offend or upset parents and be proved wrong, than hear speaking to them in the first place and thus fail to support their child.

Q: Staying on a pastoral theme, Lucy Emmerson, Coordinator of the Sex Education Forum recently said that “new research shows just how widespread experiences of relationship abuse are for young people and the disproportionate impact on girls and young women. We know that many young people leave school without having learnt about or discussing what is ‘good’ or ‘bad’ in a relationship.” Should Sex and Relationships Education be made compulsory in UK schools as some have suggested? How can schools measure the success or otherwise of their current programmes?

A: This gives me grave cause for concern and we need to make sure that Sex and Relationships Education keeps up-to-date with issues which face today’s teenagers. SRE should be compulsory, but it must also be well and widely-delivered, and with a focus on relationships more than on sex. After all, ideally we would have the relationship first. If we focus on respect and equality, and on the importance of each of these at the heart of the relationship, then there is less chance of either party forcing their will on the other.

Q: LEHS girls are encouraged to become women of integrity and responsible members of society. Is this a media-dominated world where vulgarity, selfishness, and ‘selfish-things’-loving- a ‘feeling’ seems so alluring, how do you go about this encouragement without appearing out-of-date?

A: Twice a year the world of education reflect back to the before answer on preparing preparing for students for the world of global commerce and fashion and add a third idea: appropriate pride in real achievement. We are always keen to congratulate and reward those in school who have achieved success across as wide a variety of endeavour as we can. Ensuring that our congratulations are always and entirely well-deserved is another modest goal.

Q: The role of assembly in today’s schools is just as important as it ever was.

A: And I would remind readers (if they needed reminding) that it is NOT the role of education to remind! Rather than seeing an increase in qualifications which are outside government influence, I would like to see a decrease in qualifications altogether. How much more interesting life and work in school would it if we could focus on learning, and enjoyment of learning, for four or five years before having to resort to a utilitarian focus on exam results.

Q: If a new head asked you for a few words of advice on his or her first day in the job, what would you say?

A: The things you list here are very important aspects of a Head’s job and cannot be ignored to. In most instances, delegated to others. So, to avoid the essentials getting squeezed out, I surround myself with senior colleagues whose job it is to keep their eye very firmly in these areas, and to keep me informed.

Q: Much debate about the changes to GCSEs and A levels, and the scrapping of AS levels. Have you found the resulting uncertainties have unsettled your girls and staff? Do you anticipate a greater desire for qualifications outside government influence?

A: I have been working hard with LEH’s senior and middle managers to prevent anyone feeling unsettled by these changes, and certainly it should not any parents and students. We are making detailed plans for next year and beyond, and students and parents can’t trust us to ensure that the teaching and learning, and the examination process, will continue at its current high standard. Change is something which all schools and all teachers are used to, and we are skilled at managing this, however initiating it may be! Rather than seeing an increase in qualifications which are outside government influence, I would like to see a decrease in qualifications altogether. How much more interesting life and work in school would it if we could focus on learning, and enjoyment of learning, for four or five years before having to resort to a utilitarian focus on exam results.

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Married: Roland, no children
First job: 1986, Planning, Research and Systems
First management job: 1991, Senior consultant, Touche Ross Management Consultants,
First job in education: 1996, Geography Teacher, Blackheath High School GDST
Appointed to current job: 2014
Favourite piece of music: I find it impossible to select from a long list which includes Mozart’s Clarinet Concerto, ‘The Moon’ sung by Frank Sinatra, and ‘Fly me to the moon’ sung by Frank Sinatra.
Favourite food: Potatoes – so versatile!
Favourite drink: Fresh orange juice (can’t start my day without one)
Favourite holiday destination: I’ve never been to the same place twice, but my favourite holiday activity is going on safari
Favourite leisure pastime: Playing bridge
Favourite TV or radio programme/series: ‘The Hour’ is the best series I’ve seen in a long time, and I am currently enjoying ‘Fortitude’
Suggested epitaph: She made us laugh

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**Les Miserables stuns audiences**

A cast of more than 50 pupils from Dauntsey’s School, Wiltshire, has successfully staged “Jesus Christ Superstar”, arguably the most famous rock opera of all time. With lyrics by Tim Rice and music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, this ground-breaking, seminal production followed the story of the last seven days in the life of Jesus of Nazareth through the eyes of Judas Iscariot.

Over five nights, an energetic and dedicated group of pupils from Year Four to Year Ten presented an intense, gritty and convincing interpretation of this challenging musical. The contemporary setting and imaginative staging of “in the round” created an up-close and personal experience, immersing the audience in the action and the anguish of the characters.

Behind the scenes, the cast was supported by the School’s symphony orchestra, rock band and back-stage crew with 47 more pupils making an essential contribution to the success of the show.

Rikki Jackson, Director of Drama at Dauntsey’s School said: “Our production of Jesus Christ Superstar was one of the highlights of the year. The students thoroughly engaged with the less than traditional staging of the show and it was a testament to all those audiences were moved and impressed by what they saw each night.”

Pupils from two Oxfordshire schools - Abingdon and St. Helen’s - performed the smash-hit musical Les Misérables over three nights to capacity audiences, receiving wide acclaim and standing ovations each night. Audience members commented on the outstanding talent on show, and the raw emotion with which the company told the highly intense story of Jean Valjean.

The show received incredible feedback - Twitter was buzzing with comments from people in awe of the “West End quality” of the production. Celebrated actor Christopher Biggins tweeted.

“Many Congratulations to everyone, what talent.”

Amongst other comments on Twitter -

“Les formidable! Bravissimo!”

“The privilege of seeing Les Mis at Abingdon last night - absolutely amazing - worthy of a West End production. Tremendous talent.”

Members of the audience:

“I was lucky enough to see Les Mis at Abingdon last night. If you can go, do, it was phenomenal.”

“Staggeringly brilliant!”

“Wow, wow, wow and wow again!”

**Superstars**

Based on the razzle

Kent College Pembury was transported from a cold English winter, to summer in Vienna at the start of the 20th century. With specially designed sets, the most elaborate the school has seen for many years, beautiful Edwardian costumes and a cast of over actresses, this production of Tom Stoppard’s On The Razzle farce had all the wit and panache to banish the winter blues.

The plot revolves around the chase of two naughty grocer’s assistants who, following their master’s binge with a new mistress, escape to Vienna on a spree. The complexities of Stoppard’s script were handled masterfully by the gifted cast who ensured that the audiences were left roaring with laughter. It was clear that the cast and crew had dedicated a lot of hard work to the production, alongside the direction from Kent College staff.

Special recognition and thanks to the school’s Head of Drama, Nigel Adison who designed and sourced the set, as well as producing and directing the show.

The spring musical and dramatic production of Annie at St Mary’s School, Cambridge involved a total of 71 cast members and 56 students backstage, plus 10 students in the band.

**Team effort**

Into the breach...

An aspiring young Trent College, Nottinghamshire, musician is proving the old adage if you’re good enough you’re old enough, after stepping into the breach to play the organ at Derby Cathedral after the cathedral’s professional Organist broke his arm.

Trent College Sixth Form and Derby Cathedral Organ Scholar Matthew Gibson, 17, has assumed extra responsibilities as regular organist, Tom Corfield, recovers from his injury.

Matthew found himself preparing music to accompany the choir and congregation at short notice, taking it all in his stride. He also proved an invaluable guide to other organists who helped out, including the cathedral’s new Director of Music.

But although Matthew’s current role is only temporary, he has grasped the opportunity with both hands and demonstrated his reliability and readiness for such a prominent role in the future.

The show received incredible feedback - Twitter was buzzing with comments from people in awe of the “West End quality” of the production. Celebrated actor Christopher Biggins tweeted.

“Many Congratulations to everyone, what talent.”

Amongst other comments on Twitter -

“Les formidable! Bravissimo!”

“The privilege of seeing Les Mis at Abingdon last night - absolutely amazing - worthy of a West End production. Tremendous talent.”

Members of the audience:

“I was lucky enough to see Les Mis at Abingdon last night. If you can go, do, it was phenomenal.”

“Staggeringly brilliant!”

“Wow, wow, wow and wow again!”

**On the razzle**

**High note for school choir**

In a school where music marks the beginning of every day during morning Chapel, Barnard Castle School, Durham, has been awash with music recently, most notably at St Paul’s Cathedral. The School’s Chapel and Chamber Choir were thrilled and honoured when they were invited to take Evensong at one of the most prestigious venues in London – and the UK.

There were representatives from throughout the age range at the Prep and Senior School, the youngest pupil being eight years old.

Staff and Students are intertwined in the Choir; rehearsals, practice and development are constant. The forty-eight strong Choir led the regular evening worship in the cathedral for over five hundred people. In addition to this the set psalms and responses, the Choir sang a setting of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis by Herbert Brewer and an anthem by Joseph Haydn, Insmat et variae curae.

Director of Music, Mr Mark Mashinney said: “Our School Choir are extremely fortunate to regularly perform in notable venues in the North of England including Durham and York Cathedrals, however St Paul’s has been the pinnacle. I am delighted for the members of our Choir to have had that opportunity – it is something to treasure for the rest of your life.”

During their time in London the Choir also sang Solemn Mass at the church of Our Most Holy Redeemer in Clerkenwell. The choir was accompanied on the organ by Keith Brown, Director of Music at the John Lyon School in Harrow.

The St Paul’s event came shortly after an evening’s concert at the Gala Theatre in Durham where there were performances from every area of music within the School. There were seventy performers from the Prep School and sixty from the Senior School. There was music from the wind band, string band, brass band and of course singing from the choir.

Barnard Castle Prep School, which is where many of the students acquire their initial interest in music, recently announced the building of its own dedicated Music School. The facilities and focus upon music across both Schools are evolving rapidly.

Headmaster, Mr Alan Stevens said: “Barnard Castle School has long had a fine tradition of Choral music, but the Durham and St Paul’s events have taken the School to a new level of excellence and we are extremely proud of all our musicians. The talent that is coming through from the Prep School ensures that our standards will only further improve over the coming years.”
Prisoners praise hard-hitting play by pupils

A play about restorative justice devised and performed by three Blundell’s School, Devon, pupils at HM Prison Channings Wood was openly praised by prisoners in the audience. The A2 Devised Drama students - Cameron Failinski, Luke Ricketts and Rory Thomas - performed their play ‘Crying For You’ to an invited audience including 35 prisoners who are currently serving their sentences on The Recovery Community and five prisoners serving life sentences.

Based on a true story, the play was about 14 year old Jacob White who is murdered in a London Park by Michael Stevens, a boy from a rival school. Jacob’s grieving father Graham is given the opportunity to meet his son’s murderer in prison to try and get some answers to the questions he has. Simon Hughes is the practitioner who facilitates this meeting. The Blundell’s students spent many hours researching the subject, looking at past cases and interviewing a prisoner serving a life sentence at HM Prison Channings Wood, a Category C men’s prison near Newton Abbot in Devon.

Amongst the positive comments about the performance was one from a prisoner who said that it had given him a reality check and had motivated him to change his life and to stay on track when he gets out of prison. One of the most important indicators of the impact that the performance had was the number of prisoners who wanted to stay behind to ask more questions, talk to the cast and speak to staff about restorative justice. The project was organised by Blundell’s, HM Prison Channings Wood, EDP Drug and Alcohol Services and Make Amends, a project run by Torbay District Council.

Picture: Restorative justice practitioner and prisoner: the tense moment when practitioner Simon Hughes (played by Rory Thomas) talks to prisoner Michael Stevens (played by Cameron Failinski) about the possibility of meeting the father of his victim.

Boarding comedy

A group of twenty Lower School pupils from Dauntsey’s School, Wiltshire, is celebrating a successful production of ‘Daisy Pulls it Off’. Under the direction and leadership of Sixth Former Libby Hollinghead, the School staged three performances of this comedy about life in a 1920s English boarding school. The Lower School boarding house, The Manor, is an impressive Victorian mansion which provided the perfect setting for the play.

Rikki Jackson, Dauntsey’s School Director of Drama said, “The standard of performance was very impressive, given the age of the cast and Libby did a wonderful job in directing the production of this very entertaining play. The inspired setting, tremendous lead performances and fast moving action ensured that audiences were treated to a great night of entertainment.”

The Wizard of Oz

The Scarborough College, Yorkshire, production of this family show went off with a bang and was just the thing to brighten up a gloomy February evening. The College began with a matinee performance for local schools and were delighted to welcome East Ayton, Seamer and Irton, St Martin’s C of E, Wheatcroft, Bempton and Barnsley. All the children were provided with a bag for the occasion.

Over seventy students aged 7 to 11 participated, either on or behind the stage and such was the range of talent, some roles were played by different people.

The school production represents the most complex and demanding school event of the Scaborough College calendar involving as it does the good efforts of students, staff and the many parents who make costumes, paint sets and organise refreshments. The performing arts staff at the College, Ber Gahway (director), Sarah Hammond (choreography) were assisted by staff from the English Department and, of course, the Musical Director, Rebecca Leeson and her assistant, Martin Richardson. It is a tribute to everyone that the audience appreciated such an enjoyable and professional show.
Researchers at the University of Warwick have suggested that less academically able children from disadvantaged circumstances do not benefit from boarding school. Their conclusions were drawn from the study of one new French state boarding school. It would be quite wrong to translate their study to the UK boarding school environment for many reasons, according to Ian Davenport, former head of state boarding school. It has now been in existence for two years. Their first interim report tells us that social mobility is getting worse, not better. We are, as a society, becoming less generous about the need to offer educational chances to those for whom circumstances are less propitious. The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission Report in 2014 stated: “Education is a key driver of social mobility. It would be quite wrong to translate their study to the UK boarding school environment for many reasons. We believe strongly that the success of the SpringBoard pupils is due to the supportive environment they were drawn from the home communities of SpringBoard pupils. This study shows that SpringBoard is being made available to those for whom life has not been easy, but more than this, they can also demonstrate, through the expert NFER research, that they are influencing social mobility through the “ripple” effect. This, in part, but a significant part, is why boarding is relevant today. Boarding bursaries explored

French research shows a mixed picture

Sending disadvantaged children to boarding school does not automatically lead to an improvement in their academic performance, an economist from the University of Warwick has suggested. De Clement de Chastainer’s investigation found that while younger students benefit from extra-curriculum study conditions, the effects of being away from home prevent younger children from benefiting. The disruption of boarding has a negative impact on these pupils, who reported lower levels of wellbeing to researchers, – a Belvoir fudge for their lack of academic progress. His results have been published in a working paper, Ready for boarding? The UK experience... springboard to success

The SpringBoard Bursary Foundation has now been in existence for two years and independent boarding schools will be part of the SpringBoard network; this is already a big deal. However, it is worth noting that Davenport has been a very stimulating period indeed for me as CEO. I have travelled the breadth and length of the country and met innumerable impressive and enthusiastic children for whom life, through no fault of their own, has thrown high and often innumerable barriers before them. Our first cohort of pupils is now preparing for the next stage of their educational career; they have more than made their mark at their boarding school. The schools, for their part, have been quite brilliant in providing this launch pad. A key element for us in this programme of training, which we will draw together representatives from 60 organisations at Christ’s Hospital this October, is how we share experiences and wisdom about boarding opportunities for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. Why have we made so much progress? Simply put, because the boarding schools have been unerringly enthusiastic about SpringBoard. The boarding sector faces many difficulties, but the desire to help those, for whom life has dealt a difficult hand, by offering a safe and nurturing environment, unites Heads and governors alike. Since I first wrote about SpringBoard, we have had the results of the objective National Boarding School Education Research (NFER). This piece of research is a longitudinal project and as a result, it will develop, it will become even more relevant and persuasive. Their first interim report is a powerful affirmation of the work the schools are undertaking. The main elements of their conclusion are:

- The early findings from the impact assessment are overwhelmingly positive; pupils and staff have reported remarkably few negative consequences of pupils moving to boarding schools.
- There are effective working relationships between the partner organisations, original and member schools, pupils and families/careers.
- Providing disadvantaged pupils with a place at a boarding school is leading to the impacts intended for pupil and member school.
- For pupils, these include (amongst others) an improved academic experience, broadened horizons and aspirations, and greater confidence and resilience.
- There are promising signs that impacts are ‘rippling out’ to the home communities of SpringBoard pupils.

The unique and comprehensive network of support that the SpringBoard model aims to provide appears central to its success. These findings should be celebrated by the schools, and indeed by the sector. They also counter the hypothesis, advanced by researchers at the University of Warwick, that less academically able children from disadvantaged circumstances do not benefit from a boarding environment. Although, to be fair to the researchers, their conclusions were drawn from the study of one new French state boarding school of academic excellence, founded in 2009, in part as a reaction to the riots in Paris in 2005. The school is only populated by children who have difficulty learning well in their home communities. It would be quite wrong to translate their study to the UK boarding school environment for many reasons. We believe strongly that the success of the SpringBoard pupils is due to the supportive environment they were drawn from the home communities of SpringBoard pupils. This study shows that SpringBoard is being made available to those for whom life has not been easy, but more than this, they can also demonstrate, through the expert NFER research, that they are influencing social mobility through the “ripple” effect. This, in part, but a significant part, is why boarding is relevant today.

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Tour of the Universe

Professor Dame Joceyn Bell Burnell, gave the first Foundation Lecture of the year at Stamford High School, Lincolnshire. She spoke about the creation of the universe, and how the chemists we rely on to survive, came into being.

Professor Bell Burnell is Visiting Professor of Astrophysics at the University of Oxford, Fellow of Worcester College, and has served as President of both the Royal Astronomical Society and the Institute of Physics.

A keen advocate of raising the profile of women in science, she spent the afternoon in the Anastasia with SRS physicists, talking about Pluto and describing how and why it was reclassified as a Dwarf Planet. Having become interested in astronomy as a teenager herself, she is especially keen to inspire young women to follow in her footsteps. She worked on the Nobel Prize winning discovery of pulsars as a postgraduate student in Cambridge and last year was the first woman appointed President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

Picture: Stephen Roberts (Principal of Stamford Endowed Schools), Elia Bath (Physics Prof), Dy Powell (Head of Stamford High School), Professor Dame Joceyn Bell Burnell, David Harman (Research) and Jon Sproul (Foundation Representative)


Attention! How experience in the services influences school leadership

Mark Mortimer, Head, Warminster School, Wiltshire:

I count myself very lucky to have attended the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst after training university. I then served eight years as an officer in the Light Infantry regiment. This was the arm of the 1990s, and my service included two operational tours of the army of the 1990s and my service has influenced me as a person and now of how my military experience has much from schools and other organisations.

I believe that my military experience has, in particular, taught me the importance of clear and effective communication. This is a skill that is essential to the army's effectiveness.

A common misconception is that the army works solely on blind obedience; the army is a complex, rigid, hierarchical command structure. In fact, the army believes strongly in distributed leadership and in identifying and developing leaders and then, crucially, trusting them to do their job. Again, this works well in the services where a convincing vision that gives meaning things that all good leaders try to do to and the army taught me this in spades. I am only too aware that I will fight short of the mark regularly, but the army taught me that even if I fail 'Lead' still drives me forward.

The best part of being in the army is the best part of being in teaching; spending time with other people and getting to know them and trying to help them. Bonds are built and trust is created and that the fact that we do things together drives me on. A team that works together creates something that is greater than the sum of its parts.

The military taught me that everyone in the team is there to perform at their best for me when financial rewards for physical distinction are not available to assist in each task. The military comes into its own here. As a result, leadership and teamwork is important in the services. When the smoke has cleared and accept authority more than in any other job. While I would never say this is unthinking, I do believe it is the military's way of life. When I was a Platoon Commander leading from the front, I was trained to make decisions and have the confidence to do so because they were informed by the facts. This showed how you can take action without support. They encourage staff to consider the options and teach staff to come to the right decisions and take the initiative when faced with problems. This is a great lesson for leadership in any organisation.

Firstly, on a personal note, I am also grateful for the sense of purpose/marital values and the ability to think about our and then to do the job. Again, this works well in the services where a convincing vision that gives meaning.

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Richard Brown, Head, Donet House School, Gloucestershire:

"You don't become a teacher, you are a person who you are taught," the film "The Green Mile" taught us. "You can't take your eyes off the man who is sleeping, but you have to force yourself to see beyond. I know that my eyes are always open."

As someone who has served in the armed forces, I understand that military service involves a high degree of discipline and togetherness. The armed forces are also required to deal with pressure and how to remain calm in stressful situations.

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Official re-opening of Hall

Bromsgrove School’s Sixth Form Boarding House was officially re-opened, after 12-months of refurbishment, in the presence of Janice Boswell, Bromsgrove District Councillor and Robin Shaw, Vice-Chairman of the Housman Society last weekend. The School welcomed back over 70 former pupils, current and former staff and friends of the School to the re-opening lunch at Housman Hall. The Headmaster, Peter Clague welcomed guests to the newly refurbished House and Head Girl, Emily Collier, who won the Housman Society Cup in 2013, read the Housman Verse. After lunch, current pupils showed guests around the House including the newly built bedroom wings and landscaped grounds.

Named after Poet and former Bromsgrove School pupil A. E. Housman, who lived in the house during the 1860s, Housman Hall is now home to over 100 Sixth Form boarders from the UK and around the world.

New £5 million school

Mrs Nichola Pinning MBE DL, the High Sheriff of Worcestershire, officially opened a multi-million pound redevelopment at Merchant Taylors’ Primary School. The two year, two-phase project incorporates a new large hall and kitchens, several classrooms, resource rooms, practice rooms and a dedicated library as well as a fully equipped medical room and other bespoke rooms for specialist teaching of IT, art, music and drama. Reception pupils are now fully settled into their purpose built early years’ classrooms and outdoor and undercover play areas.

A simple solution to new school buildings

Elements Europe provides innovative, bespoke turnkey building solutions to the education sector. It combines traditional design and build principles with its industry leading off-site construction experience to build schools nationally, from its Shropshire based manufacturing facilities.

Schools benefit hugely from off-site construction methods. Disruption during term time is kept to a minimum by undertaking a large proportion of the work within a factory environment. Off-site construction delivers a higher degree of quality control, building efficiency, improved health and safety, material traceability and construction waste management. Promoting a highly sustainable form of construction.

Elements Europe offers a full turnkey solution. In house experts carry out all project management, design, manufacturing, delivery, installation and on-site construction activities. This in-house expertise means a collaborative approach to all of its projects, ensuring clients receive a first class service, exceeding their expectations.

Elements Europe’s design team uses a combination of AutoCAD Revit and Tekla Structures to model the architectural and structural elements of its buildings. This software creates and manages 3D structural models to guide the team, enabling the creation and management of the whole process from conceptual designs to the fabrication, erection, construction and future maintenance of buildings. Tekla Structures/Computer Aided Manufacturing (CAM) software uses 3D models and assemblies created in our CAD software to generate tool paths that drive our CNC machines to deliver extreme precision in our manufacturing process.

Elements Europe is a part of The Pickstock Group of companies, an organisation with revenues in excess of £200 million. Its in depth knowledge of construction is born from over 30 years’ experience within the group. Elements Europe delivers innovative solutions to a plethora of sectors. Now Education is high on the agenda, delivering innovative and sustainable buildings.

Rollalong - Top of the class in modular construction

Harrogate Grammar ‘lessens’ its environmental impact

In replacing ageing boiler plant, Harrogate Grammar School has taken the opportunity to install a Hoval STU biomass boiler, backed by two UltraGas gas-fired condensing boilers.

The new heating system was specified and installed by G&H Sustainability, which selected Hoval boilers because of their proven quality and reliability. The system comprises a 159kW STU wood pellet biomass boiler, two 350kW UltraGas condensing boilers and a silo for storing the locally sourced wood pellets. To facilitate installation Hoval supplied the STU boiler in a ‘plug and play’ skid-mount configuration. “The system is configured with the STU as the lead boiler, backed up by the UltraGas boilers when required,” explained G & H Sustainability’s Andrew Hudson. “We expect the biomass boiler to meet around 80% of the space heating and hot water requirements throughout the year,” he added.

In implementing a biomass-led heating system, Harrogate Grammar School is eligible for additional revenue through the government’s Renewable Heat Incentive.
What Price for a Lifetime of Choice?

Pupils suffering serious, life-changing injuries should not have to rely solely on liability insurance claims, which are so often beset by uncertainty and delay, to secure their financial future. They should have access to personal accident insurance to provide monetary assistance to deal with the life-changing events that confront them. Jon Taylor, head of education, at Marsh explains.

A serious injury to a pupil while at school is every school’s worst nightmare. Sadly, however, accidents leading to serious, life-changing injury do happen – despite every school’s best efforts to provide a safe environment for every pupil.

No matter how extensive the risk assessment, nor how comprehensive the health and safety policy, accidents will happen. Yes, there is to be a focus on prevention, but what about making a provision for life after an accident?

Ask yourself, if the lifetime cost of caring for a severely disabled child is likely to exceed £1 million, should a school put in place an insurance scheme to ensure these costs can be met and the child’s future secured? You may well argue that public liability insurance cover is there to protect the school against such an eventuality. To an extent you’d be right, but claims centred on liability are rarely straightforward.

Is Public Liability Cover Enough?

Precisely where a school’s responsibility begins and ends can be a grey area. Take a traffic accident that happens in or around the school entrance – it might be difficult to say with certainty who was “in charge” at the time of the incident. In that scenario, a school (via its insurers and advisers) may successfully argue that it was not to blame and avoid liability – but is it a pyrrhic “victory” when you consider the hardships that are likely to ensue for the injured pupil?

That is not to say that public liability insurance is not important. It most certainly is, and every school should be adequately protected against occasions when accidents do occur and where some blame might attach.

However, we know from evidence gathered over many years that a great many disabling injuries are sustained not as a result of the negligence of a school or third party, but through sheer bad luck. In other words, the pupil has been injured as a result of a complete accident. These are the circumstances against which many pupils are simply not protected at all.

Insure the Disability

Many independent schools are operating personal accident insurance schemes to ensure that when accidents do happen pupils are protected. Personal accident schemes provide access to financial protection regardless of any blame or fault, as personal accident insurers pay out on medical evidence rather than circumstantial evidence.

In Loco Parentis

In the end, of course, schools have no legal obligation to insure pupils against accidents, just as parents are not obliged to insure their own children.

However, should schools ignore the fact that the majority of spinal cord injuries and other serious paralyzing injuries occur to young people?

It could be argued that independent schools are best placed to offer that comprehensive protection for their pupils via personal accident insurance. After all, premiums for personal accident policies are generally paid by parents via the school fee and amount to no more than £10 per term for a £2 million maximum benefit. Prudent parents wishing to buy this type of cover as individuals will simply be unable to match these group rate premiums.

When you measure those few pounds against the lifetime cost of caring for a disabled child – and the immeasurable value of giving that child the chance to overcome disability, to lead a life full of fulfilling choices – there can surely be no argument.

For further information regarding personal accident insurance for pupils, please visit uk.marsh.com/education or join the Marsh UK Education Forum on LinkedIn.

Spinal Cord Injuries: The Facts

• The frequency of spinal cord injuries is highest in younger males.
• Two thirds of spinal cord injuries are caused by sporting and road traffic accidents.
• The most common sporting accidents that result in a spinal cord injury are diving, rugby, winter sports, gymnastics and home riding.
• The lifetime cost of caring for a severely disabled child is likely to exceed £1 million.

Insurers and advisers may well argue that it was not to blame and avoid liability – but is it a pyrrhic “victory” when you consider the hardships that are likely to ensue for the injured pupil?

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Spend £10 per term and cover these costs.

Economic Affairs conference

St Swithun’s School, Hampshire, hosted an Institute of Economic Affairs A Level Economics Conference earlier this month (March).

22 of the school’s A-level economics students were joined by the day by South Downs College and Sheffield

School, Hampshire.

Grant Tucker, education outreach officer at the IEA, chaired the conference. The IEA is a UK free-market think-tank, founded in 1955 that promotes the intellectual case for a free economy, low taxes, freedom in education, health and welfare and lower levels of regulation in the contest of the current economic challenges facing Britain and the wider global environment.

Speakers at the conference included Dr Steve Davies, Education Director at the IEA, Dr Lynne Kieling, senior lecturer in the Department of Economics at Northwestern University, Illinois and Ewen Stewart from Walbrook Economics, independent consultants, London.

Dr Davies spoke to the students about globalisation and Britain’s future trading partners, giving a unique perspective of economic history in the context of today’s global economy. In addition, Dr Davies concluded the day with a short talk on the importance and role of the economist in providing research and analysis that has contributed to the increase in overall living standards of world economies.

Dr Lynne Kieling, one of the female economists, spoke about the conflict points between the green economy markets and the wider ecological environment including the role of property rights in a free market economy.

Ewen Stewart spoke about the current state of the UK, US and EU economies in the context of the credit crunch and recent return to growth.

Conference organiser, Mrs Jacqueline Campbell, head of economics at St Swithun’s said: “The students were fully engaged for the four hours of lectures and left the day with many important and relevant talking points in the lead up to exams.”

Prudent parents wishing to buy this type of cover as individuals will simply be unable to match these group rate premiums.

When you measure those few pounds against the lifetime cost of caring for a disabled child – and the immeasurable value of giving that child the chance to overcome disability, to lead a life full of fulfilling choices – there can surely be no argument.

For further information regarding personal accident insurance for pupils, please visit uk.marsh.com/education or join the Marsh UK Education Forum on LinkedIn.

Spinal Cord Injuries: The Facts

• The frequency of spinal cord injuries is highest in younger males.
• Two thirds of spinal cord injuries are caused by sporting and road traffic accidents.
• The most common sporting accidents that result in a spinal cord injury are diving, rugby, winter sports, gymnastics and home riding.
• The lifetime cost of caring for a severely disabled child is likely to exceed £1 million.

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The new charities SORP 2015

Henry Briggs, senior partner of the Birmingham office of Haines Watts, Chartered Accountants, and a former school governor, looks at how the new Charities SORP (Statements of Recommended Practice) will affect independent schools.

Like many changes that are announced well in advance, when they are finally implemented they have a habit of suddenly catching those affected by surprise. In the case of the Charities SORP (Statements of Recommended Practice) 2015, schools that are either registered or exempt charities will need to adhere to the new regulations. However, they could be taking the opportunity to bring together charities, as not only two but now four new SORPs were issued late last year and came into force for financial statements for years commencing on, or after 1st January 2015. This means that schools with year ends on 31st August are already in a year for which the figures will need to comply when shown as comparatives in their 2016 accounts. Before doing that, it is necessary to decide under which SORP they will be reporting.

Larger Charities will be required to report under the full SORP known as the FRS 102 SORP, but a ‘FRSSE’ (Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities) SORP allows charities to report under a second, less demanding standard. If a school falls below two of three size criteria, then they can opt to report under the smaller charities’ FRSSE SORP, which includes only one SORP covered and complied with this aspect, so far now we have two. What’s more, new proposals could mean that those regulations will soon be superseded. All of this needs to be taken into account when deciding which SORP to adopt for a smaller charity that has the option. Larger ones land owned have no choice and must adopt the FRS 102 SORP.

If the choices and background are confusing, at least the actual changes brought about are relatively straightforward by comparison, though requiring some consideration.

Much of the new requirements are explanations in the Trustees report, of reserves policy or its absence; of any social investment risks and uncertainties and plans for derivative purposes. However, the main area where the new requirements make a difference, other than in the detail required between the larger and smaller charities, is in the reporting of reserves and the trustees’ policy regarding them; related parties; conflicts of interest and setting executive pay.

Accounting policies for recognizing income, such as donations and legacies, may need to change to comply, as will recognition of forward expenditure and grant commitments. For paying schools that offer an advance fees payment option, this will be affected. Other changes but will need consideration are Investment properties, for which there is a ‘one off’ opportunity to realise; holiday pay, which now needs to be accrued; multi employer pension scheme deficits where forward recognition has been set; and Heritage assets.

For schools with Endowment Funds, the recent changes allowing an option to adopt a total return on investments approach can be incorporated into the accounts; but this is a whole area in itself and only relevant to those schools that have separate Endowment Funds.

As is often the case with attempted simplification, the area has become more complex, because although the new changes that come into effect in 2015 are relatively straightforward, they may be subject to further change before long. It is important, therefore, that the Trustees and Bursars look at how they will affect their schools now.

Perfect score

A team of four boys from King Edward’s School, Birmingham, has jointly won the National Final of the Senior Team Maths Challenge with a perfect score.

Over 1,000 school teams took part in the national competition and 80 went through to the National Finals, which were held at the Royal Horticultural Halls in London last month (February).

The team of Harrison Green and Clement Chan in Year 13 and Jeremy Ho and Vidy Reddy in Year 12 scored a perfect score of 176 points to jointly win the competition with two other teams, from Harrow School and Hampton School, who also scored perfect scores.

Tim Cross, Maths Teacher and coach of the team, said: “To reach the National Finals of this competition is a fantastic accomplishment. To win the competition by answering every question correctly is incredible and I am very proud indeed of these four boys and their achievements.”

John Cloughton, Chief Master of King Edward’s School, said: “We have a great mathematical tradition here and, therefore, we are not surprised to see the dangers that it poses to a generation of school children making wrong choices in games than the games field.

There was much publicity recently over a European Court case that tackled the issue of whether obesity can be viewed as a disability, and if so, the extent to which employers may have to make adjustments to the workplace to accommodate overweight staff.

The obesity epidemic is rarely out of the news, with dire warnings of the burden that it will place on the NHS and its ability to deal with the dangers that it poses to a generation of school children making wrong choices in games than the games field.

The charity the School is supporting is the UK’s oldest independent school, Dame Allan’s Schools.

Dame Allan’s Schools in Newcastle upon Tyne has been awarded a £250,000 grant to help fund a £600,000 project.

The funding comes from the Reece Foundation which promotes the improvement of education in engineering, technology and related subjects.

The donation will enable the School to develop a new state of the art Design and Technology teaching facility, creating new educational experiences and career opportunities for students.

The new centre will help students from across the region. A number of link primary schools, will also use the advanced facilities which will be fully fitted out with the latest equipment including 3D printers and sophisticated software.

Work is due to start on the building in the coming months with a view to opening the new facility in September 2015. Dame Allan’s Schools are a group of independent schools in Newcastle upon Tyne. The schools were founded in 1705 with the girls’ school believed to be one of the oldest independent girls’ schools in the country.

“Dame Allan’s Schools believes in creating a world class teaching and learning environment and that is why we are so very grateful for this incredible donation from the Reece Foundation. With it we can build a state of the art Design and Technology teaching facility to help our students to achieve great things.”

Dr Reece who established the Reece Foundation said: “We are pleased to support this development at Dame Allan’s and I hope we can make real progress in ensuring an engineering and technology centre which will inspire many pupils.”
UK pupils step into shoes of world leaders to help get 58 million children into school

2015 is an important year - world leaders will gather this September in New York to decide how to tackle global poverty over the next 15 years. The Send My Friend to School campaign has launched a new free resource pack to help UK pupils speak out for every child’s right to education and make sure world leaders commit to seeing the last child out of school. The campaign aims young people to ‘step into the shoes of world leaders’ and tell their local MPs how they would deliver a better future for the world’s children.

In 2000 world leaders promised universal primary education by 2015, but 58 million children are still out of school and it’s girls, children in conflict areas and children with disabilities that are missing out most. At the current rate of progress it will be 2086 before every child worldwide gets an education.

There has been some great progress – millions of young people around the world have spoken out and 50 million more children have enrolled in primary education. However, other countries are far off reaching the target; Nigeria has over 10 million children out of school and an average of 100 pupils in every classroom.

Sophie, 10, lives in the Kafuwa Community, Nigeria, doesn’t go to school, she says: ‘I feel lonely at home. If I get the chance I would like to be a doctor and touch people’s lives. I sometimes wonder if I don’t go to school what my future will be?’

The new Send My Friend free resource pack, suitable for KS1 – 4, includes:

• A DVD of the 2015 campaign film, plus other films
• 4 A2 colour posters with stories of children plus infographics
• A sheet of x5 stickers
• A Teacher’s Guide with instructions on how to run the campaign in school

In addition, there is a range of classroom activities, fact sheets and other learning resources available at www.sendmyfriend.org to teach about global education issues and to help pupils become active global citizens.

The campaign is asking young people in the UK to create a 3D figure of themselves, as a world leader, and to tell politicians what needs to be done. Using the technology, in the free campaign pack, young people are invited to build, and then cover their world leader figure with a ‘If I were a world leader…” message. The 3D figures will be delivered to their MPs and they in turn will be asked to deliver the world leader figures to No 10 to remind the UK government of their promise of universal primary education.

Trisha Ghazi, Head of Campaigns for the Send My Friend to School campaign said:

‘Last year over 4,300 schools got involved and spoke out for every child’s right to go to school. Young people are very passionate about this issue and we are encouraging MPs to be inundated with thousands of these 3D figures! Many MPs will also visit schools to hear from pupils who are determined that world leaders should keep their promise to get all children into primary school by 2015.

Sign up now for a free schools pack to teach about this important global issue www.sendmyfriend.org.

The campaign is backed by ActionAid UK, Action on Disability and Development, Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL), CAPD, CAMFED, CBM, Christian Aid, Consortium for Street Children, Comex Relief, Daat Child Worldwide, Handicap International UK, Link Community Development, National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT), National Union of Teachers (NUT), DfID GB, Plan UK, RESULTS UK, Save the Children UK, Sense International, Sightsavers, Steve Chuter Foundation, Trent College, University and College Union, Voluntary Service Overseas and

New Send My Friend free resource pack, suitable for KS1 - 4

Intelligent lockers improve student experience

Traka asset management lockers are helping the University of Bath lend laptops and consoles to students at any time of the day and night.

The university wanted to help its students gain access to laptops and games consoles as and when they required them. The Traka laptop lockers enable students to loan equipment 24 hours a day, without having a member of staff monitor the process. It is invaluable to students who require access to equipment at times when staff may not be working, allowing access at any time of day or night.

The university has recognised the need to increase the number of students, reduce withdrawal rates and aid student progression, by providing an exciting and high quality environment for them. The University of Bath came first for student satisfaction in the National Students Survey in 2013 and 2014 and second in the Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey last year thanks to the many initiatives they have put in place.

The lockers change the laptops so that students do not have to waste time trying to find a power source, they increase accountability, but most importantly, they help the university protect its investment and manage the use and misuse of the equipment. If devices are broken, damaged, lost or stolen, the Traka system notifies staff through its database, showing who has taken what and whether it has been returned.

Meru Gigabit Wi-Fi supports high densities of mobile devices

Meru Networks, a leader in intelligent Wi-Fi networking, has announced that Bradford College has completed the first phase of its deployment of Meru’s high-speed Wi-Fi solution.

Meru’s solution is deployed at Bradford College to provide intelligent Wi-Fi networking services that enable students and teachers to connect seamlessly across the campus, allowing them to access the school’s resources from anywhere. The solution has enabled students and teachers to connect to the network without experiencing any drop in service quality, which is crucial for mobile device users.

The solution has enabled students and teachers to access the school’s resources from anywhere, allowing them to complete their work on the go. The network has enabled the school to increase its Wi-Fi coverage, providing seamless connectivity across the campus.

The network is also being used to support the school’s Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), which enables students and teachers to organise their coursework and create and access resources from anywhere. Phase II will include external wireless access covering the playing fields and the school’s recently renovated Greek Theatre, which plays host to performances during the summer term. In the future, the IT department will look at integrating the Wi-Fi with other systems such as CCTV.
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Heads Hunted
Among the upcoming head and principal appointments:

Cham School Berkshire
Flynonse House School  Swansea
Quinton House School Northamptonshire
St. Philip’s School London
Sherrardswood School Hertfordshire

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

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

Please email to:
mail@independentschoolsmagazine.co.uk

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Schools featured in this issue include:

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Blandford School
Bolton School
Box Hill School
Bradfield College
Brighton College
Brooksgrove School
Charter School
City of London School
Crangbourne School
Dame Alice’s School
Dauntsey’s School
Derby High School
Dunset House School
Douglas School
Edge Grove School
Farlington School

Grace Drif Manor School
Haberdashers’ Monmouth School
Girls
Kent College
Kilbourn School
Kilnholme School
Kings School
Kings School
Lady Eleanor Holles School
Layton Upper School
Leicester High School for Girls
Luton Park School

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Monkton Hall School
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Sheffield High School
Self School
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St. Helen’s School
St. Hilda’s School
St. Mary’s School
St. Simon’s School
Stamford High School
Stowford Knole School
Trent College
Waterhead Girls’ High School
Yarmouth School
Widcombe Grammar School
Worth School

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Vires per Verum – Strength through Truth

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The Independent Schools Magazine

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