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# In this issue...



## Princess Royal shown father's school archives

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal viewed archive material relating to her late father's school days on a visit to Gordonstoun last month (March).

Gordonstoun Guardian Erin Bell (Head Student) showed The Princess examples of the original Moray Badge which HRH The Prince Philip won at school and which inspired The Duke of Edinburgh's Awards.

Erin also showed The Princess Royal photographs of The Duke at school and a summary of his school report, as published in an archive copy of the school magazine. Students Charlotte Barr and John Prendergast presented The Princess with a book of condolence along with a framed photo of the wreath which was laid at sea by Gordonstoun students on the day of The Duke of Edinburgh's funeral.

The visit to Gordonstoun was also an opportunity for Her Royal Highness to hear more about the Moray Badge Platinum Jubilee which is underway to encourage all schoolchildren in Moray to rebuild their confidence following two lockdowns and which has been part-funded by Gordonstoun.

Principal of Gordonstoun, Lisa Kerr, pictured with the Princess Royal, said, "We have enjoyed a warm relationship with The Princess Royal for many years in her ambassadorial role as the 'Warden' of our school. We were all deeply saddened by the passing of her father, The Duke of Edinburgh, who is fondly remembered as one of our first pupils and a huge supporter of the school."

Cover background

## Neurodiversity initiatives

New Hall School students and staff marked Neurodiversity Celebration Week last month (March) with a series of events including assemblies, lunchtime talks and an art installation.

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## Is Your School Mentioned?

### Schools featured in this issue include:

Abercorn School; ACS Egham; Ashville College; Ballard School; Bishop's Stortford College; Bradford Grammar School; Brentwood School; Bromsgrove Prep. School; Bryanston School; Croydon High School; Dauntsey's School; Denstone College; Downsend School; Durham High School; Ellesmere College; Felsted School; Forbes Sandle Manor School; Francis Holland School; Gordonstoun; Habs Girls; High School of Glasgow; Keble Prep. School; Kilgraston School; King Edward's School; King Edward's Witley; King's School; Kirkham Grammar School; Leweston School; Longacre School; Maltman's Green School; Malvern School; Maynard School; Mill Hill School; National Mathematics & Science College; New Hall School; Newcastle High School for Girls; Old Hall School; Plymouth College; Pocklington School; Redmaids' High School; Royal School; Shebbear College; St. Benedict's School; St. Hilda's Prep. School; St. Margaret's School; Stonyhurst College; Sutton High School; Taunton School; Truro School; Ursuline Prep. School; Wellington School; West Buckland School; Wetherby Senior School; Windlesham House School; Workop College

# Rebecca secures gold for England!

Year 11 student Rebecca Flaherty became the first female student in Bradford Grammar School's history to don an England vest for cross country – and won a gold medal in the process.

Rebecca won gold in the inter boys and inter girls 4 x 1500m relay race in the Home Countries' International Cross Country race at Pembrey Country Park, in Wales.

Said Rebecca: "It was amazing to be selected for England so I was overjoyed when I won gold as well. When you start running when you're younger this is the dream you have – to one day run for England. It's been my goal for seven years, so in many ways it was surreal that it was happening. I really enjoyed it."

The competition saw entrants from Wales, Ireland, England and Scotland. Rebecca, who runs with Bingley Harriers, has made many friends in the running world having competed regularly over the last few years.

She said: "I've raced against them so many times but we're all friends. We run because we enjoy it. We all do the training and put the effort in but if we took it too seriously it would take away from the enjoyment of it."

Like many of BGS's athletes, Rebecca enjoys the support the school offers to runners.

"The support is really good," she said. "We're lucky to have a running group which goes out

at lunchtimes, and we have a good team atmosphere so quite a lot of us came to the finals in Kent (which determined England selection). It takes some of the pressure off having friends there."

As for future ambitions, Rebecca is happy to simply keep on running.

Simon Hinchliffe, headmaster at BGS, said: "We were incredibly proud of Rebecca simply being selected for England. It reflected all her talent and her hard work training, particularly through the wet winter months. To win gold was absolutely fantastic and we can't wait to see what she and her thriving BGS cross country teammates achieve over the next few months."



# Neurodivergence initiative

New Hall School, Essex, students and staff marked Neurodiversity Celebration Week with a series of events including assemblies, lunchtime talks and an art installation.

The week's celebrations at the Catholic day and boarding school are in recognition of the fact that all people's brains work differently, that we are all unique and each

of these differences should be valued. The events were organised by Suzanna Minnis, Head of the Girls' & Boys' Divisions, Vanessa Minihane, Acting Head of Learning Development, and Classics teacher Charlie Hailes. They were designed to be informative while demonstrating the School's solidarity with anyone who might be neurodivergent.

A colourful display of umbrellas, decorated with details of students' individual talents and 'superpowers', is now suspended in the School's cloister as a reminder of, and salute to, cognitive differences.

Across the week, students learned how they can respect diversity and support each other. Sixth Form students Charlotte Handelaar and Albert Holland, who captains the School Riding Team, shared their personal stories of dyslexia.

Charlie Hailes, who has a diagnosis of autism, received a standing ovation for his inspiring Sixth Form talk on autism awareness, sharing his life journey and thoughts on how people can make everyone, including those who are

neurodivergent, feel more included and accepted. Next term he will give the talk to other year groups.

Further lunchtime talks included two from New Hall parents, Dr Peter Berry and Mr Preetham Peddanagari, on the positives of neurodivergent thinking. Dr Peter Berry, Consultant in Anaesthesia and Burns Intensive Care, spoke about his educational journey making links with the personal qualities often associated with individuals with dyslexia and the advantages that these qualities had brought to his career.

Mr Preetham Peddanagari, who is a partner at Ernst and Young, spoke to students about his company's worldwide Neurodiversity Centres of Excellence which recognise the economic and business benefits of having teams which include neurodivergent thinkers. In his talk, he gave examples of neurodivergent individuals who have led innovation and driven scientific and technological change.

Professor Susan Deacy, a lecturer from Roehampton University, gave a talk on autism and classics,

discussing her research into this and encouraging students to colour in a Herculean drawing to explore different interpretations of the scene.

Katherine Jeffery, Principal of New Hall, said: "There have been so many positive comments from parents, students and staff in response to this neurodiversity celebration. I'm proud that our students have enthusiastically engaged with the topic, gaining a greater understanding of, and empathy with, those who are not neurotypical. The various activities and talks have demonstrated that being neurodiverse is not a barrier to a successful career, indeed the opposite is quite often true. Our individuality is something we should wear as a badge of honour; it is what makes us special and gives colour to all of our lives. That is why we actively support a range of talents in the New Hall community through sport and other co-curricular activities as well as learning development."



Pictured: New Hall staff Charlie Hailes, Suzanna Minnis and Vanessa Minihane with Year 13 student Albert Holland under the colourful umbrella canopy

# What should we tell our children?

It is not uncommon for a teacher or parent to find themselves lost for words – being posed a challenging question from a perspective one has not considered before; helping explain complex or abstract ideas in simple but still meaningful ways; or being asked an awkward question that you would rather not answer. Recent events in Ukraine pile on top of other issues likely to preoccupy teenagers – such as climate change, the pandemic, the plight of refugees from Afghanistan and Syria, and the rise of far-right extremism. Trying to find ways to address what is going on has sometimes left me searching for the right words when talking with our students, says Paul Dwyer, Head at Redmaids' High School, Bristol.



Paul Dwyer

The words 'unprecedented' and 'world-changing' have been used so much as to become cliché due to the pandemic. This, coupled with the increasing awareness of how the climate emergency is running away from us, or the ways in which we are still contending with prejudice and discrimination in so many ways, is leaving many students to look at the headlines and feel that there is a challenge they will inherit that is beyond comprehension. I have had several young people talk to me on this point; some feel there is little they can do, or that they are worried about what their prospects are for the future, both individually and collectively.

In the case of the aggression against Ukraine, helping place the situation into context, to enable our students to start to contend with why such a senseless invasion has taken place, and to reassure or understand what the

potential future might look like, is incredibly difficult, not least because as adults we are also struggling with these issues. There are many who have written on the ways that we might address the situation in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner, as well as helping students to address the anxiety they might feel about their own safety, or on the part of Ukrainian people. Meanwhile, the stories of fund-raising, coordinating supplies or helping the individuals who are displaced or affected by the invasion are a moving testament to the ways communities come together to support those in need. But we should not lose sight of the increasing sense of powerlessness that our young people are feeling.

As adults, we are more experienced in knowing how to compartmentalise and how to put things into context, but for young people the challenge

of understanding where they can make a difference can feel overwhelming. Some will look at climate change activist Greta Thunberg and see what sacrifice, courage and leadership look like and wonder how they can measure up. As teachers we must help them to accept that they are unable to solve all the world's problems by themselves, but that it is possible to bring about change in their own individual ways or be part of wider efforts to do so.

Too often, it can seem there is only one school of thought or only one way to approach a problem. But, as polarising as things seem now, there is still dialogue, still conversation to be had. Young people need the space to discuss, debate, and think critically on issues; to form their own opinions even if that feels counter-intuitive or uncomfortable. Giving them a

chance to reflect allows other viewpoints to be aired and tested. Instead of listening to respond, they listen to learn and understand. This encourages genuine engagement.

Idealism is a beacon young people carry most brightly and one they should be allowed to hold on to for as long as possible. We must ensure they have the tools to make the difference they hope to, no matter how small a sphere this might be.

Our young people will be the future of politics, health, charity, and technology. They will also be integral to their families, to local church groups or sports teams. Helping them to realise that feeling powerless is something that affects us all, and it can be overwhelming, but that change is still possible, and progress can be made.



## Hot air balloon surprise

Pupils at a Shropshire school were wowed after arriving for class to find a Hot Air Balloon in their playing fields.

The youngsters at the Old Hall School then gathered outside to see the red balloon inflate to create a stunning sight over the grounds.

Organised by Virgin Balloon Flights the colourful spectacle was greeted with cheers of delight by more than 230 pupils as the pilot guided the balloon on a few short trips

up and down so they could see it in the air.

Following the display, the pilot Steve Richards also stayed on at the school to take part in a question and answer session to allow the children to find out more about Hot Air Balloons and what it is like to fly them.

Headteacher Martin Stott said the balloon certainly caused a great deal of excitement with pupils surprised by the early morning visitor.

# Scottish Curriculum ~ what's the way ahead?

The Scottish Conservatives have said the SNP's Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) should be scrapped in favour of a return to Scotland's traditional knowledge-based curriculum.

Education spokesman Oliver Mundell MSP said CfE was beyond saving and "the current approach is an anchor that will keep dragging down school standards."

He added that "Teaching and learning should be the central focus of our schools and we must halt the drift towards our teachers doubling up as social workers and well-being experts."

Scottish Conservatives have published a policy paper detailing the initial outline of a new curriculum, which they intend to develop further over the coming months. The policy was announced last month (March) at the Scottish Conservative Conference.

Mr Mundell MSP, said: "Scotland's education system used to rank among the best in the world before the SNP came to power.

"We should return to the strong, traditional, teacher-led approach that gave so many of us who went to our local school a decent start in life.

"Quality, knowledge-rich, universal education is at the heart of being Scottish. We pride ourselves on being a nation of innovators, entrepreneurs, and thinkers.

"We are at risk of losing all that if we keep sticking with the same distinctly Un-Scottish approach that has seen our schools plummet down international league tables.

"We should return to Scotland's Curriculum and ditch the SNP's Curriculum for Excellence.

"Curriculum for Excellence is now beyond saving. Over 20,000

pages of guidance haven't fixed it, they've only burdened it more and confused what it was supposed to achieve. The OECD review has been set up to fail and will never get to the bottom of what is wrong with CfE.

"The current approach is an anchor that will keep dragging down school standards and artificially limiting opportunities for our young people. The knowledge-based, rigorous and confident curriculum we once had was much better than the fuzzy and often contradictory guidance that dominates now.

"Teaching and learning should be the central focus of our schools and we must halt the drift towards our teachers doubling up as social workers and well-being experts. This is often presented as kindness by the SNP but the truth is it is simply asking our schools to plug the gap for cuts elsewhere while educational attainment suffers as a result.

"We want to start a national conversation with teachers and education experts to design a replacement that would restore world-class Scottish education."

## Carol Ann Lund, Deputy Head, Kilgraston School, said:

"We should not be surprised that a curriculum - years in the making, implemented for over a decade - has now passed its sell-by-date.

"From inception, it was perhaps overly ambitious to define a syllabus not just about teaching and learning, but about shaping society based around four distinct capacities: to enable each child or young person to be a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and effective contributor.

"By trying to give teachers autonomy over what was taught by defining the learning experience as "an outcome that has to be achieved", an opportunity was lost to reach agreement on what was essential in terms of knowledge. This meant that there was disconnect between the broad general education and the demands of later formal examinations delivered by the Scottish Qualifications Agency.

"We are now in danger of repeating that mistake - but in reverse - with the suggestion that exams need to be more about skills and less about final, knowledge-based, assessment. Broad general education

needs clearer parameters and to be more fact-aware and rigorous.

"Additionally, not only do educators in Scotland now have a massive task in curriculum and external examination definition, they also face huge ramifications from the pandemic's influence.

"Covid has impacted not just academic attainment, but softer skills - confidence, body language, peer interaction etc. - acquired through wider activities and opportunities open to pupils where schools are able to function normally.

"Really, the restructuring of the SQA and subsequent curriculum consequences have come at a critical time for both senior pupils and teaching staff."



# Ed Balls talks stammering and politics

Former Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls has spoken about stammering and politics during a visit to Yorkshire's Ashville College.

The Strictly Come Dancing star, and Vice President of Action for Stammering Children, made the visit to the independent school at the invitation of Sixth Former Thomas Grattoni-May, a key member of the charity's Youth Panel, and a fellow stammerer.

At a fundraising cookery event in London last November, Thomas acted as Mr Balls' 'commis chef', and asked the former Yorkshire MP if he would visit Ashville to help promote the work of the charity.

On being met by Thomas, Mr Balls visited the College's Learning Support department, met staff members and spent 30 minutes chatting to several pupils with learning needs about their studies, interests and aspirations, as well as talking about the charity, its work and Thomas' role within it.

This was followed by a question-and-answer session, where Ashville Sixth Formers, Year 11s, Scholars, and teachers - along with pupils from St Aidan's in Harrogate and

All Saints RC School in York - heard from and quizzed Mr Balls on a range of topics, from learning to live and work with a stammer, to his political experiences and views.

Leanne Norton, Assistant Head: Head of Sixth Form at Ashville College, said: "Mr Balls showed a real interest in our Learning Support department and how the team helps pupils like Thomas throughout their school life, and prepares them for the next stage in their careers, be it further education or into the workplace.

"It was also a fantastic opportunity for our pupils, plus those from St Aidan's and All Saints, to hear from a former Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer about his own personal experiences. In the audience were our own Year 11s who have opted to study our brand new Government and Politics A Level in the 2022-23 academic year, so this was a great insight into what a life in government can be like from someone who has experienced it first-hand."

Pictured: Thomas Grattoni-May, former Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls and Leanne Norton, Ashville's Head of Sixth Form



With Jeremy and pupils are Mrs Sarah Raja (left) - Headmistress of the Junior School, and Mrs Laura Threadgold (right) - Deputy Head of the Junior School

## Author Jeremy Strong visit

Jeremy Strong, renowned children's author, visited Croydon High Junior School last month (March) to officially open the new Junior library and deliver a series of inspiring talks to pupils in all year groups.

In his talks, Jeremy spoke passionately about his inspiration

for writing humorous and adventurous stories. He read extracts from a number of his books which were met with much laughter and acclaim. He also made a special visit to the youngest pupils in Nursery and read them one of his stories, Captain Whiskers.

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# More focus on outdoor learning for teenagers

With an increase in forest schools and the benefits of outdoor learning widely reported, getting pupils outside and into the fresh air has been a top priority for many schools over the last few years. Certainly, in the case of younger, primary aged children, schools have risen to the challenge of creating adventurous and inspiring outdoor education, which has been shown to improve wellbeing and concentration at school. Unfortunately, from age 11 upwards, the emphasis around outdoor learning seems to tail off; or is somewhat confined to the netball court or rugby pitch during scheduled PE lessons.

This is a great pity, since we already know that young people spend far too much time indoors in front of screens, says Rose Hardy, Headmistress at Habs Girls, Hertfordshire.

As schools, we need to be doing as much as possible to stimulate a desire for being outside. When children reach senior school, everything switches to academic progress, exams and assessments. Sadly, this simply nurtures the classic stereotype of young people who don't really want to be outside. This is of course a vicious circle too, because the more we restrict outdoor learning within these age groups at school, the more reluctant they will be to engage with it.

## Not just about wellbeing

Fresh air is of course good for the body and soul, and although this is important, outdoor learning is not just about wellbeing. There is an academic aspect to learning outside of the classroom that we shouldn't overlook. Sciences such as biology and other STEM

subjects should be taught outside more often and this activity should be timetabled as part of the curriculum, not simply a nice to have add-on. From developing horticultural expertise to studying and observing geographical surroundings, being outside strengthens academic development and provides a visually stimulating and multi-sensory learning environment for pupils.

We are constantly teaching our young people about the impact of climate change and how to take better care of our world. That also means understanding seasonal changes, recognising local wildlife and identifying the plants and trees that grow on your door step. Caring for our world starts at home in our local environment, so schools have a duty to educate older children to become stewards

of their own campus. This is also about instilling respect for our immediate surroundings.

## Climate change is local too

Often when children think of climate change, they immediately think of the polar ice caps or the extinction of certain species. While these are important considerations, children are less likely to think about the hyper local impact of climate change. For instance, how much litter can children spot in their area or what kind of birds do they notice in their gardens?

Schools are very good at providing a raft of co-curricular activities, many of which are sports related and will naturally take place outdoors, but it is the everyday curriculum that needs more work. Getting older children and teenagers outside as part of their



daily routine, should be happening in the same way that it does for primary school children and across multiple core subjects. Getting pupils involved and enthused about gardening for instance, will equip them with the skills to grow and nurture as well as foster a deeper appreciation around patience and care.

Taking co-curricular activities a step further, schools could also embrace the idea of a school allotment, perhaps set up a bird watching club or even build partnerships with linked charities to give back to their local communities? In doing the bare minimum around outdoor learning for older children, schools are essentially sending the message to teenagers, that being outdoors isn't that important. Surely, we send that message at our peril. ”

## New outdoor learning environment

A new outside learning environment for pupils at Bishop's Stortford College Pre-Prep has been unveiled.

Development of the Early Years Foundation Stage at the Bishop's Stortford College Pre-Prep began back in 2015, with a need to create an outside area that was an enabling environment for pupils incorporating 4 key areas: a quiet space; a growing natural area; an area for investigative sand, water and mud play; and an area for physical play and construction.

In the Spring of 2021, 4 companies were invited to produce a design that would embrace all of these different features. The design from Pentagon Play, an award-winning design company of outdoor learning

environments for schools and nurseries, was selected by the Pre-Prep team.

The design incorporates several zones and various types of playground and learning equipment all chosen to reflect and enhance pupils' early development. A creation zone, featuring playhouses, quiet spaces and a construction area, enables pupils to create pupil and adult-initiated projects. Alongside this space is a water wall with interconnecting pipes and tubes and another large playhouse which includes sandpits, pulley systems and a conveyer belt with a chute. Pupils have access to climbing apparatus to further challenge their physical development, as well as a wobbly bridge which leads into the wild

area, where the pupils will investigate minibeasts and plants.

Head of Pre-Prep, Belinda Callow, commented, "The Pre-Prep is a magical learning environment, where the children are nurtured and are safe to investigate, explore and discover. The high-quality teaching and learning is enhanced

by well-resourced classrooms and an amazing teaching team. We are so pleased to now have an outside play area that reflects this excellence in the classroom. What a fantastic environment for children to develop, creating a wonderful foundation on which to blossom on their learning journey".





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# Keeping face to face parents evenings to time – lessons from online?



For many schools, face to face parents' evenings are once again becoming the norm, and it is wonderful to welcome parents into our schools. However, many teachers and school leaders acknowledge that sticking to time online was much easier, says former assistant head Rob Eastment...

I know how often face to face parents' evenings would run over time. So what can we learn from online parents evenings that can help us to keep face to face parents' evenings on time?

## The power of the countdown

Probably the most effective tool for keeping on time was the five minute alert warning everyone a call was finishing soon. It didn't feel rude or odd because it was the technology, rather than the teacher, reminding us all. It was incredibly useful for teachers, and parents, because everyone knew the time was fixed and the meeting would stop automatically.

Although we know face to face meetings are meant to be 10 minutes, it's much harder to stick to time when the technology isn't there to remind everyone. However, even running over by a couple of minutes in the first few meetings can mean a 30 minute delay by the end of the evening. Making this work in real life, without it feeling rude, requires some careful thought, here are some things to try out:

- Remind everyone of the timings at the start of the meeting so parents know time is limited.
- Reassure parents that you're happy to schedule a further meeting for anything that needs to be discussed in more detail.
- For meetings which are happening in the same hall, play an alert a few minutes before the end of each session, and then another at 'change over' can be effective.
- If meetings are happening in different classrooms don't be embarrassed to tell parents you're setting an alert. You can also underline that it means you can ensure you all make the most of the time.

## Simplify the logistics

The relative simplicity of online parents' evenings meant logistics were straightforward and there was less risk of parents arriving late. Face to face there's lots of potential for parents to arrive late. Getting caught in traffic, finding somewhere to park, or locating the hall or

classroom where the meeting is taking place, can all lead to delays.

Trying to simplify things can help parents arrive in good time. Can you find extra parking spaces, or lay on a minibus for parents? Can you improve the signage so parents are less likely to get lost? Could you get more students to steward on the night to assist parents?

## Preparation for all

Another issue for teachers is that they have to spend quite a bit of the time updating parents about their child's progress before they can move on to discussing the future. Instead if parents could arrive with a good understanding of their child's learning then the discussion on parents evening could be more constructive.

Recent research from Firefly found a third of parents wanted more personalised information about their child's progress and a similar number wanted more regular information. Continuous reporting, where a school provides far more regular updates to parents about their child, could

be a useful approach to meet parental expectations and increase the productive time at parents' evenings.

## Reflecting and improving

Rather than automatically going back to a pre-pandemic approach, it is sensible to reflect on what we've learnt from the past two years about online parents evenings. A hybrid approach which combines online and face to face may well be the best approach as we learn to live with Covid. For instance, always offering the option of an online parents' meeting for parents who would otherwise have to race to get to physical parents' evenings will reduce the chance of delays.

Also using online tools to support face to face meetings can make things more efficient, whether that's sending online diary invites or alerting everyone when they've three minutes left.

All these things can help us to extract some positives from the past two years, and hopefully give us all a little more time.

Rob Eastment is Senior Product Marketing Manager at Firefly Learning and a former Assistant Head at Duke of Kent School. To read Firefly's research report looking at how schools are helping parents support their learning, visit: <https://fireflylearning.com/parent-engagement-free-report>



## Meals for the needy

Wellington School, Somerset, has been helping to provide meals for the needy with the splendid charity Feeding Communities.

A Year 10 student, Dulcie Harding raised over £500 from the sale of a beautiful calendar which she produced using her own photography of Exmoor. The Thomas Franks Foundation generously more than matched the amount, taking the total to £1000.

This money has been used to

create 500 meals, which have been produced at Exeter Cathedral School (and the boarding students there helped to make them). The team at Feeding Communities distributed 500 meals to a group of organisations within the Wellington community.

Delivery of the meals has been done by Head of Feeding Communities – Dean Collins and Charity Advisor Raj Singh, supported by Headmaster Eugene du Toit.

## Saving Money and reducing carbon emissions

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*James Robson*

James Robson, Chairman



“ One of the first things I did when I joined my current employer 3 years ago was to look at our Electricity contracts, about 46 separate supply contracts in all. Fortuitously Powerful Allies made contact, just at the right time, and I was able to invite them to test the market for me. This gave amazing results. Our existing incumbent broker was recommending we stayed with our existing supplier with a cost increase of circa 18%. Powerful Allies were able to offer a new two year fully

fixed contract with an increase of just 1.67%. I can therefore fully recommend James and his team at Powerful Allies, who offer a dedicated personal service and will negotiate very competitive offers for Gas and Electricity, HH and NHH contracts with transparency. They let you know what their charges are, so have full visibility. Give them a go you won't be disappointed.

**Brian Rollason**  
(Building Services Engineering Manager)



“ Powerful Allies provide a highly professional service, clearly explaining the complex energy market and how it works to a layman, breaking down the tariffs and fees and ultimately they gave me the confidence to make an informed decision. Renewing energy contracts is a minefield and can be badly done through lack of understanding and

lack of time to scrutinise the options. Powerful Allies have a straightforward and honest approach, work with you to find the right solution for you rather than pushing a service and I have absolutely no hesitation in recommending them.

**Alexandra D'Arcy-Irvine**  
(School Business Manager)

### Proud to Support



# Coping with the energy crisis

Henry Briggs, consultant to chartered accountants Haines Watts and a former school governor with expertise in advising and supporting both independent and state schools, looks at actions schools may take to offset some of the rising energy costs they are facing.

A shortage of sources of energy supplies in the UK has been predicted for nearly twenty years and yet no Government has grasped the nettle and produced definitive plans for our future energy needs in that time. The sanctions imposed on Russian imports may now be cited as a reason for rapidly rising energy costs, but they have only brought an underlying problem to a head that is now challenging us all. However quickly the war in Ukraine is resolved, a shortage of energy sources and thus high prices are likely to remain in the medium and long term.

The turmoil in the energy markets caused huge uncertainty, to the extent that switching supplier contracts was frozen; the implementation of the Targeted Charging review is due to further complicate matters for energy users with effect from 1st April, providing guidelines for 'load shifting' – use of energy at different times and in different places.

This has all arrived at a time when most institutional high users of energy, such as businesses and schools, were grappling with adopting policies that enhanced their green credentials in line with Zero carbon emission targets. This in itself has been testing and

difficult to achieve; but at least looking to save running costs and saving the planet are not mutually exclusive.

Schools had already started to look at ways of investing for the longer term in order to comply with good eco-credentials. This was as important for many from a PR perspective and now has become a pressing issue alongside cost reduction. Considerations such as solar deals; offering free installation of solar panels in return for a share of generated watts, being one. Others include the conversion of boilers from gas or oil to wood chip fuel; and the installation of heat exchangers for major buildings and facilities such as swimming pools. Wind turbines may also be possible. The installation of LED lighting is another option.

Where building projects are at the planning stage, these will be being considered. Modern methods of construction with low carbon footprints and low energy usage are now common. Adaptation of existing buildings is a bigger ask, though. More immediate solutions, such as double glazing and insulation, may involve negotiating the maze of the planning process – particularly for older listed buildings or those in conservation areas,

where consents run counter to the requirements of a net zero policy. Schools with older buildings will have to take these restrictions into account. The interactivity between certain types of heating, ventilation and secondary glazing, are complex.

All of these involve varying, but significant investment cost. The arguments for capital spend will need to be examined in detail, with payback periods calculated by cost reductions. This may be difficult at a time when projecting future energy prices is akin to guesswork.

As well as longer term investment, which is likely to be partly subject to timing on new projects, there are other actions schools can take in the short term, if they have not done so already. Collecting data on energy usage by times and properties may produce some surprising results and easy wins where some facilities are being heated at times when not in use, or changes to usage may bring big savings. Schools with partial exemption agreements on their VAT may be able to improve recovery. Multiple buildings and metering could be consolidated into fewer contracts. Bulk buying consortia for contracts should drive prices down; and a review of open competitive tendering undertaken. The question



of whether to fix prices ahead is a difficult one; like projecting future interest and exchange rates. Schools will tend to be risk averse in this area and go for a manageable, rather than speculative, option.

All of this asks rather more questions than it answers and piles on extra work, consideration and costs to already busy bursars and finance committees. Because of the multiple aspects and the interconnectivity with all the other areas of schools' operations, it must make sense to appoint and use one of the many excellent consultants in this area, who will have the advantage of bulk buying and knowledge and flexibility, of a constantly changing and evolving situation. Then the matter of choice is narrowed to deciding which of those to go with and, as with all advisers that becomes a matter of trust and confidence, backed by their regulatory framework and independence; endorsements by other schools will be of help in this.

## For Heaven's Bakes



A Brentwood School Young Enterprise Company specialising in making baking simple, cooked up a storm at the Easter Trade Fair in Essex scooping the top accolade.

The fledgling company, whose motto is 'Sustainably Simple', won Overall Best Company beating off stiff opposition with their eye-catching stand in Chelmsford's Meadows Shopping Centre.

There were no half-baked comments from the event judges, who were 'mightily impressed' by the product, with comments ranging from 'this is too good for a student company' and 'I would

expect to find this product in John Lewis and House of Fraser, very impressive!'

For Heaven's Bakes specialise in making baking simple. CEO and Lower Sixth student, Olivia Argent, explained: "Our business provides the satisfaction of creating a delicious treat whilst keeping it a straightforward experience. Our high quality, natural ingredients come together to form mouth-watering cookies that please everyone. All you have to do is pour the ingredients into a bowl and follow a few simple steps as seen on the index card tied to the neck of the jar. That's it".

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# Topping out for nursery building

Cheryl Giovannoni GDST (Girls' Day School Trust) Chief Executive hosted the Topping Out ceremony to mark reaching full height of 'Fernwood House' at Sutton High School GDST.

Fernwood House is Sutton High's new state-of-the-art prep and nursery building due for full completion in Summer 2022.

Also in attendance at the ceremony were Jonathan Davis GDST Chief Financial Officer, Sutton High Head, Beth Dawson, Prep Head, Anne Musgrove, and Governors Colin Laverick (Chair), Liz Berner and Catherine Clarke. They were joined by architect and building designer Joanna Mitchell from LTS Architects and building contractors Sean and Colin Quigley from Ashley Group Builders.

Cheryl Giovannoni said, "It is a proud moment for the GDST and all at Sutton High School as we enter a new and exciting chapter. We are delighted to invest in this inspiring learning space following high demand for places and the unwavering popularity of the school under the excellent leadership of Head Beth Dawson. We look forward to welcoming many more girls through the doors to Sutton High."

Head, Beth Dawson added, "Fernwood House is just the beginning of our vision for Sutton High and as our numbers

grow so too does our need for new and innovative ways to educate our girls!"

Fernwood House promises to become a landmark, first-of-its-kind, nursery in the Borough of Sutton. The development is part of a multiple phase redevelopment of the site which includes an Astro turf pitch, sports changing rooms and extension to the dining hall.

The GDST has targeted a net zero carbon development for Fernwood House which has been sustainably built, combining a

traditional learning environment with an outdoor learning terrace and woodland garden that naturally encourages exploration, discovery, and play.

Inside, the building's natural colours reduce cognitive overload meaning girls are calm, able to self-regulate and more focussed on their learning. The garden classroom has been carefully designed to include natural materials and lots of greenery to maximise health and wellbeing benefits and provide a calming environment.

## More school mergers

The Mill Hill School Foundation, London, has announced that two more schools will join its group through a charity merger: Lyonsdown, an independent preparatory school for girls aged 3 to 11, and Keble Prep, an independent boys school for children aged 4 to 13. With the addition of these two local prep schools, The Foundation now comprises seven schools in total, educating well over 2,000 pupils. One year ago The Foundation announced the addition of Cobham Hall School in Kent into its family of schools.

Antony Spencer, CEO, The Mill Hill School Foundation commented "Bringing together schools with a shared educational ethos provides a range of educational benefits to pupils, alongside significant operational efficiencies. Having more schools working together for the mutual benefit of all their pupils continues to strengthen us as a Foundation."

Rittu Hall, Head at Lyonsdown

said: "I am excited about the possibilities the merger will bring for our girls, the school and for our staff body. The Foundation is an excellent fit for Lyonsdown and, as an educational charity, it has a very similar educational and pastoral ethos to our own. Being part of a family of schools will help enhance all aspects of our educational provision (academic, sporting, creative); whilst also enabling Lyonsdown to continue to be a happy and family focused school that inspires and enables our girls to love learning and achieve personal success."

Perran J Gill, Head at Keble Prep. said: "I am excited to be taking Keble into the next chapter of its History with its move into The Mill Hill School Foundation. Keble and Mill Hill have a strong link. I was delighted to hear that Mill Hill School's current head boy is a Keble boy and I am sure the new move between the schools can only benefit all of us."



Pictured: Anne Musgrove (Head of Prep), Beth Dawson (Head), Cheryl Giovannoni, and Chairman of Governors Dr Colin Laverick

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# Fundraising for bursaries has never been more important

The millions of people suffering in Ukraine due to war will not be the only ones to have their lives significantly impacted by Putin's actions. The consequences of economic sanctions on Russia will be felt by all of us in the UK, and they will be life-changing for some, says Juliet Corbett....

With the Office of Budget Responsibility predicting inflation could reach a forty-year high of 8.7% later this year, the Resolution Foundation is now forecasting that a further 1.3 million people, including 500,000 children, will fall into poverty next year. And that's after accounting for the additional support announced by Rishi Sunak in March's Spring Statement.

Given this backdrop, it is more important than ever that independent schools continue to invest in fundraising for means-tested bursaries and state school partnerships.

As the HMC/AGBIS/IPDE Bursaries and Partnerships Conference showed earlier in March, there is significant enthusiasm in the sector for this type of work, with best practices being showcased by schools across the country. We mustn't allow this positive momentum to falter during

the coming economic choppy waters.

So what can schools do now to ensure that they are able to rise to the challenges ahead? The answer lies in key ideas central to all professional educational fundraising: keep engaging prospects, communicate impact and focus your efforts.

## Keep engaging prospects

We saw during the Covid pandemic that many donors stepped up and gave generously to means-tested bursaries, motivated by the negative impact the crisis was having on some of the most disadvantaged children in our communities.

Concerns about contacting prospective donors at a time of national crisis were successfully overcome by fundraisers being alert to each individual's circumstances and tailoring their conversations accordingly. Of course, this is best

practice fundraising at all times, but its importance is heightened when cultivating relationships through times of crisis.

The same lessons can be applied today: Engage with your prospects, listen to their concerns about the future and, at the appropriate time, communicate your authentic belief in the positive role your bursaries or partnership projects will play as part of the solution.

While it may seem counter-intuitive, if you are feeling cautious about asking at a time like this, focus on conversations with major donors. They are less likely to be feeling the squeeze from the rising cost of living and in one-to-one conversations you have more flexibility to adapt your messages to how they are feeling about the future.

## Communicate impact

People give to people, so tell stories about the impact your bursaries and partnerships work has on real people. This might be quotations from former bursary recipients or case studies of successful state school partnerships. It might be communicated by video, an impact report or in conversation. Keep telling stories of impact every moment you can.

Storytelling has a particular impact in times of crisis – we crave to know how others are feeling. So if you can, communicate how the support you are giving is helping at this moment in history. For example, a quotation from the parent of a bursary pupil talking about their relief that their child is receiving a superb education and nutritious meals, despite the struggles at home to make ends meet month to month.

Sadly, it will become easier to

To explore other ways to prepare your school for the coming economic downturn, visit <https://www.consultjuliet.co.uk/checklist>



Juliet Corbett is a school strategist supporting leaders to both secure their independent school's future and help build a more equal and just world. She has an Economics degree from the University of Cambridge and was awarded the top prize on Durham University's MBA programme in 2018. She facilitates governor Away Days, offers online support to leadership teams in developing and implementing strategy and is host of the Independent School Podcast.

find these stories as the economic impact of this crisis unfolds for real people. Tell these stories to motivate donors and elevate the positive impact you can have through your bursary and partnership programmes.

## Focus your efforts

The key to maximising your impact is focussing your efforts on the areas where you are best placed to help. While it may be appropriate for some school communities to fundraise to provide bursaries for Ukrainian children, this may or may not be the best way for your school to help.

Evaluate the alternatives and then focus your efforts. This might mean fundraising for additional partnership projects with state schools that have recently enrolled refugee Ukrainian children or focussing on bursaries for local children who are now falling into poverty due to the cost of living crisis. You can't do everything, but by strategically focusing on the area where you can have the greatest impact, you can make a difference to some of the millions of people worldwide being affected by the war on Ukraine.



## Platinum Jubilee hedge

The children at Longacre School, Surrey, have planted over 150 saplings to form a special Platinum Jubilee hedge to commemorate the Queen's 70 year reign.

Every child across the whole school from Nursery to Year 6 was involved in planting the jubilee hedge. In small groups, the

children were shown how to plant each sapling by carefully holding the tree and filling in around the roots, then adding a 'walking stick' cane and wrapping it in its 'dressing gown' protective sleeve. A selection of blackthorn, hawthorn, hazel, wild cherry, rowan, oak and silver birch saplings were planted.

Pictured: Rear 2nd from left – Joey Hall-Palmer, teacher and head of the Community Service Club; rear 2nd from the right – Penny Macfarlane, teacher and head of the Green Team; Far right – Matthew Bryan, Headmaster

# How do you know when your school website needs updating?

Your website is the first place that prospective parents, donors and alumni will visit to get a feel for your school. Staying ahead of the curve with a first-class school website can be difficult to benchmark; aesthetics aren't the only criteria to consider, and creating efficiencies in small teams is paramount. Check these key points against your current platform to get a sense of how your website could be improved.

## 1. You can't link your website to your database

Your school website is the first point of contact for people, so it's important to be able to

track activity such as completing forms, reading news articles, and downloading resources, and share these insights with your internal stakeholders. Get to know your school community better by choosing a connected website and database, enabling you to automatically log admissions enquiries on database records, create links between family members, and track email opens, event attendance, and other important actions.

## 2. Your team is limited by your website

Especially in small teams, it's important that everyone can confidently make updates to the website. Choosing a content management system that allows you to publish, edit and share content, customise your website design and build new pages in

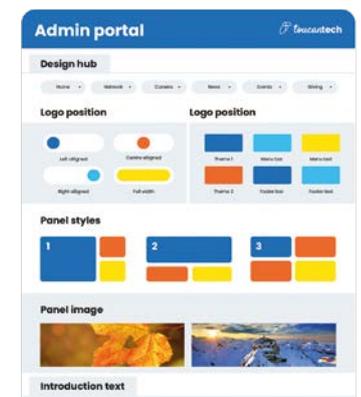
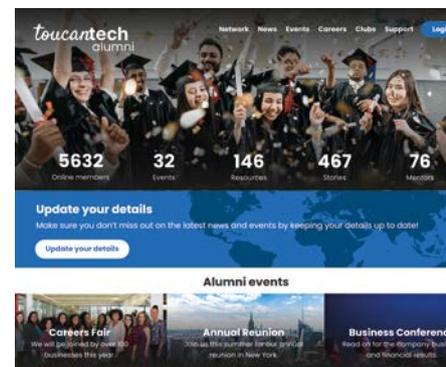
a click is key to saving valuable time and providing flexibility.

## 3. Your website isn't mobile-friendly

Busy parents and community members are choosing more and more often to view sites on their mobile; choose a mobile-responsive and flexible website to protect your Google ranking and engage your community on-the-go.

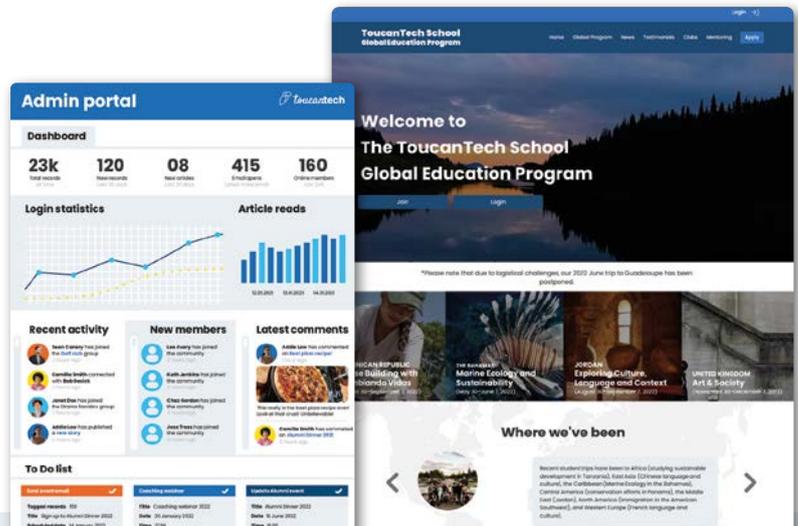
## Is it time to update your school website?

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**Andy Whittall**  
Development Director  
Tonbridge School



# Does your school canteen hold the hidden key to improved cost control?

By Ollie Brand, CEO at Zupa ([www.zupa.com](http://www.zupa.com))  
eProcurement technology for schools.

The way that independent schools responded to school closures amidst the pandemic was impressive to say the least. In particular, their overall response to adopting new technologies to implement robust remote learning programmes for pupils, demonstrated a desire to go the extra mile to deliver continuity of learning at a consistently high standard. This focus on digitisation placed independent schools in the spotlight, showcasing the reality of the differences of a private education and widening the landscape of prospective parents.

Yet, despite the growth in admissions and the climbing waiting lists that many independent schools have experienced over the last couple of years, this is no time for schools to rest on their laurels; few can deny the joint impact that rising costs and pressure on household incomes will have on school revenues in the future. With Brexit and now the conflict in Ukraine, inflation is at an all-time high and is projected to worsen in the coming months. With that in mind, it has become more essential than ever for schools to maintain absolute control of their spending.

Whilst schools may have reaped the benefits of pedagogical technology, one of the areas still largely underinvested in schools is technology solutions for back-office support, including catering management.

Do healthy meals lead to more productive learners? Interestingly, little is written about the role of food and nutrition in educational performance compared with pupil wellbeing or academic provision – even though they are all interlinked. A varied, high quality dining provision is certainly on the check list for prospective parents today. But the knock-on effect of the pandemic has brought with it a raft of challenges for school catering

teams, not only from a supply chain perspective, but also the obvious impact on the availability and rising cost of food. Staffing is the biggest cost for schools, followed by catering, so controlling food costs is pivotal to staying on budget.

## Navigating change

Catering provision in independent schools is a fixed cost. Bursars need visibility of any unforeseen problems or cost issues – that means having complete insight of spending data. Communication and price comparison is of course key to controlling costs and avoiding overspend, but supply chain fragility along with rising costs is proving to be a risk for schools exceeding budgets. This can mean they are often paying over and above for food items, which compounds the issue. Thankfully, Procurement technology is evolving today to support schools with their budgeting and to ensure they have wider access to the best prices and quality of goods. That means expanding the supplier network and the opportunity to negotiate with local suppliers on costs.

Food shortages, driven by consumer shopping trends, can also have a knock-on effect on school catering services. This was evident during the pandemic with the issue around flour supply due to an increase in consumer home baking – schools had to adapt recipes and menus to counter this. This is an area where fit for purpose technology can help; having the ability to adapt menus and recipes in line with current supply chain restrictions and food shortages, can be hugely helpful for schools in navigating changes quickly.

Managing costs is never straight forward for school catering, especially when you have multiple people within the team who could be ordering goods. Using an automated technology platform

with real time visibility of available stock, reduces room for error when new catering orders are placed. It is important for schools to have transparency over what food items they need rather than what they ‘think’ they need because this ‘guessing’ approach is likely to lead to overordering. Technology is also making it easier to set spending limits for individual staff and to raise alerts with managers and bursars if a member of the team is about to exceed a budget.

## Menu planning

Nutrition and allergy tracking is another area where schools are using technology to adapt to student dining requirements and lifestyle choices. From veganism and vegetarianism to dietary requirements, allergies and intolerances, schools have to be a step ahead of the game when managing what students are eating. This can of course be a minefield for catering teams and chefs. Product availability such as gluten free flour, for instance, has been a challenge previously, with a multitude of supply issues and where a substitute or regular flour just isn't possible. Products such as pastries and snacks that are suitable for a gluten free diet are improving all of the time though, and it is now possible to buy in a good range of these items from mainstream suppliers.

Most schools have a nut and sesame free policy to provide reassurance to pupils and parents, although many schools are aiming for allergen free menus in the future. Menu software can be very helpful in omitting specific or all allergens in recipes and this kind of technology will be key for the future in adapting menu planning.

With new labelling laws in force, many schools have been buying in pre-packed items that they used to make in-house such as



sandwiches, baguettes, yoghurt and fruit pots etc. to reduce the need to produce labels and to mitigate risk. Automatic labelling technology systems that print the allergens onto the label is a key defence tool and many systems allow you to link that to your menu publishing and recipe systems too.

## Reducing human error

Despite the challenges schools face around controlling costs, the good news is we are at a stage where technology can be transformative. Whether that is around supply chain communications, price comparison, internal team comms, recipe and menu planning, allergens management or staying on top of spending, delivering greater transparency across the catering department ensures that budget holders are more mindful of spend. Stock taking itself has always been a big time drain for catering teams and with human intervention it is rarely accurate but using technology to take control of inventory management and to ensure that any purchases made link directly with that system, removes the time drain on resources and reduces the risk of errors in the future.

The benefits of the technology revolution from a pedagogical perspective, as well as front to back-end school operations, can really deliver competitive advantage. From improved service and greater efficiencies, to better stock management, less wastage and nutrition and allergy tracking, school catering holds the key to improved cost control and service.



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# Life, liberty & the pursuit of a degree

The lure of world-leading American and Canadian universities means increasing numbers of students are applying to study across the pond. However, North America's more holistic university admissions process, compared with the UK, means British schools must provide personal and bespoke advice to support such ambitions.

Of course, the attraction of studying in the USA or Canada is clear, as Dena Deedat, Head of Sixth Form at Wetherby Senior School, London, explains: "Studying abroad is always appealing, providing an opportunity to enjoy a different culture and way of life first-hand. "In addition, the North American education system typically offers the chance to explore a wider range of subjects at undergraduate level before declaring your major. This can be particularly attractive to students who like studying a broader range of topics before specialising."

Dena has worked at Wetherby Senior since it opened in 2015. In just three years, the School's Sixth Form has received over thirty offers for its sixth formers to study in the USA. These include Georgetown, UCSD, Chicago, UCLA and a D1 Football Scholarship to the University of Akron. At the time of going to print, the School's 2022 applicants had already received offers from NYU, UPenn, Babson, Northeastern and Notre Dame.

Dena adds: "Applying to the USA or Canada can be incredibly complex, even before you consider that this process takes place alongside A Level studies, involvement in co-curricular activities, and submission of a UCAS application. At Wetherby Senior, we encourage the ambitions of our sixth formers with support from two US university advisors at our central London site."

One of these advisors is Dr Jason Smith, Director of UES Education, who are specialists in US college applications. He says: "The big difference between US and UK applications is that American universities care just as much about a student's character – including hobbies, volunteering and interests – as they do about the academics. This means advising young people on how to curate and promote their profile is a difficult but rewarding task."

Jason and his colleague, Martine Gagnon, provide one-to-one guidance to Wetherby Senior's boys on the North American application process, plus weekly

group sessions on preparing application essays. Since early preparation is essential, Wetherby Senior starts these weekly group sessions in Year 11.

Robert, currently in Wetherby Senior's Year 13, has been accepted to the University of Notre Dame to read Environmental Sciences and Sociology in 2022. He says: "During our weekly sessions, our advisor explained how we should approach writing our common application essay and supplemental essays for each university. I was also able to send our advisor my supplemental essays, before I submitted, to get further feedback."

Alongside this support, Wetherby Senior's Head of Sixth Form writes all counsellor references, in collaboration with the boys' form tutors. Dena notes: "Writing counsellor references is very enjoyable because it is a chance to show off the achievements of each pupil in a very personal way. Throughout their time in our Sixth Form, I look out for moments of kindness, responsibility and leadership, as well as academic success."



Staff at Wetherby Senior expect the number of North American applications to continue to rise, especially when current sixth formers hear from former peers now stateside. Wetherby Senior alumnus, Bennett, joined University of Notre Dame in 2020, and says: "Words couldn't explain my excitement before starting and college life hasn't disappointed. Every day, I feel so grateful to be here, it's home."

A final thought from Martine, Wetherby Senior's other US university advisor who also works at UES Education: "For motivated students, North American universities represent a life-changing experience, where what they do outside of lectures is just as fulfilling as what they do inside.

"With specialist advice and guidance, ambitious and talented sixth formers can look beyond the UK for higher education opportunities, thus adding a rewarding global perspective to their future studies."

Pictured: Mrs Dena Deedat, Head of Sixth Form at Wetherby Senior School [Dena.deedat@wetherbysenior.co.uk](mailto:Dena.deedat@wetherbysenior.co.uk) [www.wetherbysenior.co.uk](http://www.wetherbysenior.co.uk)



## Stonyhurst x LANX

Stonyhurst College, Lancashire, has collaborated with Ribble Valley based shoe brand and OS (Old Stonyhurst) business owner Marco Vaghetti from LANX, to create a limited-edition shoe steeped in Stonyhurst history and heritage.

Founded by Marco Vaghetti who left Stonyhurst in 2003, LANX shoes are high quality, British manufactured shoes which come in a variety of different styles, for

both men and women.

The link with Stonyhurst and LANX was born through the joint love for Lancashire heritage and strong British roots. Being a local, OS, business owner many of Marco's existing designs are named after places in the local area or influential people which have been meaningful to his upbringing and education, having strong links to Stonyhurst.

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# New initiative to combat waste

The pupils of Ballard School, Hampshire, have come up with an environmentally-friendly initiative called 'NewXOld' to upcycle toys, games, clothing, kitchenware and more to reduce waste caused by consumerism.

The inspiration for the 'NewXOld' project came from the 'Environmental and climate change' element of Business Studies GCSE, which has inspired pupils to start this initiative. They have enlisted the help of Mrs Jo Hatton, Head of Business Studies, and Mrs Suzie Prout, Tracking and Teaching Lead. The business curriculum involves learning how sustainable business works and sees pupils work alongside sustainable local businesses.

Through their learning of environmentalism in Business Studies and other subjects, pupils recognised the damaging impact that common materials in clothing and other everyday goods have on the environment and the species

in it. Ballard's pupils hope that this initiative will encourage upcycling and the reusing of pre-owned products.

Mrs Hatton said: "Environmentalism and climate change is an essential part of the curriculum as businesses play a big part in the fight against climate change. It's heart-warming to see the pupils so engaged with the subject and making a real difference through initiatives like 'NewXOld'."

The pupils were delighted to have received so many donations of toys, games, glassware, crockery, clothes, jewellery and vintage magazines and books. The items are then sold to others in the Ballard community. The pupils are using the sale to raise the funds needed to renovate/upscale/recycle other unwanted items, which they will then sell at trade fairs in the Summer Term.

The aim of Young Enterprise is for pupils to develop their own

business, and this year, rather than sell shares and have shareholders, they have decided to start their battle against consumerism at the very beginning of their YE journey.

Mr Andrew McCleave, Headmaster of Ballard School, said: "We are proud of our pupils for prioritising a better future for the world.

It's great to see that climate education in the curriculum is having such a positive impact on pupils. Encouraging the upcycling of unused products is a fantastic pupil-led idea, which I know will make a big difference in the long term."

As well as the NewXOld initiative, Ballard pupils have implemented further initiatives to reduce waste. As a part of their regular 'Climate Change Club', the Upper Prep pupils have also organised a 'Climate Change Clothes Swap' event, where the children organised the swapping items of donated clothing.



## Hunger walk

Upper Two at Ursuline Prep School, Essex, completed their Walk Against Hunger fundraising initiative with a walk to Warley Place.

During Lent the class raised funds for CAFOD and set themselves a challenge of walking 200km. Having trekked around the field several times over the last few weeks, it was thought that the final kilometres should be walked in some of the beautiful countryside which surrounds the school. The class thoroughly enjoyed their walk to and from the nature reserve and were fascinated by the ruins of Warley Place and the impact of the meadows full of daffodils.

# What does net-zero mean for my school?

I read in a recent article that lots of schools are now setting targets to become net-zero, often with the intent to be net-zero by 2024.

That sounds fantastic. However, if you're reading this and thinking 'Cripes!' (other expressions are available, but not in this outlet) 'I need to get my school sorted out or I'll get left behind', I would suggest there is no need to panic. Yes – get a plan drawn up. Yes – get targets set. But be pragmatic and make sure the targets are affordable, and commercially and technically achievable. 2024 is not realistic for most schools.

### How so?

Net-zero means that there are no greenhouse gas emissions arising from any aspect of the existence of the school, or – where there is an irreducible minimum remnant of emissions – their impact is being offset by negative emissions elsewhere. In practice this means there would be next to nil use of fossil fuels on the school estate and next to nil use of fossil

fuels for any activities relating to the broader operation of the school – in the supply chains, in staff commuting, from parents bringing children to school, from all school travel, etc. It would also mean that the school had identified an authentic means of offsetting the balance. The jury is currently out on what authentic offsetting means in practice; but there is mounting evidence to

suggest that many of the schemes on offer amount to little more than metaphorically tipping one's garden waste over the neighbour's fence, on a global scale.

In short, I think that schools setting such imminent targets for achieving net-zero possibly don't realise the scale of the challenge and may be in for a shock once the detail has been explored on



Nigel Aylwin-Foster  
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their respective estates. It comes back to a common theme: every school that intends to become net-zero needs to get a detailed decarbonisation plan drawn up, based on authentic, considered targets. That done, schools can then transition at a sensible pace, without breaking the back of the school.

Don't panic: make a plan.

# Is there really a mental health crisis in schools?

"Let's talk about mental health", is a familiar injunction with noble aims. It's about raising awareness, removing stigma and bringing the issue which affects so many, out of the shadows and into the light of common discourse. Over recent years this has proven to be a very productive and successful way of bringing support to those who need it.

The problem arises when the people who say "Let's talk about mental health" proceed to talk about mental illness instead. This often involves a deep dive into the issues of anxiety, stress, depression, eating disorders, self-harm and suicide.

When describing the children's emotional reactions to the day-to-day challenges of school life, teachers use words like fragile, overly sensitive, anxious, frail and other words which have the opposite meaning to the word 'resilient'.

These everyday emotions are in danger of being pathologized

and turned in to 'mental health issues'.

It's wrong-headed to say these reactions can be dismissed, somewhat insultingly, as the reactions of the 'snowflake generation' as some people are wont to. For so many teachers to be observing the same phenomena there is clearly something unhealthy going on but it's not a mental health crisis. Part of it can be explained by the absence of a resilient mindset.

So yes, let's talk about real mental health. For example; What does resilience look like? Why is it so important and how do we

go about getting it? Feeling anxious, embarrassed, excluded, disappointed, sad etc are all normal and rational responses to the slings and arrows of everyday life. It's not normal to feel happy. Let's not try to teach children to be happy but to be resilient. Happiness is a temporary state which comes along every now and then. It is to be savoured, enjoyed and appreciated but not strived for. Resilience is the underlying foundation which comes from having a purpose, direction and meaning in our lives. Using age-appropriate language and examples, this can and should

be taught from primary school onwards.

Most of the clues we get for maintaining good mental health come from our understanding of good physical health. A sedentary lifestyle is as harmful to our minds as it is to our bodies. We all need to be reminded on a regular basis of the fundamentals of what it means to be resilient in the twenty first century.

*Michael Burke trains practitioners in education, NHS, alcohol and drug services and is the founder of Embrace Resilience.*



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# Profile

In conversation with Andrea Greystoke

**Born:** 1946

**Married:**  
To Andrew Greystoke.  
6 children, whose names all  
begin with the letter A!

**Schools and University  
Attended:**  
Harvard University,  
the University of California,  
Berkeley, and King's College,  
London

**First job:**  
St. Paul's School (1969)

**First job in education:**  
St. Paul's School (1969)

**Appointed to current job:**  
1987

**Favourite piece of music:**  
Classical

**Favourite food:**  
Fresh Fruit

**Favourite drink:**  
Diet Coke

**Favourite holiday  
destination:**  
Peru

**Favourite leisure pastime:**  
Reading

**Q** Early in your career you were a Maths teacher in London, becoming the first ever female teacher at Kings College School and at St. Paul's School. Did you feel you were a trailblazer for women at the time? What, with hindsight, was the greatest challenge you faced upon entering such male-dominated preserves?

**A** *When I was fortunate enough to be offered a role teaching mathematics at St. Paul's School for Boys in London after my studies, I remember thinking it was a brave step for both myself and the school. I was their first female teacher in the school's more than 500 years of existence and was hired to teach the A-Level students and those staying on post A-Level to take the Oxbridge Entrance Exams, who were scarcely younger than myself. The school at that time was not well equipped to deal with females, and there was only one women's lavatory. I remember one time when we were expecting a royal visitor to open the new music wing, the women's facility had been repainted a few days before in anticipation, and no one (including me!) was allowed to use it until the visit had concluded. Fortunately, there was a restaurant down the road, but it was a difficult few days!*

*It's now with hindsight that I realise how important this step was in helping to break down barriers, and in shaping Abercorn, where we focus on offering a balanced and equal education for all children.*

**Q** After devoting a number of years to bringing up your six children while finding the time to offer individual maths tutoring, you founded Abercorn School. What motivated you to do so?

**A** *I grew up surrounded by teachers - my father, an uncle, and eventually my older brother were all teachers, so teaching always felt like a natural path.*

*There has been speculation that I started a school purely for my own six children! This is not true, although my two youngest children did spend some time as pupils at Abercorn.*

*I saw a need in the area for a school that offered quality well rounded and individualised education, rather than just an examination factory.*

*My belief is that if we do this well, the examination results will follow. It is important to me that we provide pupils with a varied educational experience that enables them to take their places happily in an increasingly global world.*

**Q** In those early days with just 45 pupils, it must have been tough to balance the books. How did you cope with the money pressures alongside your teaching and leadership roles? Did you draw on your previous experience as an analyst in a London stockbroker for financial know-how? Should independent school heads have formal financial training to avoid the problems of sudden closures leaving pupils high and dry?

**A** *We were fortunate to have the support of the bank when Abercorn was founded. Drawing on my previous experience as an analyst certainly helped navigate financial situations. I believe all school heads should have some form of financial training, and certainly be numerate and not scared of spreadsheets!*

**Q** Abercorn now has nearly 300 pupils between the ages of 2 and 13 across three sites. The number of 18-year-olds is expected to rise sharply in the UK in the next decade or so, offering opportunities for ambitious schools to expand. You recently announced just such a plan - what have you in mind?

**A** *At Abercorn School, we recently announced our expansion and the acquisition of additional new school premises, (our first to accommodate 11-18-year-olds) to meet this oncoming demographic shift in Britain.*

*The new premises are situated in Marylebone, within walking distance of the other Abercorn locations. They are distinguished as an*

# Andrea Greystoke founded Abercorn School, London, in 1987. She is also Founder & President of the British International School of New York.



*'Abercorn building' by a spectacular façade, high-ceilings and an abundance of light, with bright spacious classrooms. There is ample space for dedicated classrooms with a purpose-built state-of-the-art theatre and access to outdoor space at nearby Paddington Gardens.*

*The new premises will open for the academic year starting September 2022, when Abercorn will be one of the few schools in the UK to take and nurture pupils through the complete educational journey from the ages of 2 until 18.*

**Q** Nearly 20 years after founding Abercorn you founded the British International School of New York. Founding and running one school might be considered a substantial workload and responsibility - running two separated by the Atlantic Ocean must have been something again. Were you - are you now - a workaholic? What do you do to relax?

**A** *Many would probably classify me as a workaholic, but in my down time, I like to read, listen to music, talk to my family and stroke my cats!*

**Q** You are uniquely placed to reflect on the respective merits of the US and UK education systems. If you had the opportunity to export one aspect from the US to the UK, and vice versa, what would it be?

**A** *If I could export one aspect from the UK to the US education system, I would encourage US schools and teachers to listen more to what children are ready to learn rather than what they think children should learn. Learning should suit the pupil... and visa versa, I would encourage UK schools and teachers to help build more confidence in pupils from an early age.*

**Q** Your own school-years education was in the USA. With the benefit of hindsight, and with your later

experience of the UK schools, do you feel that technology has benefited or detracted from basic teaching and learning skills?

**A** *The advent of technology has undoubtedly propelled education forward all around the world. The benefits of technology in education were particularly felt during the pandemic, as those with access were able to continue to receive an education during periods of school closures. At Abercorn, we quickly and successfully adapted to online learning throughout the pandemic to ensure a quality learning experience for our pupils during periods of school closures. However, I am a firm believer that classroom-based learning provides the best environment for children's personal development and wellbeing, with a blend of technology where appropriate.*

**Q** Do you still teach? If not, how do you keep in touch with the sharp-end?

**A** *I do not teach anymore, but remain heavily involved in the running of Abercorn. Listening to feedback from parents, teachers and children, as well as keeping up to date with the wider education news and trends have been vitally important to Abercorn's evolution and continued success, both academically and pastorally over the years.*

**Q** Covid has disturbed normal school life across the globe. Loss of classroom time is tough to make up, educationally and socially. What has been your approach to minimising such impact?

**A** *There's no doubt that the pandemic has had a detrimental impact on many children all around the world.*

*At Abercorn, we place a great emphasis on the wellbeing and happiness of our pupils and offer many activities to help*

*support children who may be struggling. All our pupils participate in weekly yoga classes from ages two and above, which has a positive impact on their wellbeing, both mentally and physically. We also encourage meditation as a way for children to cope with any worries and stresses in their lives, and have also seen success from mindfulness and team building activities.*

*In my experience, academic success and the willingness to learn at Abercorn go hand in hand with personal wellbeing and the enjoyment of schooling. Learning in a structured, supportive, safe and, above all, enjoyable schooling environment is essential to help nurture happy, successful individuals who are well prepared for the real world.*

*Since onsite learning has resumed, I have seen a noticeable, positive impact on many students at Abercorn, both mentally and physically. For example, before lockdown, we had one young lady join us in London from abroad, who faced the uncertainties and challenges of moving to a foreign country. She in particular has benefitted enormously from our resuming in-school activities, and is now a happier, more confident and capable individual.*

**Q** "The global nature of the school community and the pastoral care of pupils are outstanding." The verdict from the Independent Schools Inspectorate which must have pleased you greatly. What has given you the greatest satisfaction over your 35 years of school leadership?

**A** *Seeing our leavers move onto the next phase of their schooling journey with so much happiness is one of my greatest satisfactions.*

*I will never forget a phone call I received out of the blue from a former Abercorn pupil, who called to say thank you. Abercorn had given his family considerable financial assistance, and he had just qualified as a surgical registrar.*

## Are you logging music usage correctly?

Every Copy Counts is a new campaign launched by Printed Music Licensing Limited (PMLL) to help musicians recoup royalties that are rightfully theirs from schools that are using their music.

The importance of high-quality music education is embraced by independent schools across the country; and the provision and value given to this creative subject is often one of the key factors attracting parents to a private education for their children. Parents rightfully embrace the capacity music has to enrich lives, as well as the advanced development of children's imagination and intellectual abilities that the discipline provides.

Independent schools are extremely adept at nurturing natural talent, with many children from the sector following their passion for music and building rewarding careers within the music industry long after they have left education.

However, the past two years have been incredibly difficult for the creative industries, including musicians, a third of whom report they may have to leave the industry due to financial hardship. But music teachers can help!

The campaign Every Copy Counts helps musicians recoup royalties that are rightfully theirs from schools that are using their music.

Independent schools that access musical resources are currently required to purchase The School Printed Music Licence from the PMLL, enabling them to copy, arrange and perform original music freely and to have constant access to a wide range of repertoire from composers and songwriters. To comply with the licence, teachers need to report what they are copying and arranging annually to allow the PMLL to distribute royalties to the appropriate music publishers, and in turn the musicians who created that music.

However, it has been identified that only two per cent of schools in the UK are correctly logging the music they use within school, creating a huge data deficit that has significant financial implications for music creators and the wider industry.

Abigail D'Amore is a music education consultant and is leading the 'Every Copy Counts' campaign; she said, "Unfortunately, due to a lack of awareness and misunderstanding of what the licence allows schools to do and, perhaps most significantly, the lack of time that busy teachers have, this important data just isn't being captured.

"PMLL has launched The Every Copy Counts campaign, a new initiative that will make it easier for teachers to copy and arrange music, whilst also ensuring that creators and musicians get paid. We have one clear aim – to raise awareness of the requirement to log music on the database and to encourage teachers to do so. As a 'thank you' for teachers a range of incentives have been put in place to encourage staff to take part, as well as the feel-good factor that comes with contributing to a fairer financial process for musicians."

Dr Lisa Hardy, temporary director of music at Durham High School, took part in a pilot scheme with Every Copy Counts and highlighted how music is an essential part of a holistic education and the development of well-being. However, like most schools, up until now she had not been logging music usage.

Dr Hardy said, "We were not registering our sheet music in the database prior to the scheme because we just weren't aware that we should be.

"Since joining the pilot scheme we have started to record our music in a spreadsheet and then upload the information onto the website. This has proved very easy to do and, once I uploaded the data, I had access to a wealth of useful teaching resources.

"I would encourage all teachers who are not currently logging their music to do so. It is not an onerous job, and it will ensure that composers receive the royalties that they are due.

"Participating in the Every Copy Counts campaign has had the added bonus of allowing me to network with other music teachers around the country as well as tapping into the inspiring resources on offer."

To make it quicker and easier for teachers, PMLL has created a new online portal to make logging music simple and straightforward. It provides a suite of free learning materials that are unlocked once music usage data has been entered and which can be accessed at any time. These include:

- multimedia editable power points with lesson ideas for composing and songwriting, created by teachers for teachers;
- guides on copyright and careers;
- a mixed ensemble arrangement to use with student bands and ensembles;
- an exclusive webinar series with industry experts; and
- access to online teacher networking sessions to share practice and ideas.

"The Every Copy Counts team is a group of committed music educators who understand and believe in music teachers and really want to help," Abigail concluded.



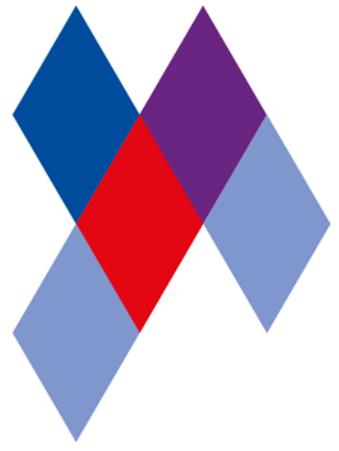
Abigail D'Amore

### If you're copying or arranging printed music in your school, simply:

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Email [spml@cefm.co.uk](mailto:spml@cefm.co.uk)
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3. Submit your sheet music usage data at a convenient time for you. You will need a record of: Composer/Arranger; Title of work; Title of book; Music Publisher; Print Publisher; Website (if a digital download)
4. Unlock your free resources and access the various offers from Every Copy Counts

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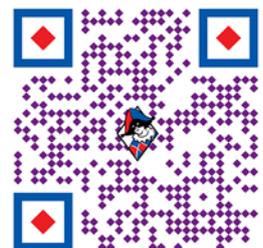
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## Charity Single

Musicians from The King's School, Worcester have released their own charity single to raise funds as quickly as possible for those in need in Ukraine.

Pupils and staff at The King's School, Worcester have been actively fundraising to provide essential funds for those in Ukraine via Save the Children UK and the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC). Following a raft of fundraising efforts, the School released a single across major streaming platforms including iTunes, Amazon, Apple Music and Spotify. The single, performed by The King's Worcester Chamber Choir, is the Ukraine song called Shchedryk; written in 1916 by Ukrainian composer Mykola Leontovych.

The single is the first of its kind to be released from King's and pupils and staff are aiming to continue to raise as much money as possible, with all proceeds from the release going towards helping those in need in Ukraine.

Director of Music, Simon Taranczuk said, "By releasing this single pupils wanted to do something that sends a message of hope, love and goodwill from our community to all those in Ukraine. We hope the single spreads far and wide and we are grateful to all for their support in listening to and sharing the single."

So far they have raised £6,500 to support their chosen charity, Save the Children (via the DEC). The charity days organised by the pupils saw everyone across the Foundation wear yellow and blue, run popular cake sales, make flags and raise money via concerts and events. Some Sixth Formers also donated their salaries from their part-time jobs to support the fundraising efforts.

The single is available to download from all major streaming platforms including iTunes, Amazon Music, Apple Music and Spotify. All proceeds from the downloads will be passed directly to the DEC Ukraine fundraising effort.



## Celebration Concert

St Benedict's School, London, students, alumni, staff and professional soloists gave a concert to mark the School's 120th Anniversary in Ealing Abbey.

In the opening words of St Benedict's Director of Music, Chris Eastwood, the evening was "a wonderful celebration of music, faith, hope and joy", as musicians from the age of 11 upwards came together to perform three major works.

The concert opened with Haydn's Symphony No. 104, and the St Benedict's orchestra beautifully conveyed the mixture of drama, lyricism, dramatic fury and exuberance of the composer's final symphony.

Next came a new commission by alumnus and composer Samuel D. Loveless, who is in his final year of a Masters in Composition at the Royal College of Music. "Soul" is a work that looks at the essence of what it means to be part of the St Benedict's community", said Samuel - "a celebration of people, friendship and family, and what we can achieve together."

Samuel's musical career began as a chorister at Ealing Abbey and St Benedict's current Director of Music, Chris Eastwood, taught him A Level Music. 'Soul' is written for choir, chamber orchestra and organ, and musical influences in the piece include plainsong, choral music spanning 600 years and the harmonies and rhythms of African music.

Finally, the St Benedict's Consort Choir and Orchestra returned to the music of Haydn, with a wonderful, uplifting performance of his Nelson Mass. They were joined by four professional soloists, soprano Iúnó Connolly, mezzo-soprano Rebecca Stockland, tenor Tom Cragg and baritone Theo Parry.

The Headmaster of St Benedict's, Andrew Johnson, said: "This was the most wonderful concert for the School's 120th anniversary, with amazing performances by our talented musicians, superbly led by Chris Eastwood. It was made even more special by the premiere of 'Soul', an intriguing, beautiful piece which was perfect for the occasion."



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## Starring in TV show

Bishop's Stortford College Lower Sixth student, Nana Agyeman-Bediako, starred in a new TV series, Theodosia, airing on HBO Max.

Nana, who has been acting since the age of 5, plays the role of Will Morgan, a charming street magician whose world takes an exciting turn when his chance encounter with main character, Theodosia, eventually leads him into a world of ancient evil Egyptian magic which he, Theodosia and others must save.

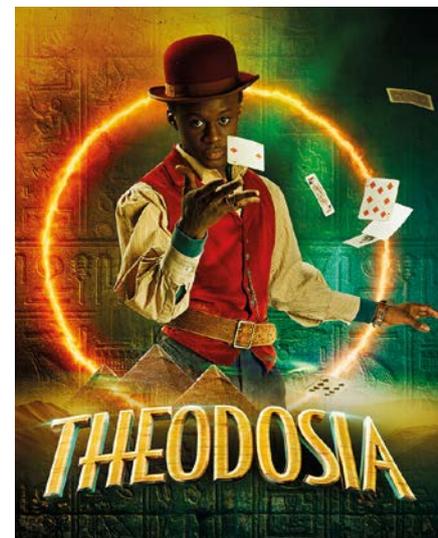
Nana's acting career began from

his mum witnessing him imitating performers on television. Wanting to utilise this passion, Nana was enrolled in 'Stagecoach', a Saturday performance school, and thrived whilst learning acting, singing and dancing. From there, Nana was picked up by his current agency and started with modelling and TV adverts until he landed his first acting role in Channel 4's Top Boy in 2011.

Since then, Nana has performed in various West End musicals including The Lion King, Kinky Boots and Motown the Musical,

had guest roles in several TV series such as BBC One's River and Casualty in 2015 and Channel 4's The State in 2017, as well as starring in the film The Huntsman: Winter's War and Come Away.

To date, the Theodosia TV series, based on the bestselling books by Robin L. Lafevers, is not only Nana's biggest TV series role but also his biggest project so far. The filming spanned across 7 months and was based predominantly in Brussels, Belgium with a few scenes also shot in France.





## Jekyll and Hyde - new production

A cast of 15, supported by an assistant director and seven technicians, all from the Fifth and Sixth Forms at Dauntsey's School, Wiltshire, have staged a daring new production of 'Jekyll & Hyde'.

Elise Chambers, Head of Speech and Drama, adapted the script from Robert Louis Stevenson's legendary Gothic novella, 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde'.

Elise commented: "Each year as a department we look to provide pupils with variety, producing a range of productions differing in style and genre. 'Jekyll & Hyde'

certainly provided a contrast to our December musical, 'Legally Blonde', and offered challenges from both an acting and design perspective.

"I was lucky to work with an extremely hard-working cast, who were certainly excited by the task of developing the tension and atmosphere required of a Gothic Victorian production. The language and plotline was challenging, yet the cast worked hard to understand the content of the piece fully in order to make the narrative clear for the audience."

## Wonderful Wizard of Oz!

The Royal School, Surrey, Drama department performed a spring production of 'The Wizard of Oz'!

After two years of outdoor cabaret filmed performances and Covid

related false starts it was a pleasure to hear the hum of excitement fill the theatre as pupils from Year 7 to Upper Sixth (and a live dog!) took to the stage.

The production combined live action and footage that had been pre-recorded in the school's brand new TV studio, perfectly edited and seamlessly blended into the production. The show even got a shout out from Jo Whiley on BBC Radio 2!

Mr Ed Taylor-Gooby, Head of Drama, said, "The talent on display was outstanding and our inclusive approach that still maintains professional standards continues to give our pupils and audiences an outstanding theatrical experience!"



## Music festival success

Ellesmere College and former Ellesmere College pupils turned in solid performances at the Oswestry Youth Music Festival - competing in 34 of the 74 classes, winning 19 and achieving 59 out of 84 first, second and third places.

Student's performances included the first rap in the festival's history and a winner of the Oswestry Town Council Cup, with a performance of The Green Eyed Dragon.

Ellesmere College Director of Music Tony Coupe said: "Ellesmere has performed outstandingly well at this year's Oswestry Youth Music Festival, achieving a very high level of results for individual level as well as unforgettable performances from our ensembles.

"In the final I was very proud that six of the 14 finalists were from



Ellesmere. We achieved a fantastic set of results from a very strong field and I am proud of each and every one of our participants.

"It has been a delight to hear live music once again and my thanks go to Sue Turner and the stewards for organising the Festival.

The college traditionally performs particularly well in Vocal classes and this year won the 12&U, 15&U and 18&U classes as well as the 16&U, and 21&U Youth Choir classes with the Lower School Choir and Chapel Choir.



## Extravaganza performance

Over 250 children from 14 schools around the region turned out for an afternoon of workshops and rehearsals at Wellington School, Somerset, before performing a dazzling array of Junior Showstoppers to a thrilled audience of around 1,000.

Pupils came for rehearsals and a sing-off to find star soloists for the performance. In the evening, hundreds of parents, grandparent, friends and relatives poured into the packed Sports Hall to hear the most phenomenal concert, complete with a professional band and two conductors.

"All the pupils had learned the songs in their schools with the help of their music teachers, and they came into school for workshops earlier in the term. When they finally came together on Friday, the sound was electrifying – such an exciting moment," commented Ros Shaw, from Wellington School, who masterminded the whole event. Songs included Electricity from Billy Elliot, Consider Yourself from Oliver, Little People from Les Miserables and a resounding rendition of Can you Feel the Love Tonight from The Lion King!

# The nuance of language and its impact on the young

In our fast-paced, digitally driven world, how we consume language today is changing too. It's becoming increasingly difficult to sit quietly with a good book. Even the pre-digital generation who had pleasure of retaining focus and attention for long periods of time, are now struggling to be still and concentrate. *Why? Asks Pippa Sutcliffe, Assistant Head of Academic at Windlesham House School, Sussex...*

In the beginning, human survival was simply a matter of life or death. Our prehistoric ancestors had to make quick survival decisions. The situation was very much 'fight or flight'. Likewise, when humans are first born the world is a buzz of confusion all at once. To make sense of the magnitude of information, we break this down into bite size pieces to allow our brains and bodies to cope as we navigate our way through life. The intricacies and confusions of everyday situations can be overwhelming and human beings crave simple frameworks to thrive. However, language as a concept is not so black and white. There is not one word for one feeling, opinion or perspective. In language there are multiple shades of grey which are essential for precision and subtlety, particularly in light of periods like those we have faced in the last couple of years.

## No middle ground

The truth is the subtle nuance of language is waning and we need to resist it. Many people seem to speak to others as if they are haranguing them on a street corner. You either agree or disagree – there is suddenly no middle ground, no sitting on the fence. Perhaps those shades of grey (in between) are perceived as a sign of weakness or simply a waste of time?

Most of us spend too much time on social media. People with differing opinions to others are seen as 'bad' or negative. As a society we seem to be cultivating a demanding, cut and dry

attention span. Yet our world has become more complex than it was a century ago. So why is there such disparity today and how will this impact our younger generations?

The media often assumes our attention spans are shorter than they once were. People feel they have to keep up with these short exchanges, therefore their attention span reduces. Attention spans are marketable, valuable and as a result of this indoctrination, they are becoming increasingly shorter.

The reality is of course more complex but as schools, we need to consider the effect this will have on children and their learning outcomes. We have brains that are designed to simplify reality, inherited from our ancestors. Our brains are becoming less sophisticated day by day and at a time when we need them to be analytical, innovative and inquisitive. Schools need to be equipping young people with the tools and the mindset for the future jobs that will arise in the 21st century.

## Blurred lines

Reading physical books is declining as digital technology rises and grows, and time, or lack of it, is a deciding factor here. We spend more time skimming words on screens than delving deeper. People use informal, less sophisticated vocabulary both in the written and spoken word, and they edit less. The printed words on a page are no longer adored nor are they lasting. We are grammatically less accurate,

we make more mistakes which impacts on our life, development, and ever-changing language.

The question is, how will the language our children use develop in the future? Will it regress? How do we ensure children use an accurate range of vocabulary, punctuation and sentence structures when they are communicating with each other through text messages, emojis, snaps and likes? The objective of communication in today's world is to be clear, quick and reactive. This contradicts what we are trying to teach pupils in English lessons and also in our RSHE lessons.

To recognise detail and nuance is a skill you learn as you mature. As we teach children in terms of diversity and inclusion, recognising even small differences is very important. After all, every child is unique. Shades of meaning and tones of voice do matter. They help us to communicate more effectively, efficiently and maturely. But if children are being brought up in a culture that doesn't value a range of shades, we need to look at how we can we address this in the classroom.

## Focusing on detail

If children are the product of this reduction in language, which is has evolved to become a more silenced, abbreviated state, then we need to educate them with the beauty and delicacy of language and words. Schools must encourage children to study the grains of language and abandon the inflammatory use of the



acronym. Focusing on detail and small differences is key.

The targets and criteria upon which we measure success in education, should be focused on detail. This means increasing the words in the dictionary and developing language. We should be looking to create many words in place of just one. When you use unfamiliar new words you engage with a new aspect of reality, you conceptualise it in a different way and open a new window into a new world of new concepts.

As a teacher, I hope to take the pupils that I teach to a place they have not been before. Education should be about new adventures and continuous exploration. A place that is full of multiple colours and shades. A place where children can flourish with ideas, thoughts and opinions. Language affords us that opportunity.

The road ahead is a challenge indeed. It will require thought, planning and integrated changes that are subtle enough but pertinent enough to create change in the long term. Schools have an important role to play in developing children's observations and ability to see the detail. This must be a curriculum-wide approach, one that is embraced by all schools, teachers and parents. The message has to be universal – to slow down, observe subtle changes, reflect, discuss and listen.



## Bursary campaign in memory of teacher



Pocklington School, Yorkshire, is inviting donations to the 'Shape the future' bursary campaign in memory of former pupil and teacher, Malcolm Milne.

Malcolm, or 'Mally' as he was affectionately known, was a pupil at Pocklington School from 1955 until 1962, returning in 1971 to teach geography. During his 32-year career as a teacher, tutor, housemaster and sports coach at the School, Malcolm earned pupils' respect through his empathetic nature and his love of sport, nurturing them with his unflinching encouragement and compassion.

Malcolm was also the Secretary to the Old Pocklingtonian Association (Pocklington School's former pupil society) for more than 30 years, organised the annual Pixies' cricket tour to Sussex for 50 years from the mid-60s, and in 1987 initiated the still popular staff golf day.

Malcolm's lifelong love of sport, people and the School did not relent even after his retirement from teaching in 2003, as he regularly helped out with School and Old Pocklingtonian events, coached and umpired cricket and was a regular on the School's rugby touchline.

Malcolm was passionate about helping to make Pocklington School more accessible to as many deserving students as possible, regardless of their background, and played a key role in the planning of the School's 'Shape the Future' campaign.

The Shape the Future fundraising campaign is currently being rolled out to the Pocklington School community with information also available on its website at [www.pocklingtonschool.com/shapethefuture](http://www.pocklingtonschool.com/shapethefuture)

## Bonus for winning students

Students from a Birmingham school got an insight into one of the region's biggest businesses when they visited its Warwickshire headquarters.

Members of the winning King Edward's School (KES) quiz team from the Lord Mayor's Mega Quiz, plus boys from one of the school's other quiz teams, were welcomed to Pertemps, in Meriden, and given a guided tour by Lifetime President Tim Watts and CEO Steve West.

They were also presented with a £10,000 prize, a bonus from the firm to the school for winning the annual schools' competition three years in a row, taking the total number of KES victories to five in

nine years. The quiz is entered by around 50 city institutions annually.

The Lord Mayor's Mega Quiz, which is for sixth formers, is organised annually by the Lord Mayor of Birmingham's Charity, of which Pertemps is a supporter, with entry proceeds going to support a range of local charities.

Dr Katy Ricks, Chief Master of King Edward's School, said: "We were delighted that a team of KES boys achieved a hat trick in the Lord Mayor's Sixth Form Mega Quiz, and are grateful for the generous prize and warm welcome to Meriden Hall brought about through Pertemps' sponsorship of the quiz."

Pictured: Joel Abbott, KES Chemistry Teacher and Quiz Coach, Andreas Ktori, Harry Rachman, Steve West, Pertemps Network Group Chief Executive Officer, James Corcoran, Ben Wharton, Will Thomas, and Graham Watson, KES Director of Outreach and Academic Operations

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# Science Wing officially opened

The top floor of The John Shaw Science Wing has officially opened at The High School of Glasgow Senior School in Anniesland following a £1.5million donation from former pupil John Shaw, the largest single donation the School has ever been gifted.

After leaving the High School in 1966, John Shaw studied at the University of Glasgow before joining Coats, a Paisley-based textile firm, in management and financial roles across the world. In 1998, he married his wife Kiran and joined her business, the Bangalore-based, biotech giant Biocon. This billion-dollar biopharmaceutical company's mission is to change patients' lives in over 120 countries by finding new and affordable ways to treat diabetes, cancer and autoimmune diseases.

John and Kiran's philanthropic efforts are well-documented, including a \$7.5million donation given to the University of

Glasgow in 2019. It was recently announced the University's Advanced Research Centre will be named after the couple.

Thanks to the donation from John and Kiran, the High School has converted the top floor of the Science Wing to create a new base for its Geography and Modern Studies department. Four bright and modern classrooms enjoy views across the Old Anniesland playing fields and out to the Campsie Fells in the distance.

What is particularly special about the top floor is the creation of a making and doing area. This description is reflective of the desire for this to be a space that pupils make their own. Whether

they want to come together to design Formula 1 racing cars; discuss hypotheses for experiments they are carrying out in Biology or Chemistry; or immerse themselves in learning through virtual reality, the top floor provides pupils with a flexible space in which to do so outside the confines of a normal classroom.

Kenneth Robertson, Head of Senior School at The High School of Glasgow (pictured), said: "The top floor of The John Shaw Science Wing allows us to have a place within the Senior School that moves away from the traditional education system in favour of a more entrepreneurial area. By giving pupils a space



to discuss, design and dream together, they get out of their comfort zones and learn to adopt a growth mindset. This is a critical skill to hone, helping to bridge the gap to Higher Education and the working world.

"In addition, it also provides a new location to host members of the School community, be that parents, prospective parents or former pupils.

"John and Kiran's donation is truly remarkable and we are so grateful to them for their tremendous generosity which has so richly enhanced the educational experience and opportunities for our pupils of both today and tomorrow. The naming of the building reflects the huge contribution made to the High School from one of our former pupils, the largest single donation we have ever received."

Commenting, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, said: "My husband John Shaw and I are delighted to see our gift being put to such excellent use by his school for the augmentation of scientific knowledge of young minds."

The top floor of The John Shaw Science Wing is still being finalised, with eye catching wall art being installed across the Easter holidays and furniture for the flexible making and doing space to follow.

John O'Neill, Rector of The High School of Glasgow, added: "This incredible donation from John Shaw has provided a strong foundation on which to build as we look ahead to the 900th anniversary."



# Three tips for planning your estate improvements

Investing in Design

Over 90% of teachers<sup>1</sup> believe well-built and designed schools improve educational outcomes and pupil behaviour, and they're right. Good design is proven to increase staff productivity, and has a significant and positive impact on pupil engagement, wellbeing, and attainment<sup>2</sup>.

Yet the historic buildings and grounds of many independent schools, magnificent as they are, were not designed with today's educational needs in mind. Schools are under increasing pressure to modernise, optimise, and decarbonise, in order to attract and retain pupils and staff. Knowing where and how to start can feel like a daunting task.

Luckily, there are simple strategies for getting more from your existing facilities, even on a modest budget. Here are three principles we

have found to be helpful in starting off estate improvements projects on a strong footing:

- **Be clear about target outcomes, not just outputs.** A visionary estates plan should focus on the intended impact of works, not just what will be done to get there. For example improving student safety is a goal that could be supported by a variety of design solutions, some architectural, others not. If you're just thinking about new fencing around the car park, you might be missing other opportunities for low cost, high-impact improvements that will support your goals.
- **Assess your assets.** How do your current facilities serve your educational objectives? Which spaces are working, which are not? Rather than limiting your focus to problem

areas, a powerful exercise can be to list aspects of your school's culture, identity and ethos that are points of pride, and consider ideas for how these could be further reinforced and championed in new designs.

- **Don't be afraid to ask for professional help early.** Architects are well placed to help you develop your brief, by advising on budgets, timeframes, and practicalities, and most are willing to provide up front consultation for free to help you get going. The biggest mistake we see is schools underestimating how long planning and procurement processes take, and reaching out too late. It costs nothing to pick up the phone early, and might save you from headaches in the long run.

Chris Kennedy is a director at Kennedy Woods, an architecture firm that has transformed dozens of historic buildings into Ofsted-Outstanding schools. Call or write for a free design workshop: 020 7993 8205 / [hello@kennedywoods.co.uk](mailto:hello@kennedywoods.co.uk)

Sources:

1 "Better Spaces for Learning" RIBA report on school design

2 "Clever Classrooms Report", Salford University ('The impact of classroom design on pupils' learning: Final results of a holistic, multi-level analysis')

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## Sport needs to be an intrinsic part of school life 'to prevent girls from losing interest'

A report by the charity Women in Sport, carried out ahead of International Women's Day, found that more than one million teenage girls who once considered themselves 'sporty', lose interest after primary school. A fear of feeling judged by others, lack of confidence, pressures of schoolwork and not feeling safe outside were some of the reasons given for not wanting to participate for this group of girls.

Chey Hooper-West, Assistant Director of Sport at Malvern College in Worcestershire (pictured) said the trend could only be reversed if sport was seen as a vital part of school life, and if teachers harnessed a positive environment.

"For far too long, sport and physical activity has been seen as a distraction from schoolwork and academia," said Chey.

"Frankly, the opposite is true. There is countless research out there that backs up the age-old belief of 'healthy body, healthy mind'. Just last year, this was backed up by research from the World Health

Organization, Europe, which found that increasing the amount of physical activity can have a positive impact not only on children's health and well-being, but also on their performance in the classroom.

"With so many girls stating that the pressure of schoolwork is a reason for losing interest in sport, it is vital that educators recognise its benefits and give it just as much priority as languages, sciences and other areas of academia."

Women in Sport surveyed 4,000 teenage girls and boys as part of its research work 'Reframing Sport for Teenage Girls', funded by Sport

England. It found 43% of teenage girls who once actively engaged with and enjoyed sport were being side-lined in their teenage years and made to feel not good enough.

Chey said: "It is important that, at an early age, you instil a love of what they do. If you're offering young people a range of options that relate to sport and physical activity it is easier for someone to find something they enjoy and stick with. You also need to create an atmosphere that is positive and encouraging. If you get this right, it will aid the transition from primary school to secondary school and, hopefully, to life beyond education."



The school encourages its own pupils to play at least two sports - even if the pupils are on a sporting scholarship.

Chey says: "If you're on a named hockey scholarship, for example, this can sometimes feel like it comes with a lot of expectation and there is the danger that you start to feel like it's your job. But if you then play another sport you can just have fun with it. Sport can be such a power for good, so we need to keep it as good as it can be so our pupils can enjoy it.

"Anything is better when you are enjoying it."

## Footballers qualify for two National Finals

The Downsend School, Surrey, U11 football team has made history by qualifying for not one, but two National finals in the same week.

The team competed at Trinity School in the IAPS U11 Football Tournament, defeating 8 teams to become the Regional winners, which saw them progress to the National Finals last term at Millfield Prep School. Commended for their stoic play without a recognised goalkeeper, the boys took turns to play in goal, playing with an additional outfield player while the goalie used only their feet, keeping the ball on the floor and playing out from the back. A stunning display of quality football from every member of the team.

Not content with one win, the

team then went on to compete in the ISFA U11 Sevens Hampshire Tournament the very next day. A demonstration of confident, free-flowing football, the boys continued their impressive form throughout the group stage, topping the group unbeaten. The quarter-final against Walhampton led to an impressive win, and was shortly followed by a victory in the semi-final against Twyford on penalties. In the final, Downsend retained their composure and took a fantastic win against Churcher's College.

The final will take place next month (May) at the National Football Centre at St George's Park.

Ian Thorpe, Headmaster said: "It is a testament to the strength of character, the hard work and the



sheer talent of our pupils that has led to such remarkable results; I am proud of the team."

Grant Lawrence, Director of Sport, said, "The boys played with enthusiasm, dedication and composure beyond their years,

employing skilful football against strong competitors. Taking on the finals will be an exciting and challenging experience for the team, but I know they are up to the job and will train hard to provide an exceptional performance in both finals."



## Trio's England training

Three Denstone College, Staffordshire, pupils were elected for the England U17s rugby training camp last month (March).

Harry Clarke, George Perkins and Alex Garrett are all currently part of the Leicester Tigers Academy and are really looking forward to the opportunity to be part of the England training squad.

The selection continues Denstone's rugby sporting success this year

following Daisy Aspinall's selection for the England Rugby women's U18 team, and Old Denstonian, Ben White's debut for Scotland in the Six Nations.

Rugby at Denstone continues to grow, boasting elite facilities and coaching with four Level 3 staff to hand. Denstone are also proud to play in the prestigious St. Joseph's College tournament and in the Rosslyn Park 7s.

## National Hockey Title

Felsted School's U16 girls' hockey team were crowned National Champions in the England Hockey T2 National Hockey Tournament after a 1-0 win against Scarborough College.

It was 70 minutes of action for the two sets of national finalists at the Lee Valley Hockey and Tennis Centre. The Felsted girls took an early lead, making their way past the defence to tip the scales 1-0 in the first half. It was then a nail-biting second half as Felsted fought to defend their lead as the other

side pushed hard for an equaliser. Felsted stood firm and as the whistle blew, they were declared T2 National Winners.

Felsted Hockey Coach and Welsh International Jo Westwood commented: "I am incredibly proud of what these girls have achieved. They have grown as a team and also learned from every single game they have played together. It has been a pleasure to work with these girls and I am looking forward to the next few years with them to see them keep developing."



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## Emily ranked 1st in UK U15s

Pocklington School, Yorkshire, pupil Emily Marshall is ranked 1st in UK for High Jump U15s.

She was awarded Gold for High Jump at the Northern Indoor Championships held at the England Institute of Sport in Sheffield. Already ranked no 1 in the UK with an impressive PB of 168cm the previous week at an open meet in Manchester, Emily was delighted with the gold medal.

A week later, Emily went on to win Bronze at the England Athletics Age Group (U15/U17/U20) Indoor National Championships (at EIS Sheffield) and retained her age group's 1st place ranking -an enormous achievement as this was the first time Emily had been old enough to compete in the Nationals.

Emily said "I've been doing high jump for 6 years and I'm part of Kingston Upon Hull Athletics Club. Last year I changed coaches

and began training twice a week with Ian Hill at EIS in Sheffield. Since training with Ian I have improved by 23cm! I am currently ranked 1st in the UK for high jump in the U15 age group with my PB of 1.68. My goal for the indoor season was to clear 160 so jumping 168 a few weeks ago was a big highlight!"

"My goal for the outdoor season is 174cm. Later this month (April) I'm going with my coach to train in Spain for 10 days along with 5 other athletes to get ready for the outdoor season."

David Byas, Director of Sport at Pocklington School commented: "As a community we are delighted with the success that Emily has achieved, it is testament to the hard work and dedication that she has shown in this field, and we all wish her well in achieving her goal of 174cm through the outdoor season."

## Off to the Commonwealth Games

A Wellington School, Somerset, student is heading for the Commonwealth Games this summer. Sixth Form boarder, Alisa Scantlebury has been selected for the Barbados Cricket Association women's cricket training squad for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

Alisa joined Wellington in 2017 to improve her cricket and trains every day with outstanding coaches. She is a superb all-rounder, captains the School's 2nd XI football team



(mixed) and also plays in the Girls' Rugby team which has had an excellent season.



## Olympic Gold medallist unveils new pitch

An Olympic Gold medallist says she was "blown away" by a Surrey school at the official unveiling of their new sports playing surface.

Giselle Ansley MBE was part of Team GB's victorious 2016 women's hockey team and continues to represent England and Great Britain. She visited King Edward's Witley to inspire pupils as part of the celebrations to launch the School's new Astro-pitch surface.

Giselle said: "King Edward's Witley clearly sees the value of sport. The facilities, like this new playing surface, are fantastic. You can see how much the pupils really love their sport here."

"To be honest, I have been blown away by what I have seen. There are some incredibly talented young people, some of whom could go a long way in their sporting careers. They have the environment, coaching and support to excel in their chosen sports."

As part of the celebrations, Giselle led a Masterclass for the budding

hockey stars from King Edward's and partner school Barrow Hills on the new surface. Giselle also provided coaching advice during one of the School's several hockey fixtures.

Joanna Wright, the School's Head, said: "Our pupils have loved learning from someone who has such a fantastic array of experiences and stories to draw upon, to help give them that additional spark of inspiration. Most of all however, days like this encourage every pupil, of every ability, to simply enjoy taking part in sport. It helps build character, develops a healthy competitive spirit and contributes to fitness and wellbeing in both body and mind."

The new playing surface is just part of the School's continued investment in the sporting culture. It was recently announced that former Surrey cricketing legend, Rikki Clarke, had become the School's new Director of Cricket, to sit alongside specialist coaches in other sports.

## Proud win

Bromsgrove Prep School's U13 team have lifted the IAPS National netball shield. The last time the U13 team won was in 2008, years before the current U13 team were born. The girls met the day head on with eagerness to win, and they came away triumphant.

Prep School Coaches Jenny Danks and Lynn Hadley have both commented that "The self-belief and composure the girls displayed was beyond their years, and we could not have been any prouder of them all at the full time whistle."





## Skateboarding breaks down barriers

St Margaret's School, Hertfordshire, has introduced skateboarding as a sport within its Junior School this year. The adrenalin-fuelled sessions are designed to help children boost their self-confidence and to create a safe and fun way for them to experience risk. The sessions are already proving hugely popular with the children, who are learning the basics of how to skateboard, as well as how to perform special moves and tricks.

Working with specially trained coaches at ABC Skateboarding, who operate in the local area, the school has been able to run safe, risk-assessed sessions for all of its pupils alongside a weekly club for its Junior and boarding pupils.

Emma Gray, Head at St Margaret's Junior School explained, "The impact of the ongoing pandemic has shrunk the world for our children. Many are struggling with feeling safe and secure generally, and for some this has affected their self-esteem and confidence around trying new things. We've found that introducing skateboarding in school has helped to break down some of those boundaries, expanding pupils' minds around the unknown, and

encouraging them to have a go at something new."

The response from the children has been extremely positive, and the school has even had to expand the number of sessions it offers to allow for more children to participate.

Mrs Gray added, "To see our children engaging in an exciting new sport and embracing risk-taking, is wonderful. It has really made them feel that after two years of restrictions, things are finally possible again. Who knows, we might even have a future skateboarding Olympian like Sky Brown in the ranks!"

Prior to introducing the sport, the school conducted a comprehensive review and risk assessment alongside the professional coaches, to establish the best and safest settings onsite to skateboard. All of its pupils are equipped with the correct safety equipment for the environment they are skating in.

St Margaret's has also been introducing skateboarding as part of its admissions process for 11+ and 13+, and once academic assessments are complete, children get to take part in a skateboarding session.



## Gymnastics and Dance Competition

Leweston School, Wiltshire, hosted their historical Inter-House Gymnastics and Dance Competition for Years 7 and 8. The competition allows students to showcase their interests and passion in an aesthetical sport and enables them to appreciate

others as they performed in front of the rest of their class. Previously, the competition used to be just a gymnastic based routine but over the past 3 years they have now incorporated dance.

Congratulations to 1st place winners, Team 'Dandelions'.

## Netball coaching session

Pocklington School, Yorkshire, shared its facilities and resources as part of its Schools Outreach Programme when the Head of Netball and Co-curriculum hosted a netball coaching session for 8 to 11-year-olds from local primary schools.

Eight to 11-year-olds were invited to a skills-driven morning, hosted by Pocklington School's Head of Netball and Co-curriculum, Lucy Hornby. Three Sixth Form 1st Team netball players led the session: Georgie Taylor (Music Scholar), Vivi Mayman (Sports Leader) and Emily Phillips (Sports Leader).

The children were guided through a series of sporting drills, which focussed on key elements of

gameplay including ball skills, footwork, attack, defence and rules of the game. After several team exercises, the youngsters enjoyed some match play, where they put their newly refined skills into practice. The Sixth Form leaders concluded the session by thanking all the children for working so hard (and on such a cold morning!) and awarded certificates of merit.

Lucy Hornby said: "The aim of the morning was to provide an exciting session for the children to develop their netball game. Our Sixth Form students enjoyed the opportunity to plan and lead the session for the children and in doing so, we hoped this would provide our local primary school children with accessible sporting role models."

## Tennis star ranked no.1

Eric Lorimer, a Year 7 student at West Buckland School, Devon has reached the top of the UK LTA ranking for his age group.

Under the watchful eye of Head of Tennis at West Buckland, Chris Gill, Eric has been fully supported by the school, with plenty of flexibility to fit in his practice and matches around his academic studies.

Eric has been at West Buckland since joining in Nursery and has been training with Chris, a level 5 coach, for the past four years. As part of the West Buckland Tennis Programme, Eric takes part in early morning and lunchtime sessions as well as practising at the nearby indoor Tarka Tennis Centre. In addition, Eric is part of Team Bath, an international high performance centre based at the University of Bath.

Chris Gill is extremely proud of his



student and credits his success to hard work, "Eric has an incredible work rate and is very dedicated to his tennis. It's great that the school has been able to support him so that he can balance his competitions and practice with his school work."

## Rugby sevens champions

Shebbear College in Devon is celebrating the achievements of its talented U14 Rugby Sevens squad, who have won the Independent Schools Association (ISA) Rugby Sevens Open Championships and are now national champions!

The team competed in the tournament at St James' School in Surrey against twelve other schools from across the UK. They played some intense games, remaining unbeaten throughout and going on to win the cup with style at 40 points to 7!

Team captain, Mitch Sibley said "This was our first ever Rugby Sevens tournament so we arrived with not much experience and we were playing against schools from all over the country. We were the only South West school taking part and at the start we weren't expecting to win at all. The

adrenaline was pumping and we were all really excited but we had to stay calm and focused which paid off. At the end we were all buzzing and there was lots of singing on the bus journey home!"

Robin Giles, Head of Sport and Outdoor Education at Shebbear College, said "The boys played with humility and pride, developing and improving as they progressed through the tournament. Each player made a significant contribution to the team both on and off the pitch, helping their team-mates thrive. As they progressed through the tournament their understanding of the 7s game improved and the quality of their rugby reflected this. I am extremely proud of the way the team performed and I am excited to see how they progress over the next weeks and years."



## National Gymnastics Champions!

The U11 girls from Maltman's Green School, Buckinghamshire, have been crowned Under 11 National Champions in the British Schools Gymnastics Association Milano Teams National Finals.

The win came a few days after the girls took the overall gold medal position in the ISGA national championships, crowning them National Champions, in which the Under 10 girls took the overall silver medal position and the Under 9 girls took the overall bronze medal position! They also scooped a



number of other top spots across all age groups including U11 individual Silver, U11 2nd place group sequence, U9 2nd place group sequence, U10 3rd place group sequence, U9 individual 4th place and U11 individual 4th place.

## Selected for England Lambs

Two Taunton School, Somerset, students are celebrating being selected to play rugby for England Lambs.

Thomas Houghton-King and Ben Chaffey will tour Ireland this summer after being invited to play for the Lambs following a tough selection process in regional games.

Both boys currently study in Year 13 at Taunton School, where they play in the First XV.

Ben, 18, from Trull, said: "We're both quite shocked to get through because we were selected out of 400 players. The standard of rugby was seriously high so to get through is pretty special."

Thomas and Ben have already played some initial matches for England Lambs ahead of their Ireland tour.

Thomas, 18, from North Curry, said: "Rugby is a very team orientated sport so I'm enjoying meeting players from other schools and playing with them as team members rather than rivals.

"We both started playing rugby



when we were very young and this is a celebration and recognition of everything we've achieved."

Ben added: "We had a good grounding in rugby at Taunton School. We've always felt supported and part of a close-knit team. The school recognises talent, helps you develop and gives you opportunities without pressure."

Taunton School's Director of Rugby Nic Sestaret said: "Thomas and Ben are extremely hardworking, dedicated young sportsmen and we are incredibly proud of their work ethic and achievements. I'm sure they have bright sporting futures ahead of them."

## Cross Country Championships

More than 700 children from 70 schools across the UK have taken part in the National Prep School Cross Country Championships at Malvern College in Worcestershire.

The school played host to four races. The under-11 girls and under-11 boys races were run over a 2.8km course, while the under-13 girls and under-13 boys raced over a distance of 3.2km.

Florence Goodwin from Great Walstead won the under-11 girls race in a time of 10 minutes 31 seconds, with Joshua Sillett from

Beachborough picking up the under-11 boys title, finishing in exactly 10 minutes.

In the under-13s, the winning girl was Cici Huepfl from Dragon School (12m 02s) and the winning boy was Hugo Berry from Aysgarth School (11m 03s), who just edged out Stirling Rolls from Tockington Manor, who finished with the same time.

The race was organised by Keith Metcalfe, headmaster of Malvern College, and Tom Tuthill, House Master and Politics teacher, who are both keen runners.

# ‘Silver jubilee’ rugby occasion

Kirkham Grammar School 1st XV travelled to Twickenham last month (March) to participate in the National Schools U18s Cup Final, for the first time since 1997, to play Trinity School, Croydon. The occasion inspired former KGS teacher, Mr Adrian Long, who was at the school at the time and still very much involved with the alumni section of school, to reflect on the 1997 game and how things have changed in the game since, while a match report from this year's game was written by Master in Charge of Rugby, Mr Aled Trenhaile....

25 years ago...

It was on Saturday 22 March 1997 that a stellar KGS senior squad reached the final of the Daily Mail Cup at Twickenham, and was cheered on by a vast travelling army of pupils, parents and friends of the School. It was a glorious spring day as they went head to head with Colston's School, Bristol, who won, on what remains one of the proudest days in the School's long history. This was very much a highlight of Brian Gornall's time as 1st XV coach and of Barrie Stacey's headship – two true KGS legends who cheered their successors as Aled Trenhaile's 2022 squad followed in their footsteps, hoping to go one better.

All who were at KGS at the time remember that squad with great respect and affection. Captained by Rob Porteous, it was a team bristling with talent and character, with the star name being Alex Sanderson, now Head Coach of Sale Sharks RUFC. Alex went on to be First Team Captain the following season, as well as School Captain.

In some ways, it feels like only yesterday, but in other ways it

seems like a totally different world and a different game. 1997 was just before mass access to the internet shrank our world and brought us all into such constant contact, with our every moment captured on smartphones and shared to social media. There is little trace of that final on the internet, and photos taken at the match were taken on analogue cameras, not hi-res smartphones. However, coverage in traditional print media was in remarkable depth, with those ordinary Fifth and Sixth Form lads briefly elevated to the status of local superstars, getting their 15 minutes of fame.

Rugby Union was still at the dawn of the professional era, and top schoolboy teams like KGS were the nurseries where sporting talent was fostered, most often alongside boys' other career ambitions. Members of that 1997 team are these days engaged in a variety of professions across the country and indeed the world, and many are active and supportive members of the Old Kirkhamian community. Their togetherness as a group was reinforced that summer when they undertook the School's first

South Africa tour, paving the way for KGS's links and exchanges with South Africa, which have flourished to this day.

**In the true spirit of rugby union, the boys of 1997 were the first to hope that their successors could go one better by bringing the trophy home to KGS as the school prepare to celebrate the centenary of the School's adoption of the rugby code in 1924.**

And this year...

The atmosphere at Twickenham was electric; both schools had huge support and the teams started nervously. Trinity appeared less nervous and dominated KGS in the early exchanges which resulted in them eventually taking a 5-0 lead. In typical Kirkham tradition, a response was immediate and the KGS forwards started to use their power. Both second rows, William Riley and Huw Davies, started to dominate the lineout and were forceful in the loose and they made inroads into the Trinity defence, which led to an opportunity for prop, Pateece Bell, to crash over near the posts. Captain, Aaron Pope, converted for KGS to take a 7-5

lead which they kept until the half time break.

The second half started with both teams trying to attack despite the poor weather conditions. The KGS forwards, again dominated by Harry Thompson and Yande Nkonge, started to influence play with some strong carriers. However, with around 16 minutes to go, a mistake was made by Kirkham, which led to Trinity regaining the lead 10-5. KGS tried desperately to force the game and, with the weather getting worse, another mistake was made which Trinity capitalised on and increased their lead to 15-7. Despite this setback, the team dug deep and against the odds started on a comeback of giant proportion. As time started running out, Kirkham forced Trinity to concede a penalty at the breakdown and Captain, Aaron Pope, stepped up to calmly kick a penalty to close the gap to 15-10 with just 6 minutes left on the clock. Kirkham gave everything in these last few minutes and gained momentum with Josh Lynch, Huw Davies and William Riley gaining yards. Suddenly, the KGS crowd realised there was a chance as KGS reached the Trinity 5 metre line with just seconds left. A KGS lineout gave the team their last opportunity for glory. Unfortunately, a mistake was made and the ball bounced into the hands of a Trinity player who kicked the ball off the pitch. Trinity celebrated a famous win as the KGS boys sunk to their knees knowing their chance was over.

A sterling effort from this talented group of KGS players and an unforgettable experience.



## Academy launch

Worksop College, Nottinghamshire, is developing the next crop of female sporting superstars – all under the tutelage of England Lioness and Man City's Jill Scott MBE.

Based within just a short drive of several Women's Super League (WSL), Championship teams, and Regional Training Centres, including Sheffield United, Doncaster Rovers Belles and Derby County – Worksop College's 330-acre site is well-placed to offer some of the best facilities in the country. And with bespoke training and educational pathways, links with professional clubs, and support from a squad of skilled coaches, the team at the school is confident the Worksop College Girls' Football Academy will be the Midlands' primary training ground for young female footballers aged 16-18.

The school's sporting legacy is not to be underestimated, with the establishment boasting England Cricket Captain Joe Root, as well as cricketers Samit Patel, Billy Root, Brett Hutton and Liam Patterson White, and three of the Olympic Tokyo 2020 men's hockey side (Dixon, Ward, Sorsby), all alumni of the recent past.

Head of Sports Performance Ian Parkin explains how the Academy – launching September 2022 – will be the latest success story: "The number of women and girls playing football in England has reached

huge numbers," he says. "There has been a whopping 54% increase in affiliated women's and girls' teams since the FA launched its Game plan for Growth in 2017. The game is growing almost faster than the infrastructure can keep pace."

"This is great news and shows appetite, but for years the focus has been heavily weighted towards the men's game in terms of media coverage, coaching and finance. The systems are there for boys to play football at the level that their ability and skill warrants, with Academies, shadow squads, top grassroots sides and private boys' academies flooding the market – the same is true of 6th form Colleges offering dual education and sporting pathways. This doesn't exist for women in the same way."

As well as opportunities to accelerate their football training and knowledge, the school's two-year programme will give young women access to the Sixth Form curriculum – offering vocational qualifications alongside traditional A level options, facilitating something akin to the "scholarship" system afforded to boys at pro clubs.

## Squash Team Triumphs

Truro School, Cornwall, claimed the title of National Champions at the England Squash National Schools Championships 2021/22 after winning their KS5 (Under 19) competition.

The finals were held at Nottingham Squash Club.

The Truro School 2022 squad comprised Louis Murray (captain), Jack Mahon, Ben Thorpe (vice-captain), Joe Thomson, Callum Oliver and Ed Hayes.

The squad is coached by Truro School's Head of Squash, Tim Smith.

Tim Smith commented, "In 30 years of teaching squash, I can't recall a day more dramatic or exciting as this. To win a national title is an exceptional achievement, and I am so pleased for the team."

The win came on the back of a narrow defeat for Truro School in 2019, where the U19 team finished in 2nd Place after being defeated by winners Wycliffe in the Grand Final.

With Covid disrupting subsequent competitions, games only resumed this academic year.

Putting Comish School Squash on the map, Truro School flew through five successful qualifiers at Taunton and Millfield, enabling them to return to Nottingham and compete again for the most coveted prize in the sport of school squash.

On the day of the win, Truro School took on the following matches:

- The Quarter Final; Truro v Epsom College with a 4/1 victory.



(L to R) Ian Parkin, Dr John Price, Jill Scott, Paul Wilkinson

"The academic side is critical for any aspirational footballer, male or female, as there have to be options for them later in life," emphasises Ian. "The advantage of coming to a school like this is academic rigour is taken very seriously as we are used to delivering in the classroom at that level. Academic achievement opens up dual career options – offering player exit strategies – such as University (home or abroad), and roles in sport that may be playing or outside of that."

The team at Worksop College, alongside Jill and the JS8 Academy, look to build this infrastructure, the quality of partnerships and coaching is of top priority.

Jill Scott said: "As a girl growing up in a football-mad city (Sunderland), all I ever wanted was to have the same chance to take part and excel as the boys. I needed something just like this at 15/16 years old to take me to the next level, and it simply was not available. Worksop College has a history of producing professional sportspeople, so I'm confident they know what they're doing. As I reach the twilight of my career, I want to give back to the game that has given me so much"

Heading up the Academy will be retired Premier League footballer Paul Wilkinson – a top-level striker who boasts 196 goals in 650 professional appearances. Paul's coaching career spans over a decade, including roles at Leeds United, Cardiff City, Sheffield Wednesday and Grimsby Town.

And adding to this wealth of experience will be a team of coaches, including full-time Athletic Development coach Vitali Kalcinskij from Athletic Performance 360 and professionals from across the school's sports dept and Jill's own JS8 Academy.

Headmaster Dr John Price is looking forward to watching the academy launch in September 2022.

"When I arrived, it was clear that football was missing from our offer", he says. "We have the facilities, the staffing and huge appetite from young people. Now we have Jill and Paul on board; we have all the ingredients to deliver a world-class programme to aspiring female footballers from across the globe – we can't wait to get started to see what our next generation of talent will add to our impressive sporting legacy."



- The Semi-Final; Truro v Wilson's School with a 3/2 victory.
- The Grand Final saw Truro v Wycliffe with a 4/1 win

Director of Sport at Truro School, Dan Sanderson, says of the win, "To have had the privilege to watch this unfold was an honour. Knowing the heartache the team and coaching staff went through in 2019 when they came second by

a few points, has made this even more special.

We couldn't be more proud of the team. A special thank you to coach Tim Smith, whose energy and passion have driven the team to this point. Thanks also to guest coaches Alison and Jamie, who ensured Truro were in safe hands. The attention to detail from the coaches and the dedication from the boys makes this title a richly deserved one."



## Regional Tennis Champions

Stonyhurst Boys and Girls A Tennis Teams worked through a rigorous training regime this winter to secure their places in the LTA North Regional Tennis Finals last month (March).

The finals event took place on the eight indoor tennis courts at the Sunderland Tennis Centre. The boys experienced a tense first match against Bradford Grammar school resulting in a lead of 3-1 after the singles. The team went on to win one of the important doubles matches which meant they eventually won 4-2 overall. The next opponent was Altrincham Grammar School who has previously defeated Stonyhurst, demonstrating how the team has considerably excelled over the past year.

The Stonyhurst boys played a number of great singles matches

to go 3-1 up and clinched both doubles with outstanding skill from all players, eventually winning 5-1 and becoming the LTA North Regional Champions.

The girls performed equally well but unfortunately lost 5-1 to St Peter's School, York. Many of the matches were extremely close and, despite the loss, the girls really worked hard and showed great commitment throughout the final's day.

David Shaw, Director of Tennis, said: 'This is the biggest achievement for the Stonyhurst Tennis Academy in the history of Stonyhurst St Mary's Hall and Stonyhurst College. Our young people have made great strides over the past five months, and I am so proud of their hard work and determination to achieve the very best they can be.'

## Leweston supports Bath Rugby match in aid of School Partnership

After becoming part of the Bath Rugby's School Partnerships for 2021/22 in September, Leweston School, Dorset, students went to Bath to support Bath Rugby in their game against Worcester Warriors.

Leweston became part of the Bath Rugby Schools Programme in September 2021. The programme provides the students with unique experiences and training and enables them to engage with the wider Rugby Club. Last term, in partnership with Bath Rugby, Leweston hosted a Rugby Masterclass Roadshow and welcomed over 80 boys and girls of all abilities, aged between 7 to 16 years old, from across the local community to engage in the Masterclass in order to promote the game and develop skills.

As part of the programme, boys Lewis Palmer, Bath Rugby's Delivery Lead with students



and girls will have the opportunity to receive high-quality rugby coaching sessions, training sessions at Bath Rugby's elite training facility – Farleigh House, meet and train with Bath First-Team players, as well as a Girls Masterclass event and the Bath Rugby Roadshow with access to three RFU Level 2 qualified coaches.

Bath 'NextGen' is designed specifically to cater for the next generation of players and supporters aged between 4 and 16, providing exclusive access to child-friendly content, unforgettable family experiences and fantastic competitions.

Mr Cannon, Head of Leweston Rugby, and all of Leweston students, are very excited to get stuck into the programme.



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# Fire warning issued to schools and care homes amid kitchen ventilation concerns

Hundreds of schools and care homes across the UK could be at risk of devastating fires because the commercial extraction systems in their kitchens aren't being cleaned to required industry wide standards.

All kitchens in a commercial setting now need to be cleaned by specially accredited technicians in order to adequately remove dangerous volumes of grease which quickly build up in the extraction ventilations systems.

Due to the fire risks associated with the flammable nature of the greases and oils in large-scale kitchens, a Building Engineering Services Competence Assessment (BESCA) Vent Hygiene Elite (VHE) scheme

requires all commercial kitchens to be cleaned to what is known in the industry as TR19 level. However there are fears many organisations across the UK are unaware of this specification.

Cumbria-based Hy5 Commercial Cleaning is one of only a handful of companies in the UK with the necessary BESCA accreditation, and its team is warning businesses of the potential dangers of not adequately removing grease from their kitchen extraction.

Keith Simm, the Founder and Managing Director of Hy5, said: "All commercial kitchens will routinely be cleaned but many establishments will be totally unaware of the requirement to have the commercial extraction systems cleaned to such a high standard, and why it is so important to do so.

"Over time, the amount of grease which builds up in the system is vast and they can easily catch alight due to the nature of them being around intense heat and open flames. These greases are highly flammable and once they catch fire, the flames spread extremely quickly.

"It does not bear thinking about the worst case scenarios in schools and

care homes where you could have hundreds of vulnerable people trying to get out of the building at the same time.

"This is why the BESCA VHE exists and why we have significantly invested in becoming accredited because safety is of paramount importance to us. We are leading the way nationally in grease hygiene, and we want to raise awareness about the new specification to prevent any major disasters."

The BESCA VHE has the backing of all major insurance providers across the UK, and the companies will only provide full fire cover to establishments which have been serviced by accredited technicians.

Keith added: "If commercial kitchens have not been cleaned by BESCA VHE accredited technicians, then they will not be properly covered by any insurance policies.

"If there is sadly a fire, not only are you counting the cost of any damage, but you won't get any payout from your insurance company either."

The VHE has been introduced by BESCA to provide a management process for controlling the risk of grease-related fires associated with



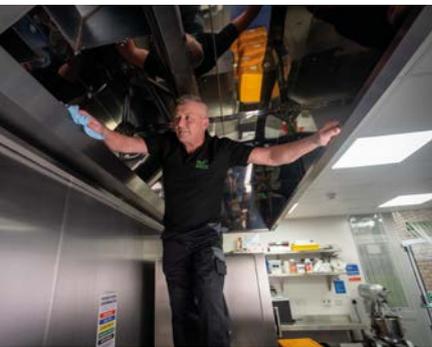
Pictured: From left, the Hy5 Commercial Cleaning management team of Lead Grease Technician Chet Kilburn, Managing Director Keith Simm and General Manager Anna Ellwood.

commercial kitchen extraction systems.

"When it comes to fire safety, the need for competence and compliance cannot be overstated," said Duncan Sibbald who administers VHE on behalf of BESCA.

"Many parts of our industry were effectively unregulated for years and initiatives like VHE were the result of responsible firms and individuals trying to take a stand against those less than scrupulous operators who seemed unperturbed by the fact their work was putting lives at risk.

"Since the Grenfell tragedy, that work has taken on even greater significance and we are delighted that firms like Hy5 are clearly committed to improving professional standards right across our sector."



Pictured: Hy5 Commercial Cleaning's Managing Director Keith Simm cleans a kitchen extraction system to BESCA VHE standards.

## Biosphere award

West Buckland School, Devon, WEBS (West Buckland Ecology and Biodiversity) group, have won the 2021 UNESCO North Devon Biosphere 'Pledge for Nature' award following their dedicated work to increase awareness of ecology and sustainability at school.

The Pledge for Nature, supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund aims to help nature's recovery across the North Devon UNESCO Biosphere.

The group, made up of Sixth Formers, and under the watchful eye of Head of Biology, Noah Shawcross, started the group to try and encourage greater biodiversity on the school's 90-acre campus and, at the same time, educate other students about the need to protect the environment. This year the school, based close to Exmoor National Park in North Devon, created its first ever Environmental

Prefects who help lead the school's work on biodiversity and sustainability.

Headmaster, Phillip Stapleton, is extremely proud of the group's achievements: "Since its inception, WEBS has seen perceptions and behaviours change in school, as well as in the biodiversity on the campus. Single use plastic has been virtually eradicated onsite, the school café now sells healthier food with less plastic and the school has positioned more recycling bins around the campus to encourage students to actively recycle. Members of WEBS have held meetings with the Bursar, SLT and governors on a number of occasions to see where the school could reduce greenhouse gases and a second biomass boiler is currently being installed, meaning that virtually all the school's heating is now from this source."

To kick off their initiative they asked the school's Artist in Residence, Joseph Witchall, to design a logo, before presenting their objectives to the Senior Leadership Team and Governors. These included improving the biodiversity of the school campus; reducing food and packaging waste; reducing greenhouse gas emissions within the school and surveying the pupils to find out their attitudes to waste and sustainable food as well as leading assemblies to encourage a more caring approach to our environment.

In consultation with the school's Head Groundsman, Baz Norden, two wildflower meadows were developed by the group, who enlisted the help of students from the Prep school up to Year 9 to bring on the wildflowers from seed in their classrooms. On a recent open day, in conjunction with the Art Department member of WEBS

helped make seed bombs, with seed collected from the wildflower meadow and in a recent staff training session on biodiversity and sustainability all staff were given a homemade packet of wildflower seed. Both of these projects took inspiration from the Moor Meadows project which is a community initiative whose members are interested in conserving, restoring and creating wildflower meadows, from a meadow in the garden to many acres in the landscapes.

Over the past two years 500 new trees have been planted and all age groups within the school have been involved, including Year 7s, who have been doing the work as part of their John Muir Awards, as well as the Prep school children. The trees were kindly donated by the Woodland Trust and are part of the Queen's Green Canopy which marks the Platinum Jubilee of Elizabeth II.

# Weather doesn't stop play with Paragon's sports structures

Environmentally friendly sports facilities from Paragon Structures are designed to withstand extreme weather conditions, including the record-breaking winds which recently hit the UK.

Back in February, the UK was ravaged by three storms in seven days, including Storm Eunice, its worst storm in 30 years. Recording wind speeds as high as 122mph – the fastest ever recorded in the country – Eunice left a trail of destruction in its wake.

Sports and leisure facilities were among the casualties. The storm ripped roofs off sports centres and left a huge hole in the roof of the O2 Arena, leaving the owners severely out of pocket due to the costly repairs and loss of income.

Storm Eunice also destroyed the Air Dome at Cardiff International Sports Campus. Similar to those at Chelsea and Ajax football clubs, Cardiff's air dome was built in 2017 over a 3G pitch to provide

indoor training. The collapsed sports facility will be closed for the foreseeable future.

## Built to withstand hurricane strength winds

In contrast to these traditional air domes, high performance sports facilities from Paragon Structures are designed to withstand the most extreme weather conditions. Working with our partners Sprung – the world's leader in the manufacture of engineered tension membrane structures – our structures benefit from a sophisticated tension system built using individual 15ft (4.5m) membrane panels which are tensioned both vertically and horizontally.

Once the membrane is tensioned, it will never need to be re-tensioned again during its lifespan. The membrane structure is highly resistant to tearing and ripping, even if forcefully punctured. Combined with each structure's unique shape, the robust tension system is designed to meet design wind speeds for hurricane and typhoon zones.

This explains why a Sprung structure was one of the few buildings to remain standing after Hurricane Katrina hit the US, why another Sprung building was used as a storm shelter during Cyclone Pam, a category 5 cyclone, and yet another Sprung building took two direct hits from hurricanes Frances and Jeanne (with winds over 125 mph) without sustaining any damage, inside or out.

## Environmentally friendly sports facilities

In addition to their strength and durability, sport structures from Paragon are energy efficient and environmentally friendly. They have a thick, uniform layer of insulation from the base of the walls to the apex of the roof. This insulation combined with the airtightness of the membrane

design, which is 10 times better than building regulations limits, creates a highly thermally efficient building to significantly reduce running costs.

The flexible sports buildings are made with environmentally friendly materials including aluminium for the frame, which is 100% recyclable. The glass fibre insulation is formaldehyde free and contains a minimum of 25% recycled material, while the membrane materials can also be recycled.

The structures use low carbon footprint materials compared to steel or brick buildings, minimise waste to landfill due to reduced foundations and prefabrication and result in low construction site traffic. They have also achieved a BREEAM rating of Excellent.

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# Heads Hunted

Among the upcoming head and principal appointments:

Aysgarth School Yorkshire

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Mylnhurst Prep. School Yorkshire

West Buckland Prep. School Devon

Winchester College Hampshire

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.

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# CHANGING FACES... CHANGING PLACES...



Mr Huw Thomas will be Head of Prep School at Plymouth College from September 2022.

Mr Thomas is currently Director of Operations & Co-Curricular at



Shebbear College, Devon, has announced that Mr Charlie Jenkins, the current Senior

Deputy Head at the school, has been appointed as the new Head, starting in September 2022. He will take over from the current Head, Caroline Kirby, who announced earlier this year that she would be standing down at the end of the 2021-2022 academic year to relocate to the Cotswolds, with her husband and three children.

With more than a decade of senior school leadership, coupled with extensive teaching and pastoral care experience,



Aldenham Foundation (the group encompassing Aldenham Senior School, Aldenham

Prep School, Aldenham Prep Riyadh, Aldenham Nursery, St Hilda's Prep School, and Bluebird Nursery) has announced the appointment of the new Head at St. Hilda's Prep School for Girls, Andy Kaye, from the start of the 2022-2023 academic year.

Mr Kaye joined St. Hilda's in 2016, and has served as the Deputy Head since then. He graduated from the University of Worcester with a degree in



The Governors of Bryanston have confirmed the appointment of Richard Jones as the new Head of the School.

Richard joined Bryanston as Second Master in 2020 and was given interim responsibilities as

Sherborne Prep School, where he has been employed since 2016. Mr Thomas brings with him a wealth of experience, having also been Housemaster and Director of Rugby at Glenalmond College, Perth and Assistant Master at Blundell's School.

Mr Jenkins joined Shebbear College in September 2020 from Licensed Victuallers' School in Ascot where he was the Deputy Head (Academic & Co-Curricular). Before that he worked at Pangbourne College, Berkshire, where he was Head of Geography and Assistant Boarding Housemaster.

Mr Jenkins graduated from Exeter University with a BA (Hons) in Geography and moved back to Devon when he accepted the Senior Deputy Head role at Shebbear College. In his free time he can be found enjoying the outdoors, dog walking, running and learning to kite surf.

Psychology and Health Studies before working in logistics for an international company, but teaching had always been a vocation he intended to pursue. He returned to study at the University of Hertfordshire, and qualified as a teacher through their Graduate Teacher Programme. Mr Kaye's first teaching post was at a junior school in Harrow, where he developed new approaches to assessment and helped empower parents to best support their children with Maths. Before he joined St Hilda's, Mr Kaye worked as the deputy head at a three-form entry primary school.

Acting Head at the end of last year. With a Master's degree in Educational Leadership, he has a wealth of experience as a housemaster and in front-line teaching and, before joining Bryanston, was previously at Canford School and St John's School, Leatherhead.



The Maynard School, Devon, has announced that Mrs Liz Gregory has been appointed as the

new Headmistress from September 2022.

Liz is currently a Senior Deputy Head Academic at Haberdashers' Monmouth Schools as well as a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, a Mental Health First Aid Ambassador, an EPQ supervisor and Sixth Form tutor, in addition to an athletics and cross-country coach. Previously she was the

Assistant Director of Studies and Head of Economics & Business Studies at King's College, Taunton.

Liz is currently completing a Masters in Educational Leadership, has a degree in Economics and is a Trustee and Fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching, as well as a founding member of the HMC Women in Senior Leadership mentoring programme. She is a keen sportswoman and musician in addition to also being a founding member and volunteer of several charities.



Mr Mark Howe will be the new Headmaster of Hampshire's Forres Sandle Manor School

at the start of the Autumn Term 2022. Mark joins from his current position as Headmaster of the day and boarding school, Ipswich High School.



Felsted School, Essex, has announced the appointment of Miranda Norris

as Head of Felsted Prep from September 2022

Miranda brings with her over 18 years of senior leadership experience across state, independent and international settings. She joins Felsted from Dulwich College Junior school, where she is currently Head of the school's pre-prep department (DUCKS). Previously, Miranda

was Deputy Head of Dulwich College Junior Schools in Suzhou, China and more recently Dulwich College, Singapore.

Miranda grew up in Swindon and North Wales before completing a four-year bachelor of Education honours degree at Westminster College, Oxford. Miranda began her career as a primary school teacher in Neston where she also led the physical education curriculum before moving to the independent sector in London, as Director of Studies at Wetherby Prep.



ACS International School Egham has announced that Mark Wilson will take up the position

of Head of School from August 2022.

Mr Wilson has over two decades of leadership experience in British and international education at top International Baccalaureate (IB) schools across Asia and the US. Mr Wilson will be coming to the school from his current position as Head of School at the British International School Houston, Texas. Prior to this role, Mr Wilson was Headteacher at

The British International School Shanghai.

Mr Wilson's teaching background is rooted in Drama and the Arts, and he holds a BA Hons Degree in Drama/Dance and a PGCE teaching qualification in Education (Drama) from Middlesex University. He has also provided guidance as an educational leadership trainer, consultant, and guest speaker for a variety of organisations, including PGCE Teacher Training Programmes at Middlesex University and the Royal Academy of Dance.

# Developing Leadership

Across the last year, through a series of articles, we've been looking at how schools can develop the leadership potential in their young people. As we come to this final article, we reflect on some of the themes which have come out as we've explored how areas like drama, music, sport, outdoor learning, boarding, and formal leadership roles can be used to help our students become the leaders they can be, says Dr Andy Kemp.



Dr Andy Kemp  
Principal  
The National Mathematics and Science College

Whilst we looked at many examples and specifics across this series, there are for me two overarching messages which will enable us all to transform the activities we already carry out in our schools into real opportunities for students to develop their leadership skills.

The first major theme is that of intentionality. Whilst it is certainly possible for some of our young people to develop leadership skills through their general interactions within school, this is likely to be significantly more impactful where colleagues have taken the time to reflect on an activity and think about minor adaptations which would encourage the students to take a more meaningful leadership role within the activity. When I talk about intentionality, I also mean being intentional about ensuring all students are given opportunities to experience leadership across their time at the school. These don't need to be the same opportunities, but they do all need to be meaningful.

It is important that we avoid the possibility that our confident, extroverted young people are given all the opportunities at a young age and therefore develop their leadership skills further and faster, meaning by the time prefect roles and selection of heads of schools come round, they are the only obvious choices. Quiet, introverted leadership very much has an important role to play in our society; it's crucial that these young people see leadership as something which is also for them, and are given the opportunity to explore and develop these skills alongside their extroverted peers.

The second major theme is about teachers being more hands-off. A highly structured activity can be turned quickly into an opportunity to develop leadership by just removing some of the detail and structure. As we looked at with outdoor learning: ask yourself, what is the real objective of the activity. Does it matter if they don't get to your intended end point?

Sometimes the answer will be yes, in which case more structure may be necessary. But often the answer will be no, and we can instead put our focus on the journey rather than the destination.

This is our opportunity to take some risks, reduce the scaffolding, and sit on our hands to avoid the temptation to interfere! Whether this is asking a student or a group of students to plan a charity event, prepare a presentation for the History society, chair a discussion, organise the house outing, co-ordinate a student led musical ensemble, or run a rugby practice for the team. In each case if you take the time to explain the intent, and give them the time and space to plan, there's a good chance that not only will you still get the outcome you had originally hoped for, but they will have had an opportunity to explore their leadership potential and develop some of those key leadership skills.

In all of this, it is important to remember that not all leadership

happens in traditional leadership roles. We are all required to show leadership in our lives day-by-day. Leadership is about influence, organisation, delegation, and service. There is no single correct model of leadership towards which our young people should be aspiring, but each and every one of them will need to make use of leadership techniques and skills at various points throughout their lives. So, if we are to provide them with the best possible preparation for life beyond our walls, leadership must be something which forms part of our planning.

If you've got some great examples or stories of how you've been able to create meaningful opportunities for your students to develop their leadership capacity I'd love to hear about them. You can email me on [principal@natmatsci.ac.uk](mailto:principal@natmatsci.ac.uk) or find me on twitter [@andykemp](https://twitter.com/andykemp). Let's keep this discussion going as there is so much we can collectively achieve by sharing our ideas and experiences.

## Governing Board appoints Jasmine, 26

Newcastle High School for Girls (NHSG) has announced the appointment of recent alumna, Jasmine Summers, to its School Governing Board.

Keen to appoint a young member with more recent experience of school life, the school specifically sought a former pupil who could bring a fresh approach to the Board, while providing sound strategic and leadership experience for the successful candidate.

Qualified investment banker, Jasmine Summers (26) was selected from a pool of candidates during a rigorous recruitment process. The Board's youngest appointment,



Jasmine originally joined NHSG on a bursary scheme in 2007 aged eleven. Originally from Northumberland, she has spent several years working in investment banking in London, and has recently taken a career break to travel to Mozambique and Central America.

Jasmine says she was keen to join the School Governing Board so that she could give something back to the school that helped her to nurture her skills and confidence.

## Rebel visit

The iconic Australian actress, film producer and comedian Rebel Wilson visited Francis Holland School, Regent's Park, London as part of their Women of Influence series.

The series began seven years ago, with the aim of hosting an engaging range of guests to inspire, to challenge and to encourage girls to consider their place in the world now, as well as their career and their future.

As well as many entertaining stories, Rebel delivered pearls of wisdom about the importance of building inner resilience, exploring opportunities and learning not to fear failure. Whilst at university, Rebel was chosen to do a year

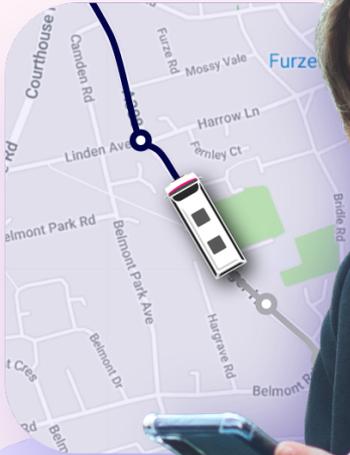
Pictured: Rebel with students and Charles Fillingham, Headmaster



abroad in Africa as a Youth Ambassador for Australia, where she contracted malaria and had a hallucination that she had become an actress. Having completed her Law degree, she began to pursue a career in acting and her big break came when she was cast in Pitch Perfect aged 32. She has now also turned her hand to film producing, with three successful films under her belt to date.

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