

February 2022

The Independent Schools Magazine



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In this issue...



Extension to GCSEs

The Board of Directors at Forres Sandle Manor School, Hampshire, have decided to extend provision at the school up to GCSE. The school is currently day and boarding for boys and girls aged 2 to 13.

Executive Director – and former pupil – Duncan Murphy, made the announcement to staff and parents last month (January).

He said: “Forres Sandle Manor has a rich heritage of academic success together with outstanding pastoral care and a wonderful site. We are excited to build upon the school’s strong values and offer a pathway for our families to stay for an additional three years”.

It is planned that the first intake of Year 9 pupils will begin their GCSE journey at Forres Sandle Manor in September 2024.

Pictured: Head Robert Tasker (left) with Duncan Murphy

Cover background

Leading edge facility

Haileybury, Hertfordshire, has announced plans to create two state-of-the-art Science and Technology buildings to house globally renowned research and provide exceptional teaching and learning facilities for its pupils and the wider community.

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Is Your School Mentioned?

Schools featured in this issue include:

Bancroft's School; Benedict House School; Bolton School; Brentwood School; Cheltenham College Prep. School; Conifers School; Dame Allan's Schools; Dauntsey's School; Derby Grammar School; Felsted School; Forres Sandle Manor School; Francis Holland School; Haileybury; Headington School; Highgate School; King's College; Langley School; Malvern College; Mill Hill School; Moreton Hall School; Mount School; National Mathematics & Science College; Nottingham High School; Queen Ethelburga's Collegiate; Queen's College; Royal Hospital School; Royal Russell School; Sevenoaks School; St. Catherine's School; Stonyhurst; Westholme School

MFL changes – what they will mean



New GCSE French, German and Spanish curricula with set vocabulary lists will launch in 2024, a year later than originally planned. Students will be assessed on the “most common vocabulary”, alongside grammar and pronunciation, in a move which – so government claims – will increase “clarity for teachers” and improve the “practical benefits for students”. The revised arrangements – confirmed last month (January) – have not been universally welcomed.

Angharad Simpson, Assistant Head (Teaching and Learning) at Nottingham High School, reflects...

The decline in entries for Modern Foreign Language (MFL) GCSEs is well documented. Since 2002, entries have reduced by almost half in the UK¹ and this phenomenon has not bypassed the independent sector. The 2021 British Council Report outlines that 44% of independent schools surveyed had fewer dual linguists at GCSE compared to five years ago, with increasing numbers of pupils not taking a MFL at KS3 either (17% in Years 7 and 8 and 30% in Year 9)². The government’s proposal to reform the current GCSEs in MFL aims to help reverse such trends through helping students to recognise the importance of language learning with a strong linguistic and cultural foundation and a “satisfying” and “interesting” programme of study.

So what is different about the new 2024 GCSE? The first radical adjustment is the removal of topics and themes in favour of a colossal vocabulary list, cited as 1,500 items for Foundation Tier and 1,700 for Higher. These figures do not tell the full story, however, as each “headword” comes along with an extensive “word family”, meaning that the full number of vocabulary items will be significantly larger than this. Many teachers feel that to reduce language learning to a series of individual words to learn will render these courses extremely dull and invite rote-learning. The design of the qualification in this way does not invite creative thinking, problem solving or communication skills, and reinforces the Google

Translate concept that language can be reduced to a string of individual words to learn in isolation from one another. To present verb conjugations as vocabulary items in a list is to do a disservice to our young people, who are more than capable of learning how to manipulate the infinitive for themselves to produce accurate conjugations in their own right. Although many teachers will continue to teach such skills, the design and presentation of the “vocabulary” lists in this manner could alter the perception of conjugation as a fundamental linguistic skill and a required foundation for further study.

The resurrection of dictation exercises is also of concern to many teachers. Even in the nineteenth century this practice was being questioned, with Gouin noting the issue of frequent mistake making during a dictation and the possibility of absorbing that mistake as fact. “During the time that [a student] scribbles and blots on a page under dictation, [they] might assimilate it and read it over twenty times.” (Gouin, 1894) In the 1960s, Bennett noted that dictation was a skill with “little relation to any real life activity,” (Bennett, 1968) and yet, half a century later we are bringing it back to our classrooms. It will be up to subject leaders and teachers to develop strategies to support those with processing difficulties in this particular area, and could lead to a further reduction in students with SEND taking MFL qualifications as a result.

The rigidity of the aforementioned vocabulary lists means that it may be more difficult for teachers to bring in much cultural content, which is what, in practice, seems to excite students most in their language learning. In my own practice, letting Year 8 students re-enact the closing ceremony of the San Fermin festival brings the subject to life for them. Yes, we write about attending the festival in the preterite tense (manipulating verbs for ourselves) and using a wide range of vocabulary, but it is the cultural experience that students remember and makes them consider the subject for GCSE. Will it be possible for teachers to find time for such cultural interludes with so much vocabulary to get through?

There is much about the 2024 MFL GCSE qualification which remains unknown at present. In particular, the modes of assessment and grade boundaries will be key to its success. The severe grading of MFL GCSEs has long been noted, making languages a poor performer on school results tables, which in turn leads to poor take up from students and additional pressure placed upon teaching staff. The extent to which these examinations will be more or less difficult than what we have at present remains to be seen with the publication of detailed specifications from examination boards in due course. However, since the current specification has only been available for examination since June 2018, it is arguable that there has not been a sufficient number of ‘real’

examination series on which to base these changes. The financial impact on schools in terms of additional training, resource materials and the time it will take teachers to re-write their courses from scratch should not be underestimated.

Dr Simon Hyde, General Secretary of Headmasters’ & Headmistresses’ Conference HMC, said: “HMC’s schools in England want to see a vibrant, enjoyable and exciting Modern Languages qualification. HMC members fear that the narrow focus of these confirmed proposals will not arrest the declining numbers wishing to study languages.

“This model will not give students the confidence in their language, both at examination level and as a life skill, to take forward into further studies, careers and personal endeavours.

“Crucially, these proposals will further widen the academic step up for students moving from GCSE to A Level languages, which is already significant and may deter many students from studying languages at A Level. The costs and time involved in retraining teachers and redesigning resources, so soon into the lifecycle of the current language specifications, will be an unnecessary burden on schools when they are already incredibly stretched.”

1 assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/844128/Recent_trends_in_modern_foreign_language_exam_entries_in_anglophone_countries_-_FINAL65573.pdf
2 www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/language_trends_2021_report.pdf

A question of gender

The Girls' Day Schools Trust (GDST) updated policy on trans students generated some strident responses in the media, not all of them balanced or accurate. ISM is pleased to help put the record straight...

The GDST admissions policy:

The GDST is committed to single-sex education for girls. Admissions to GDST schools are based on the prospective student's legal sex as recorded on their birth certificate. Further details of the approach that the GDST will take in different situations are set out below:

New applicants who are legally female but who identify as trans or non-binary:

Applications from students who are legally female but who identify as trans or non-binary will be carefully considered on a case-by-case basis. Single-sex schools present a particular context for transgender students. There may be cultural challenges involved in a trans student who does not identify as a girl attending a school which deliberately tailors its ethos

and educational approach to cater specifically for girls.

New applicants who are legally male but who identify as trans or non-binary:

GDST schools are able to operate a single-sex admissions policy, without breaching the Equality Act 2010 on the basis of an exemption relating to biological sex. The GDST believes

that an admissions policy based on gender identity rather than the legal sex recorded on a student's birth certificate would jeopardise the status of GDST schools as single-sex schools under the act. For this reason, GDST schools do not accept applications from students who are legally male. We will, however, continue to monitor the legal interpretation of this exemption.

Cheryl Giovannoni, CEO GDST, provided ISM with this statement on updated Gender Identity Policy:



"Our schools have a responsibility to support trans students by making sure measures are in place to ensure any needs they have are addressed. The underlying aim of our policy is to help staff provide this support. We wrote our policy because we want to make the best choices for the long-term wellbeing of our trans students.

"We regret the fact that media reporting and commentary in response to our policy update may have caused upset amongst people within GDST. We did not intend to make an ideological stand on this issue, or for our policy to be made public and hijacked by some parties as a vehicle to convey their messages in this sensitive debate.

"We are not affiliated with, or influenced by, any outside

organisation in developing our policy. Instead, we have tried to steer a course that remains true to the GDST's single-sex ethos while ensuring a supportive environment for students transitioning or exploring their gender identity.

"We recognise that this has provoked a significant reaction and that strong views have been shared, some of which are misleading or inaccurate in respect of our

organisation, our ethos and our values.

"We are listening to the concerns that have been raised. We will be listening carefully to students – valued members of our school community. Ultimately, the views, opinions and beliefs of our students, parents, staff and wider school communities will shape our policy in the long term."

Nursery Developments

Works have begun at Cheltenham College Prep School, Gloucestershire, to build a brand new, purpose-built Nursery School. Opening its doors in September 2022, the building has been designed to offer spacious modern classrooms and outside space to children aged between 3 and 5 years.

Designed by the Gloucester-based firm, Roberts Limbrick Architects, the Nursery School has eco-build status.

Cheltenham Nursery School will be sited amongst the trees in the heart of the Cheltenham Prep site, giving pupils access to 75 acres of green space to explore during their Outdoor Learning sessions.

Head of Cheltenham Prep, Mr Tom O'Sullivan, said: "The new Nursery School is the beginning of the Cheltenham Prep journey for our youngest pupils. We are continuously striving to provide the best educational experience for our pupils, and this brilliant new building will provide the best possible start for their journey. We passionately believe that a

happy child will be far more likely to fulfil their potential, and this amazing learning environment will certainly provide our youngest pupils with a safe and supportive, but also extraordinary and exciting, beginning to their school lives".



Bluebell Nursery – part of the Langley School, Norfolk, family – officially opened a brand new Baby Room for ages 6 months and above, during a special unveiling.

Langley Headmaster Mr Jon Perriss was joined by EYFS Governor Dr Hannah Nearney to cut the ribbon and declare the Baby Room open.

Bluebell Nursery Managers are Kym Carey and Meganne Smith.

The Nursery is based at the Langley Prep School site in Taverham, home to the neo-Jacobian Taverham Hall, where the milestone of 100 years of education is celebrated this year.

A unique benefit of the setting is that the Nursery is nestled within 100 acres of parkland and ancient woodland, where Langley Prep School's Outdoor Learning Centre sees pupils playing and learning out in nature every day.



Exam boards should aim to drop compulsory handwritten tests, says Head



Exam boards should aim to drop the compulsory handwritten tests for GCSEs and A-levels, and allow typed papers instead, to improve fairness and accessibility for all, suggests Keith Metcalfe, head of Malvern College in Worcestershire. He says the pandemic has reinforced this viewpoint as teachers and pupils have used various online platforms to complete and upload schoolwork.

“Any headteacher should rightly feel proud of the education sector at the moment, which has not only survived a truly challenging crisis but has looked at ways it can learn and emerge even better for it.

At Malvern College, we had already started to introduce technology such as Zoom, Teams and OneNote long before the first lockdown, because these are tools that can vastly improve how we educate our children. They are not just ports in a storm.

So maybe now it's time to look at how this technology can make the right kind of difference elsewhere. It still amazes me that, when technology is so much more at our fingertips, pupils still go into exams clutching a pen and paper.

Is it not time that we considered dropping handwritten GCSEs and A Levels in favour of using touch typing and other technology that would make the process fairer, more accessible, and more efficient, preparing our children for the world into which they are actually going to go?

Schools are rapidly becoming the last place where handwriting is used as a tool for work. And exam boards are starting to look antiquated for hanging on to this old-fashioned method as a part of how we measure success.

I do greatly appreciate a handwritten thank you note and make it a regular part of my way of thanking my team. As a teacher, I get a deep sense of satisfaction in seeing neat legible script. So I am

certainly not saying it is something schools should drop; in fact, we should encourage children to develop both skills.

But I have noticed how, as we use typing more regularly, long periods of handwriting can become increasingly tiring. Those who spend more time touch-typing, can lose speed and clarity of hand-writing and thus are not able to express their ideas so proficiently in exams where hand-written answers are required. I am not sure this is fair or whether it achieves what a modern education should deliver.

Good schools will continue to have an important focus on handwriting, but simply to do this in order to prepare pupils for exams seems a little backward. It is not preparing them for the real world where

handwriting is becoming less valid.

I use a mix of technology during classroom work, but insist on handwritten prep. This seems to work extremely well, and is a positive way to give pupils the balance of skills they need.

Amid a clamour for a change in the way we assess the academic capabilities of youngsters, a desire for a greater focus on skills and learning to harness the power of technology is undoubtedly an important one; is now the time to encourage exam boards to join us in the 21st century?

In my discussions with pupils I know they also feel strongly about this and are keen to take the lead in seeing change for the better.”



Taste of success

Students at Queen's College, Somerset, are celebrating their culinary success at the Royal Academy of Culinary Arts national finals. Queen's College was the only school in the entire country to compete in two different age groups.

Tired after a 6am start, coupled with pre competition nerves, Queen's students Natasha Ncube (Year 10) and Munopa Uhete (Year 13) both managed to score exceptionally high marks in their categories and were individually praised by Head Judge and celebrity TV chef Lesley Waters.

Pictured: Natasha and Munopa with celebrity TV chef Lesley Waters

Quality Mark Award

Chapter House, the Early Years, Infants and Junior School at Queen Ethelburga's Collegiate, Yorkshire, has been re-awarded the prestigious Primary Quality Mark Award for English and Mathematics by the national programme The Quality Mark.

This national accreditation is awarded to schools which meet the Quality Mark Standard and lasts for a period of three years, with Chapter House previously being awarded the Quality Mark in 2018.



Pictured: Karen Kilkenny, Head of Chapter House (far left) and Joanna Young, Deputy Head of Chapter House (far right) with Chapter House pupils and the new Primary Quality Mark Award plaque



Baroness inspires a new generation

Baroness Floella Benjamin DBE DL and Royal Russell School, Surrey, pupils have planted an Oak tree and saplings on Royal Russell's 110 acre campus.

The Jubilee trees were planted as part of The Queen's Green Canopy – a unique tree planting initiative created to mark the Platinum Jubilee of Royal Russell's Patron, Her Majesty The Queen.

Chris Hutchinson, Headmaster of Royal Russell School said: "We strongly believe in the wellbeing benefits of a green environment and I've long extolled the virtues of nature and its positive impact on learning."

Royal Russell is particularly special for Lady Benjamin as her daughter, Alvina, attended the School as a child and now teaches Geography and is Head of Reade House.

Lady Benjamin commented "It's so

important that we look after and appreciate our environment while we still have the chance. Some of the work I do in the House of Lords is concerned with ensuring we take positive action to protect the environment. That's why I was so happy to be invited to be an ambassador for The Queen's Green Canopy initiative. I hope future generations will enjoy this beautiful Oak tree which the children and I have planted today".

The Oak tree planted by Lady Benjamin will stand in Lime Tree Quad which was designed by architect Sir Aston Webb, right in the heart of Royal Russell School and will be enjoyed by future generations of pupils.

This special tree has been added to the interactive QGC Map, joining the growing network of green canopy projects across the country.

About QGC

The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) is a unique tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 which invites people from across the UK to "Plant a Tree for the Jubilee".

Everyone from individuals to Scout and Girlguiding groups, villages, cities, counties, schools and corporates will be encouraged to play their part to enhance our environment by planting trees during the official planting season between October to March. Tree planting will commence again in October 2022, through to the end of the Jubilee year.

With a focus on planting sustainably, the QGC will encourage tree planting to create a legacy in honour of The Queen's leadership of the nation, which will benefit future generations. As well as inviting the planting of new trees, the QGC will dedicate a network of 70 Ancient Woodlands across the UK and identify 70 Ancient Trees to celebrate Her Majesty's 70 years of service.

By inviting everyone to plant considerable numbers of new trees throughout the country, the QGC seeks to highlight the significant value of trees and woodlands as nature's simple but highly effective way to clean the air we breathe, slow the impact of climate change, create important wildlife habitats and improve our general health and wellbeing.

Pictured with Floella are (back row L-R): John Evans, Headmaster, Royal Russell Junior School; Alvina Benjamin-Taylor, Head of Geography; Chris Hutchinson, Headmaster, Royal Russell School along with Pupil Heads of School and, in blazers, the juniors who helped with the tree planting

Global Icon Visit

It is not often you get to meet a global icon in the flesh, but Sixth Form pupils at Bancroft's School in Essex, had the chance to do just that when they welcomed veteran Civil Rights campaigner and politician Reverend Jesse Jackson to the school.

The 80-year-old has twice stood for US president in ground breaking campaigns, has served as Senator of Washington DC and has made his mark on the international diplomatic stage on many occasions. Over the years

Rev Jackson has been recognised for his work in human and civil rights and campaigning for nonviolent social change.

Head Simon Marshall, who presented Rev Jackson with a copy of "Floreat" the Bancroft's history, described the visit as "an honour". Mr Marshall went on to say, "It is not often we have the chance to encounter someone who has lived through such interesting times and who has been such a prominent figure in the fight for human rights."



Pictured (L to R): Philip Harrison (Head of Sixth Form) Faith Cunningham, Jasmine Rajan, Rev Jesse Jackson, Chizara Oti (pupils are members of Bancroft's Afro Caribbean Society)



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The impact of eating disorders in schools

The Institute of Teaching and Learning at Sevenoaks School, Kent, has released its annual academic journal, *Innovate*, which shares findings from research-focused projects to support good practice in schools. A professional development resource for educators, the journal provides research-informed ideas to implement in teachers' own practice.

Sarah Eversfield, Teacher of English and Assistant House Mistress, reflects further on one of the topics in the latest Innovate...

What are eating disorders?

1.25 million people in the UK live with an eating disorder. Around 75% of these are female and 25% are male (Beat, 2021). Many eating disorders start in adolescence and can be devastating to the lives of young people. To someone with a healthy and unemotional relationship with food, eating disorders can seem inexplicable and even ridiculous. Conversely, someone with an eating disorder could be sitting in a Maths lesson, unable to focus for more than seven seconds on something that is not the food they will or will not eat that day, the toast they 'shouldn't' have eaten that morning or the way their thighs look on the classroom chair. Every minute of every day is punctuated by thoughts about food, weight and shape.

Eating disorders are highly serious, insidious and irrational, seriously impacting the health and quality of life of sufferers and those around them.

Who is impacted by eating disorders?

A culture of young people trying their best at all times may lead

to some of them developing perfectionistic traits, found to be common in those with eating disorders (Holland et al, 2013). Bernie Wright, a counsellor, psychotherapist and specialist in eating disorders, interviewed for this article, comments: "We do often see students from extremely academic schools, where children live with very high parental expectations. And their way of dealing with their feelings can be to sedate themselves with refined carbs and sugars or sedate themselves by having that very euphoric feeling of starvation."

The friends of those suffering with eating disorders are also at risk; studies suggest eating disorders can be contagious, especially in group social settings such as schools and boarding schools (Allison et al, 2014).

What can staff do if they notice someone with an eating disorder?

Wright advises staff who notice the signs of eating disorders to initiate a conversation.

"In their roles as teachers, boarding house-parents and matrons, staff

may notice the signs of eating disorders. They are not qualified professionals in healthcare or eating disorders, but they may observe the symptoms. For example, duty staff might observe a student regularly not eating at meals, or a child who has lost a significant amount of weight over a holiday. In the boarding house, you might observe a child binge eating a huge amount every time there is a birthday cake, going back and forward from the kitchen to get more. Either way, it is a concern.

I would say, "I have noticed that you're regularly doing this" or "I've noticed you're not nourishing yourself. I wonder what else is going on? I wonder what really is bothering you? Is there anything you would like to say to us?" In my experience people who are using food in these ways may be trying to make themselves feel better about something.

By starting an initial conversation like that, we can start to find out what is happening and show them we are aware of the issue. That's not a difficult conversation for staff to have – sometimes staff might shy



away from these conversations for fear of putting their foot in it. But that's a fairly easy way in."

What should we prioritise in our schools to create a healthier culture?

Wright offers some insight into how schools should address this highly important issue and deal with a potentially unhealthy culture.

"I think talking about eating disorders is not necessarily the answer. A sufferer or potential sufferer will not necessarily be listening to the talk on anorexia or the talk on bulimia.

In schools, I believe we should be focusing more on managing anxiety, building self-esteem, building resilience. As far as I can see, anxiety is the biggest problem in young people now. And that has a huge impact on my work in the eating disorders space."

It is clear that thought and time should be spent by schools, pastoral teams and teachers considering the widespread nature and potential impact of eating disorders in their settings.

Innovate's Flourishing flavour

The third edition of the journal centres on the theme of human flourishing, initiated by the school's research project with researchers from Research Schools International and The Human Flourishing Program at Harvard. Reflecting on a year of recovery, realignment and growth, many of the featured articles explore what it means to flourish in relation to learning, happiness and life satisfaction, mental and physical health.

Guided by Harvard's definition of flourishing – the feeling of contentment across different aspects of life, from happiness and life satisfaction to character and virtue, meaning and purpose, and mental and physical health – and evaluating the activities known to promote it, Sevenoaks School explored how it was already promoting flourishing and where it could do more.

Commenting on the publication of *Innovate*, Jesse Elzinga, Headmaster at Sevenoaks School said: "Our Institute of Teaching and Learning ensures our teachers are supported in their professional learning, are encouraged to reflect on their craft and share their observations with the wider educational community. A culture of reflective practice ultimately benefits each one of our students every day, as enlightened teachers deliver inspiring and effective lessons. By sharing these reflections with the wider educational community through *Innovate*, we hope to enhance professional learning elsewhere."

Innovate is now available online from: <https://www.sevenoaksschool.org/teachinglearning/research/innovate>

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Holistic awards initiative

Students at Westholme School, Lancashire, have been congratulated for their achievements in all areas of life as the school held its first ever Holistic Awards presentation.

The celebration not only focused on educational achievements but also leadership, communication skills and extra-curricular interests.

The bronze and silver holistic awards – custom-made pin badges – were presented to 45 students from Years 7, 8 and 9 as part of a whole school assembly in the school's theatre.

Dr Richard Robson, Principal, explained: "Westholme School offers an 'unrivalled holistic excellence' bespoke to our school. The Holistic Award encourages the development of key skills outside the classroom preparing all our pupils for the 21st century workplace from a very young age."

Recognition was given to students who had carried out an act of kindness, organised a charity event

or had been selected to play for a sports team. Volunteering for tasks such as helping to deliver a whole school assembly were also praised.

To achieve the awards, which will be presented each term, students need to achieve a set number of credits in key areas:

academic; co-curricular; leadership; communication; service to school; and personal development.

Mrs Louise Cowan, who kick started the awards, said: "Actions speak louder than words. The Westholme Holistic Awards demonstrate the skills, confidence

and achievements of students.

"We would like to say a huge congratulations to all those students who have achieved a Holistic Award. The Award recognises the commitment in all aspects of student life – both in and out of the classroom."



Tokyo latest in family

Malvern College has announced Malvern College Tokyo as the latest addition to the Malvern College Family of Schools.

The school, which will open its doors in September 2023, will be Malvern's seventh overseas school, expanding the global network to a total of 10 schools. As well as the parent school and two further preparatory schools, all located in Worcestershire, other locations include Qingdao, Chengdu, both in mainland China, Hong Kong, Cairo and Switzerland.

Located in the suburb of Kodaira, a 40-minute commute from central Tokyo, Malvern College Tokyo aims to be the leading international school in Tokyo and the first British-branded all-through IB school in Japan. The school will share the ethos of its parent institution and will initially accommodate pupils from Years 1 to 9, ultimately providing

950 places for both primary and secondary pupils. It is anticipated that the school will attract both Japanese and expatriate pupils from greater Tokyo.

Allan Walker, Director of International Schools for Malvern College, says: "We are delighted to be opening Malvern College Tokyo in partnership with Babylon Education, following the success of our other schools in the region, located in Qingdao, Chengdu and Hong Kong.

"Each of our international schools offers a holistic education which is centred around a recognised international curriculum. It is especially important to us that we incorporate the values and ethos of Malvern College in our schools as we believe that it is these values which will best prepare our pupils for success in today's increasingly globalised society. Together with my colleagues from

Malvern College UK I look forward to supporting our new school in Tokyo as we begin the exciting journey towards its opening in 2023, and to its eventual success as a leading school in the Asia Pacific region."

Malvern College Tokyo intends to adopt the International Baccalaureate as the core curriculum for the primary, middle and secondary sections of the school, and will be pursuing

authorisation as an IB World School. Malvern College Tokyo would then become Malvern's second all-through IB school following the success of Malvern College Hong Kong, which opened in 2018.

Leadership, teaching and support staff roles at Malvern College Tokyo will be advertised in summer 2022 and further information is available at www.malverncollegetokyo.jp



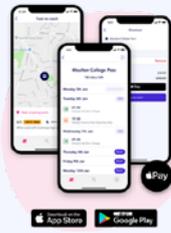
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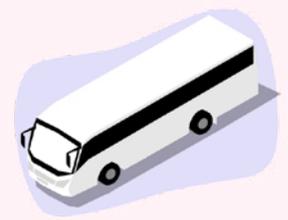
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We can work with them and just add our technology



The Snug – support when & where it's needed

A dedicated wellbeing centre to house specialist support services has been opened at Dame Allan's Schools, Newcastle. *Kate Stanley reports...*

There's no doubt that Covid-19 has caused unprecedented disruption in children's lives, and their social and emotional development has been impacted significantly in the wake of the global pandemic.

However, the vulnerability of young minds has long been recognised, and promoting good mental health within schools is imperative if generation after generation are to be given the right skills to cope with the many challenges they will inevitably face throughout their lifetime.

Dame Allan's Schools was the first independent school in the region to employ a dedicated counsellor more than 20 years ago, and has honoured its commitment to stay responsive to the pressures young people face by recognising the needs of its student body long before quiet concerns become serious problems.

The Schools have invested significantly in the creation of a wellbeing centre; a relaxed, peaceful place with comfy sofas, soft music, and therapeutic activities, that sits away from the general hustle and bustle of school life. It is markedly different in appearance to the rest of the school and appropriately named The Snug. It not only houses support services operating outside the curriculum, including psychotherapy, counselling, and learning support, but provides an inclusive space where pupils feel safe, heard and understood.

Natalie Shaw, Vice Principal (Pastoral) says its creation is paramount in enabling Dame Allan's to offer the appropriate care to a wider mix of pupils, who are exhibiting an array of needs at a variety of levels.

"We acknowledge that children need to talk to people other than

their teachers or parents, but what we must then do is create a support system that effectively addresses those needs and promotes positive mental health in a way that is relevant and current," she says.

"That means not only looking to provide the very best support services that we can, but also looking to house those services within a central hub that has its own purpose; a quiet place that actually doesn't feel like school – a positive space, where pupils feel it is safe to be, with no stigma attached."

While there has been limited robust research published about the mental health of children during the Covid-19 pandemic, studies that have been undertaken suggest mental health has significantly worsened, particularly during lockdowns. According to the latest NHS England data (May 2021) referrals to child mental health services have reached record highs.

Dame Allan's – like all schools – has a duty to adapt.

Ms Shaw explains: "Young people globally have experienced an extraordinary amount of change over a relatively short space of time. They've faced physical restrictions at an age when they crave space to grow, and have been catapulted into a world of remote learning away from their peers.

"As a result, we're seeing higher levels of stress among children who have not only been deprived of ordinary social experiences, but who might also have witnessed the intense pressures their parents are under, and perhaps even experienced loss of relatives."

The full impact of Covid is yet to be realised, but nationally schools are reporting a rise in general

anxiety among young people. More specifically, paediatricians and child mental health practitioners have noticed an increase in tic-like symptoms among adolescents, particularly females, that developed during lockdown.

Dame Allan's has ploughed considerable thought as well as investment into the creation of The Snug. Designed as a place of refuge for children, it includes prayer space and counselling rooms, as well as small classrooms for learning support. It is purposefully private, with no windows within the main room, so those who use it don't feel overlooked or insecure.

It is open to both staff and senior school pupils, although used primarily by the latter and those already receiving support under the umbrella of pastoral care. Young people who access the facilities sign in and out, allowing staff to keep check of any repeated patterns of usage, and there is no separation of year groups, meaning pupils can support one another when needed, backed by the Schools' peer mentoring framework.

In addition to the physical space, Dame Allan's has introduced a therapy dog, Heidi, to the mix. The trained Maltichon – a cross between a Maltese Terrier and a Bichon Frise – is gentle, patient and affectionate in temperament and attends The Snug once a week to interact with pupils.

Learning support teacher and Heidi's owner, Kelly Lowery, said having a dog in a school is shown to help improve behaviour, attendance, and academic confidence among pupils, while lowering levels of anxiety, stabilising intense emotions and enhancing relationships. It also teaches pupils about responsibility, and develops key skills in empathy and nurturing.

"Children take great enjoyment from interacting with Heidi; she is such a calming influence and helps create a friendly, happy and homely environment within The Snug," says Kelly. "Heidi has recently supported students taking their mock exams and been a welcome distraction and comfort to those who felt a little overwhelmed."

Last month (January) former pupil and award-winning Radio and Television presenter, and published



Pictured: Natalie Shaw in the Snug



Pictured: Kelly Lowery and therapy dog Heidi

author, Vick Hope returned to Dame Allan's to officially open The Snug.

As co-host of the 'Life Hacks' show and the 'Life Hacks Wellbeing toolkit' on BBC Radio 1, she connects with listeners and invites experts on air to help young people prioritise their mental health as they navigate life's challenges.

She said: "It's been important to me in my work to raise awareness, destigmatise and signpost resources dedicated to nurturing the psychological and emotional wellbeing of our young people, and I'm so proud that Dame Allan's is clearly doing this work so well too."

But how does Dame Allan's measure the success of The Snug, and the pastoral care it provides to children across all four of its Schools that operate within its diamond structure of education?

Ms Shaw says: "We measure success on how children feel when they are in The Snug and when they are supported by our growing team of highly trained and specialised staff. If The Snug is being used as intended, and if young people feel safe and supported, then we feel assured that we are doing the best we can for those who need us.

"There's a palpable sense of trust here – pupils trust one another, and they trust us to listen. They genuinely care for and respect one another, and they're prepared to talk, to have difficult conversations and share their concerns. As long as children are talking, and we are listening, then the right steps are being taken to protect their emotional wellbeing."



Head Will Scott with Vick Hope at the Snug opening

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Teachers must be leaders too

From camouflage to classroom

On George Vlachonikolis' 25th birthday, he was holding an SA80 assault rifle. Inside his webbing pouches were 150 rounds of ammunition, two HE grenades, two smoke grenades, a small survival kit, 20 Marlboro Lights, and a medikit that included two sticks of morphine and two tourniquets. Strapped to the left-hand side of his Osprey body armour, within easy reach, was his bayonet. George was in Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

On George's 37th birthday, he was wearing a striped cotton twill shirt and well-ironed beige chinos. A thin fabric lanyard carried his ID badge proudly. In front of him was a class of secondary school students, who were settling down and getting ready for their next lesson. George was in a school in the UK.

Now, George has written a book. *From Camouflage to Classroom* is about everything George learned with the British Army in Afghanistan and has brought to his classroom teaching today. By reflecting on the most intense and thought-provoking experiences of his life, George aims to explore the role of the classroom teacher from an original perspective: one based on military principles and practice.

- "How many people did you kill?"
- "What was it like out there?"
- "Are you OK now?"

That one always gets me. Normally, it's accompanied by a two-finger tap to the temple. What the students really want to know is: 'am I all messed up with PTSD and stuff?'

I'm sure anybody who's left the armed forces and then found a new civvy career has had these questions fired at them. It's all part and parcel of being a veteran, I guess.

Then, of course, there's the assumptions.

- "The Army probably got you really into fitness"
- "You must have a really dark sense of humour"
- "I bet you're always 5 minutes early to everything"

I still get these. It's been 10 years since I left the British Army and, still, I get all of these.

Back in 2011 I had just completed my second operational tour to Afghanistan and, to be honest, I didn't much fancy a third. So, I chose to shift gears into a new challenge and became a school teacher. In fact, I've now been a school teacher for longer than I was in the Army.

Somewhere along the line I decided to write a book about my military

to teaching transition. From camouflage to classroom. I don't know about you but I'm fed up with educational books that claim to be teachers' manuals but just end up telling me all the things I'm doing wrong: 'Here's something else you should be doing in class', 'Here's the latest scientific advice that contradicts the last bit of advice', 'Here are 10 things all teachers have forgotten to do'. The focus always seems to be on specific practice and/or activities in class. I always thought there were deeper fundamentals that I relate back to my time in the Army. More often than not, I ended up reflecting on my previous Army career to help solve my challenges at school.

I know what you're thinking: he's talking about instilling Army-like discipline. It's easy to imagine ex-service personnel as Windsor Davies types from 'It Aint Half Hot Mum'. Like the many other assumptions above, everyone seems to assume that Army life looks something like the opening 20mins from Full Metal Jacket with Private Pile being shouted at the unnamed swearsy sergeant. Whilst that makes for good TV, we don't all just run around camp shouting at each other and dishing out orders to people. Any commander who tried to do that would get filled in pretty quickly.

I'm not talking about rigidly

enforcing discipline. In fact, I despair at classroom practitioners who challenge us to be assertive all the time: 'It's my classroom and these are the rules!'. In my view, this sows the seeds for a power-play conflict that will inhibit effective teaching. Instead, my book argues that teaching and learning will be far more effective in an environment where teachers and students are on the same side. As teachers, we should view ourselves as military commanders and students as the soldiers. We need to lead them, not fight them. Considered in this sense, teaching is as much about leadership skills as it is fine-tuning pedagogical skills.

To give you an example, let's talk about 'the enemy' briefly. Last summer, I sat talking to a fellow teacher at another school about what classes we had next year. He told me that he'd got the Year 9s and 'they are all a*****s'. He used a cricketing metaphor, saying 'I've already got my forward defence ready for them'. I smirked. That any teacher would want to speak about their students like they are the enemy baffles me.

In my opinion, labelling students as the enemy is probably the single most counterproductive move anyone can make in teaching. In Afghanistan, we had an enemy. We called him Terry. Before my first tour, I remember sitting in a



cold briefing hall in Kent being told what Terry looked like, what he talked like, what he dressed like and how bad he really was. We were told how he had abused his own people, what he liked to do to foreign and, via a Powerpoint kaleidoscope of severed body parts and mutilated corpses, what he wanted to do to us. Terry wasn't just bad, we were told, he was evil.

But, let's be clear: in teaching, our students are not the enemy. We are not there to battle them. We are there to lead them into battle.

Against who? Well, this is where I think it can be useful to create a common enemy with your class. In my own teaching career I've generally taught exam classes. As a result, I often choose to label the final summer exams (and the examiners who mark them) as a common enemy. I frequently talk in combative terms too:

- 'I want you to destroy the exam.'
- 'Give the examiners no mercy.'
- 'Make sure they surrender their A grade to you.'
- I want you to batter the examiner with your analytical prose.'

In my experience, creating a common enemy that you and your students can overcome together will help to avoid teacher-student conflict by harnessing that collective energy.

Perhaps that is easier for me to say because I have always worked in an independent school setting. But, like you, I've had my fair share of awkward students too. Ones that could make my lessons difficult. Undermine me. Lead a mutiny.

But, again, my Army career was useful in the sense that I'd come across many soldiers like that before. And I realised that there is absolutely no point picking a fight with them. Try and they'll try harder. Instead, I had to adapt. It's a bit cliched, but the best solution was often using a 'hearts and minds' strategy to build relationships. My favourite trick was to always carry a pack of cigarettes with me, but the cigarettes weren't really for me. If I ever wanted to know what was really going on with a particular soldier, I'd offer them a cigarette and just sit back and listen. We would invariably connect and from there we could build a bond.

Of course, I'm not advocating that you share cigarettes with your students but there are other ways:

- Find the common interest.

- Put things in the student's terms.
- Speak their language (and if it's an international student, literally).
- Give the student an analogy they can relate to.
- Discover their personal motivation.

Leadership skills are visibly important in the Army. It takes a lot of courage for soldiers to line up at the gates of a poorly fortified patrol base in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. They will only do that if they believe in their leaders.

Without exaggeration, I see many parallels with our students. Learning requires our students to make a conscious and often courageous effort. Remember, they might be just as anxious and fearful as the soldiers outlined above. My argument, therefore, is that learning will never be as effective as it can be unless students believe in their teacher. This is why, for me, leadership skills are so vitally important for teachers too. We should aim to be Leader Teachers.

George Vlachonikolis is Head of Economics and Professional Tutor at Headington School, Oxfordshire

From Camouflage to Classroom

What the reviewers say:

This is an excellent book. Based on his experiences of leadership in the Army, George cuts through a great many of the fads and bogus theories of teaching to present a common-sense perspective on what works best in the classroom.

Barnaby Lenon, dean of education, University of Buckingham

I am fascinated by military history and teaching is my passion in life. Despite reading a lot about the military and being well versed in books about education, I have never read anything like this before. George wanted to write a book for teachers that is different and he certainly accomplished that. Don't be fooled into thinking this is an Army survival guide that can be adapted for the classroom; far from it. While there are comparisons and insights about life in the military, there is a wealth of wisdom that teachers – or Leader Teachers, as the author puts it – can take away. No nonsense, with warmth and character.

Kate Jones, teacher and author of the Retrieval Practice series

This is a wonderfully provocative book, but not what you might expect from a frontline soldier turned teacher. Your students are members of your unit. The enemy is what gets in the way of learning: poverty and the lack of skills and aspiration. This is no bullying bootcamp: the classroom becomes a safe haven, not a battleground; trust and cooperation are key. A gloriously imaginative and inspiring read.

Gordon Stobart, emeritus professor of education
University College London

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The surprising benefits of teaching young people military heritage & values



For many, the last two years for school staff have been akin to a military operation. COVID-19 has seen the team at Royal Hospital School, Suffolk, offer an online learning platform, followed by a hybrid working method, a COVID-secure school and teacher assessed exam grades. Thanks to a collective team effort from staff, and the resilience of the students, it has been a success and allowed our young people to thrive. On reflection, says head Simon Lockyer, "I see why it has proved so positive for young people to have instilled in them our naval heritage and values".

Here at RHS, our rich seafaring history is celebrated and lives on in the daily life of the School through a number of traditions, including Divisions, formal parades requiring pupils to wear naval uniform, learn the rudiments of dress and march in step. These spectacular ceremonies, which generate tremendous pride in pupils and their families, are held on seven occasions over the course of the year to coincide with annual events such as Harvest Festival, Remembrance Day and Prize Giving.

Although there is a cost associated to the School in providing a naval uniform to every student, along with hours spent by our older pupils teaching the younger years the art of marching, the benefits this activity instils in our young people are immeasurable.

What makes these events so special and remarkable is that this long held tradition is a function of pupil leadership; successive generations of pupils are responsible for passing on the knowledge, standards and skills. It is so much more than just marching; it teaches young people valuable skills and attitudes including collaboration, active listening, self-discipline, integrity, honour, loyalty, and most important of all, ownership in the achievement that comes from being part of something bigger; by acting

together as a team. Preparation is fundamental to success, and when the school gathers for a parade, it is apparent just how much it means to the pupils taking part, and to their families and friends.

At RHS, we are proud to have long standing naval connections. The School was established in 1712 to provide boys from seafaring backgrounds the rare privilege of learning arithmetic and navigation. Now, 300 years later, it is a thriving co-educational school for children from all backgrounds, and from around the globe. Today the heritage is retained in some of the language; the dining hall is still fondly referred to as the Mess. Every morning and evening representatives from each house proudly raise and lower the school's defaced ensign, and Trafalgar Night is one of the highlights for the senior pupils.

There are also links maintained with our maritime and seafaring heritage; not just as a function of the school's coastal location but also through our outstanding sailing academy with its fleet of over 70 boats. The academy offers coaching to the highest performers who compete around the globe as well as providing provision for all Year 7 pupils to learn to sail. This dedicated week in their first term here actively encourages our youngest pupils

to learn the technical aspects of navigating a dinghy and challenges them to do something that, for many, is outside of their day to day comfort zone; the sense of achievement at the end of the week is tangible. It encourages initiative and resilience, whilst developing skills such as team collaboration and confidence. The energy and commitment shown by every child to get to the finish line and achieve their RYA Dingy Sailing Certificate is often one of the most memorable moments of their early years at RHS.

At RHS our Combined Cadet Force (CCF), is one of the largest and most active school groups in the country. Pupils can get involved in the Army, Marines, Navy or Air Force sections but, regardless, the emphasis is on personal development and fun. Cadets meet every Friday afternoon and there are termly field training days, leadership courses and adventure training camps both in the UK and overseas. Pupils develop teamwork and leadership skills, as well as acquiring proficiency in map reading, first aid, navigation, shooting, field craft, safety skills and self-reliance. There are also opportunities for sailing, flying, sub-aqua, rock-climbing, coastering, power-boating and many other outdoor pursuits. It is important to offer pupils opportunities to

be resourceful throughout their education – it is a life skill that instils confidence in readiness for the modern world, and what better way to do that than through teaching young people traditional military values.

We work hard to empower, inspire and challenge our pupils to realise their full potential and strengthen their character. The original values and traditions that remain have become distilled and refined. They provide the opportunities and ethos that encourage and promote the attributes and attitudes we feel provide our pupils with enviable employability skills but, as importantly, the personal skills to live full and independent lives. The School has a long list of generous alumni who have made charitable donations in order to give children the opportunity to experience a first-class education. Former pupils return to visit, and they talk about the rich culture of the School which gave them the confidence to lead happy, fulfilling lives.

We are proud of our naval heritage and consider the related values it inculcates in our young people as the magic ingredient to navigating their critical formative years, not just through their education, but as a foundation for future success in whatever path they choose to take.

Simon Lockyer, Headmaster at Royal Hospital School

Simon has been the Headmaster at Royal Hospital School for six years and was educated at Blundell's School in Devon. Simon completed a BSc in Microbiology at the University of Newcastle, followed by a PGCE at the University of Cambridge; he then went on to gain an MA in Educational Leadership at the University of Buckingham.

Simon started his teaching career at Bishop's Stortford High School where he was a Teacher of Biology and Assistant Head of Sixth Form (1996-1999). Simon then spent ten years at Wellington College as a Housemaster and Head of Department (1999-2009) before joining Portsmouth Grammar School as Second Master (2009-2015).

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West End performance

Students from Year 7 to Year 13 at Francis Holland School, Sloane Square, London, delivered a performance of the unique musical *Made in Dagenham* at the legendary Adelphi Theatre, one of Andrew Lloyd-Webber's family of six theatres in the heart of London's West End.

Fittingly, the first ever theatrical performance of the show took place at the very same theatre in 2014. This made the occasion particularly special, as did the

fact that it was the school's first, one-night-only West End performance since *Singin' in the Rain* at The Shaftesbury in 2019 due to the pandemic, the first time the show has been resurrected by a school cast in the West End and, remarkably, the first day the girls were able to rehearse in the theatre; all previous rehearsals having taken place in the school hall.

The performance attracted an audience of over 500 and there

was a true buzz of excitement in the packed auditorium which grew more and more palpable as the night progressed.

Made in Dagenham is a musical based on the 2010 film of the same name, which explores the story of the Ford sewing machinists' strike of 1968. In a tenacious struggle for equality, heroine Rita O'Grady and other female workers at Ford's Dagenham plant strike to combat the inequality that becomes

apparent when it is announced that the stitching room workers will have their pay grade dropped to unskilled. The plot is based on real-life events which eventually led to the passing of the Equal Pay Act 1970. There were too many highlights of the show to mention, but one particularly memorable moment was when a real-life Ford car, one of many fantastic props sourced and transformed by the FHS Art and Facilities Departments, was wheeled on stage for the rollicking musical number *Cortina*.

Headmistress Lucy Elphinstone has highlighted the poignancy of the choice of *Made in Dagenham* as this year's West End performance:

"The story of the Ford women of Dagenham, who fought for their voice to be heard and for equality of pay and opportunity, mirrors the struggle of our school over decades to empower its girls to believe that they have as much right as boys and men to be treated with respect and justice, to be independent and free, to realise their dreams."



'My Fair Lady'

The Felsted School, Essex, production of *'My Fair Lady'* saw a return to live audiences as pupils, staff, parents and members of the local community enjoyed five performances over four days. 46 actors from Year 9 to Upper Sixth took to the stage, ably supported by three Assistant Directors, one

Assistant Choreographer, seven stage crew, five musicians, nine hair and makeup artists, five lighting technicians, five sound technicians and four Marketing Associates.

Felsted's Director of Performing Arts, Melanie Donaldson said: "In a departure from convention, Felsted chose to cast an outstanding

female performer to play Higgins; turning the Edwardian misogyny on its head, retaining the comedy, but making songs like 'Hymn to him' ironic. The show balanced entertainment with a much more modern outlook".

For the double cast, it was a debut for many of the pupils, and also

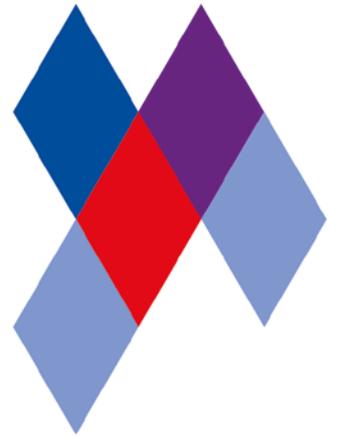
a chance for some of the Upper Sixth to perform in their last Senior School Show. The audiences were lively and enthralled by the many familiar iconic songs, including; 'Wouldn't it be Lovely', 'A Little Bit of Luck', and 'I could have danced all night'.



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Hit musical 'Legally Blonde'

A cast of 130 Dauntsey's School, Wiltshire, pupils, supported by a large backstage crew and full orchestra, has delighted sell-out audiences with a fantastic and uplifting production of Legally Blonde The Musical, adapted from the hit 2001 comedy film. This popular musical with music and lyrics by Laurence O'Keefe and Nell

Benjamin, and book by Heather Hach, launched in 2007 and was a hit both on Broadway and in the West End.

The Dauntsey's production received standing ovations from sell-out audiences across all four nights. The cast was made up of pupils from years 7 to 13; for some this was their stage debut. Backstage,

the School's hi-tech sound and light system, worthy of a West End theatre, created a suitably fun and colourful setting for the musical. The orchestra, made up of both pupils and members of staff, performed the light-hearted score with great skill and energy.

The December production has become a musical tradition for

Dauntsey's and Legally Blonde The Musical follows spellbinding shows including In the Heights, Les Miserables, Mamma Mia, Miss Saigon, and Billy Elliot.

Chris Walker, Director of Drama, Dauntsey's said: "It felt truly momentous to be back on stage, performing live. There was a palpable sense of excitement and joy among both cast and audience as we performed this fun and light-hearted production. A huge amount of hard work goes into staging something on this scale - it's not just about the actors on stage but also make-up, lighting, musicians, sound, costume, choreographers - everyone involved made a huge contribution to delivering a high-energy, slick and crowd-pleasing show. It was wonderful to witness everyone leave at the end with a smile on their face."



Musical collaboration strikes a chord

Brentwood School's first Orchestral Outreach workshop, attracting more than 80 young musicians from the local area, proved a huge success raising the roof of the Wessex Auditorium.

The inaugural event, in collaboration with professional conductor Chloé van Soeterstède (pictured) and members of her professional orchestra, the Arch Sinfonia, will hopefully be the first of many community partnerships.

The Essex school's Director of Music & Performing Arts, Mr Florian Cooper, explained: "We invited local young Orchestral musicians from other secondary schools and youth music organisations in Brentwood and were pleased that 20 external young musicians joined our school symphony orchestra of 60 students for a wonderful afternoon rehearsing the music of Dvorak and Williams.

"It was a fantastic opportunity to rehearse and perform in a professional setting and to experience playing in a large symphonic orchestra - the afternoon culminated in a



performance to parents which was extremely well received."

Chloé van Soeterstède is one of the most exciting young conductors on the professional scene and is enjoying huge international successes, most recently with her appointment as a Dudamel Fellow with the LA Philharmonic Orchestra.

Buoyed by the resounding success of yesterday's workshop, Mr Cooper said he hoped the initiative would pave the way for future outreach collaborations which will be open to all local young musicians.

Performance Academy celebrates its Fifth birthday

Face2Face, the performance academy which opened its doors at Moreton Hall School, Shropshire, in 2017, is celebrating its fifth birthday.

Pupils past and present gathered to share memories of the many productions, guest workshops and summer schools including slideshows of Beauty and the Beast, High School Musical and Elf, with birthday chocolate brownies.

The academy is driven by the specialist tuition of West End performer Michael Jenkins who commented: "I can't quite believe that Face2Face is now five years old. The academy has gone from strength to strength over the years, and continues to provide an excellent training ground for aspiring performing artists, thanks to a team of professionals who help me coach every Friday."

Offering weekly classes in the creative disciplines of singing, dance and performance, the academy has a growing

membership of over 50 young students from across the region and has proven extremely popular within the community. Despite the lockdown, lessons continued online providing masterclasses and teaching with professional performers, directors and designers offering an insight into the creative industry.

Now classes have resumed back within its new home of The Holroyd Community Theatre at the school. Young performers have commenced work on an upcoming musical theatre film project to be filmed by a professional producer and screened in The Holroyd Community Theatre with a live audience later this year.

Michael added: "Face2Face pupils have gone on to gain places at Dance and Drama schools across the country, obtain professional performance employment and have been seen by leading casting directors."

Variation on vaccination: Approaches to sick pay post-pandemic

Joanna Lada-Walicki, independent schools lawyer at Moore Barlow, sets out the potential pitfalls facing schools when offering reduced sick pay to unvaccinated employees.



With so-called 'plan B' restrictions now lifted, what schools should expect of their staff when it comes to vaccination status and wearing masks is arguably a more difficult area to manage than ever before.

Currently in England, people who have had at least two doses of an approved Covid-19 vaccine do not need to self-isolate if they have been in close contact with an infected person.

Recently some major retailers have introduced policies in respect of unvaccinated employees who are required to isolate, after they have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19. These policies state that unvaccinated staff will be paid Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) only when isolating, rather than the enhanced rate of company sick pay available to employees who are 'sick'. This begs the question:

should other sectors, including education, follow suit?

The small print

Schools intending to adopt a similar approach would need to handle the situation very carefully and check their policies regarding the rules on sick pay.

Those that wish to adopt the same approach, and pay SSP only to unvaccinated staff who are required to self-isolate because they have been in contact with an infected person, will need to consider whether there is a contractual entitlement to an enhanced rate of sick pay.

Few policies are likely to provide for payment of an enhanced rate of sick pay in circumstances where an employee is not actually unwell and has not tested positive for Covid-19. Many schools will therefore be entitled to pay SSP

only in such circumstances, subject to the caveats set out below.

The reality

School leaders should also keep in mind the issue of staff morale and the backdrop of the past couple of years when considering whether to adopt such an approach.

Teachers and other school staff have worked tirelessly and adapted incredibly well to the challenges they have faced as a result of the pandemic. The strain they have been put under should not go unrecognised, particularly as attitudes towards Covid-19 and how best to deal with it are shifting at government level.

Furthermore, there may be other reasons why an individual is unvaccinated, beyond personal choice. For example, medical conditions or religious beliefs. A school may be at risk of claims

for discrimination if it adopts one approach for all unvaccinated staff.

The application of a policy should take account of exemptions and employees' reasons for choosing not to be vaccinated.

The right time?

If a school wishes to adopt such an approach, staff should be given advance notice so that they may plan accordingly and so that the school may demonstrate that it is acting reasonably.

Finally, the ever-changing Covid-19 landscape and changing rules on isolation must be considered. Reports suggest that all restrictions could be removed as early as mid-March, posing the question as to whether any sudden changes to sick pay policies for the unvaccinated between now and then could potentially do more harm than good.

About Moore Barlow:

Moore Barlow is one of the UK's leading law firms, focused primarily on meeting the needs of the leaders of fast-moving organisations and businesses including independent schools. Moore Barlow has offices in Southampton, Guildford, Woking and Lymington, as well as two locations in London (Richmond and the City). For more information, please visit www.moorebarlow.com

Classics Symposium for 100 students

Francis Holland School, Regent's Park, London, believes that Classics could not be further from a dying discipline. The study of the ancient world in Classical Civilisation never ceases to spark the imaginations of students of all ages, and learning about how ancient societies lived and thought encourages students to ponder the big questions – What is truth? What is love? And why are we all here? – as well as highlighting the fundamental intricacies of human nature. The study of Latin and Greek also holds many unique benefits, honing students' analytical skills and increasing depth of understanding of modern languages to a degree that would

otherwise be inaccessible. Indeed, more than 60% of British words have their roots in Greek or Latin, and similar can be said for French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese... the list goes on.

This belief led the school to hold its second school Classics Week last month (January) featuring Classics Kahoots Quizzes, a Mythical Monsters Balloon Debate, teachers dressing up as Greek goddesses and a fascinating lecture on the Construction of a Greek Tragedy by our Classicist in Residence, Dr Peter Jones MBE. The grand finale of this week was the Classics Symposium, where 100 passionate Classics students

from FHS and other schools including Brighton College, City of London Boys, Godolphin & Latymer, Maria Fidelis Catholic School and Westminster came together in St Cyprian's Church. Sessions were held by Professor Robin Osborne of King's College, Cambridge, on 'Theatre and Democracy in Classical Athens', focusing on the contrasting political impact of Ancient Greek comedy and tragedy, and Professor Caroline Vout of Christ's College, Cambridge, on 'Seeing God in Greece and Rome', focusing on the ways in which depictions of God indicate the historical progression of his perception in different parts of society.

FHS's Head of Classics, Eleanor Simons, said: "This was our second Classics Week at Francis Holland and we were also delighted to host our first Classics Symposium – the first of many such events. The enthusiasm of our students – and the many students from other schools who attended our Symposium – show that Classics as a subject is alive and well and speaks to the current generation as much as any previous generation. The study of Latin, Ancient Greek and Classical Civilisation encourages pupils to be analytical and critical thinkers; qualities which have never been more relevant than in today's society."

The power of bricks and mortar

Cultural changes from a new facility

Kate Hawtin, Head of Sixth Form at St Catherine's School, Surrey, considers how new Sixth Form space has rapidly changed the way in which girls interact, their study habits, their socialising and their sense of independence, authority and responsibility for leadership in the School.



In March 2021, as we emerged from another lockdown, excitement at being able to return to School was felt even more keenly amongst our Sixth Form community. The girls were of course eager to see their friends and return to in-person learning, but they were also thrilled at the prospect of being able to use our long-awaited new Sixth Form building, named 'The 6', comprising beautifully modern boarding accommodation and a huge common room.

The main change I had anticipated as a result of the development was an increase in boarding numbers due to the upgrade in facilities, and this has indeed been the case. However, until we began using The 6, I had never fully considered the cultural changes that a new building could create, affecting the girls' behaviour and supporting their learning. It has been remarkable to see how the space has rapidly changed the way in which the girls interact, their study habits and their sense of independence and responsibility. It is amazing what bricks, steels, lead and mortar can achieve!

We were lucky enough to have a dedicated Sixth Form library already onsite and in close proximity to The 6. In the past, the line between academic and social had been somewhat blurred in the library as, due to outdated common room facilities, the girls saw it as their space for both aspects of school life. Now they have a huge new common room it is far easier to separate the two, and a healthier balance is being

struck, with deliberate study breaks for tea, toast and chatting and a more focused atmosphere in the library.

Due to the size and design of the common room we have also seen a much more harmonious and easy interaction between the two Sixth Form year groups, as well as between boarders and day girls. The sofas are arranged in a circle, and it has been interesting to note that far more time has been spent chatting than watching TV, and that both year groups mingle together, with L6 gaining much from the experience and the reassurance of U6, who might pass on revision techniques, as well as driving or parking tips! In our previous facilities we spent too much time resolving disputes about the messiness of the kitchens and common rooms and whether the culprits were day girls or boarders. Now, the practical layout of the common room is such that keeping it clean is easy, with a specific mug dishwasher, a glass-fronted fridge and a huge kitchen island. The boarders also have their own dedicated cooking space for weekends and a "Snug" on each floor for evening snacks, drinks and relaxation.

Another unexpected bonus of the kitchen island has been an increase in group working, meaning that the common room is on occasion a very academic space too. Boarders benefit from sitting together to work on a tricky Economics homework in the evening, for example, and are delighted if one of their A Level teachers is on boarding duty, as they can take advantage of some extra, individual support too.

We were keen to keep our Sixth Form very visible on site and therefore The 6 has a prominent location in the heart of school life, close to two large classroom blocks, with easy access to our Association Office which is now receiving more sixth form visitors eager for suggestions of alumnae and parent contacts. The younger girls see the



Sixth Formers walking purposefully and confidently to and from The 6 and they aspire to be part of this community within a community. In turn, the Sixth Formers take great pride in their facilities and in their position as role models, and they have undoubtedly risen to new challenges of leadership and responsibility as a result.

The location of my office at the entrance to The 6 - opposite the Head of Sixth Form Boarding - has changed my job completely and improved sixth form pastoral care immeasurably. With our doors open, we see the entire Sixth Form community pass by throughout the day and we can spot any upset and offer discreet help quickly. UCAS season, for example, has been far

more interactive with so many girls dropping in for advice. We are also up-to-date with the latest gossip too - the girls are so relaxed and at home in their building that they often forget we are there and let their guard down!

Life in The 6 is, of course, about progressing academically and developing intellectually. It is about developing independence and resilience, but it is also about developing firm and lifelong friendships and enjoying being part of a strong, supportive and happy Sixth Form community. When the building was designed we of course had this ethos in mind, but to see it come to fruition and exceed our expectations has been extraordinary.



Saving Money and reducing carbon emissions

With over 140 Independent School clients, Powerful Allies is by far the largest energy partner within the sector and so we are particularly proud to support ISBA, GSA, BSA, CISC, MIST and IAPS members across the UK.

In these challenging times, it is crucial for Independent Schools to work with partners they can trust, and Powerful Allies has built a reputation second to none as a truly trusted partner, as the very many client references below and on our website will attest.

Transparency

Powerful Allies has created a unique Open Competition charter which defines and guarantees Best Practice energy procurement.

In an unregulated sector, we alone have created a Code of Practice which exceeds all others and introduces transparency hitherto unknown in the tender process.

Trusted Partner

We know our Bursars regularly speak to each other and our key reputation is everything. Indeed we are proud to list our key clients on our website. You will recognise many of the names. *Our clients trust us and we trust our clients. Grown up behavior, honest discussion, mature and impartial advice.*

Energy Cost and Emission Reduction

At the end of the day, we are retained by superb clients because we reduce energy costs and we reduce carbon emissions. That is the bottom line. And our clients know how we do this, and what we earn and they have complete confidence that our contracts really do provide Best Value. Demonstrable Best Value with 100% Renewable source electricity at zero extra cost.

To illustrate why so many reputable Independent schools have appointed Powerful Allies in preference to the other 2500 energy brokers out there (possibly bombarding you with calls right now?), *we would like to undertake a full and free energy procurement review for you, with no obligation and absolutely no charge.* I am confident you will be impressed with the results.

Please have a look at www.powerfulallies.com/clients and then either call 01380 860196 or email me, jamesrobson@powerfulallies.com.

The review will be completed quickly and efficiently, with the very minimum input required by you. Relatively painless by all accounts!

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



Modulek specialise in designing and constructing beautiful and bespoke new educational buildings

A new building is much more than its construction. It is an environment where your pupils can express their personalities and grow as individuals. For this to happen a new building should be designed to perfectly align with your school values. It should provide your teaching staff with the best space and facilities to engage and nurture the next generation of pupils who will rise through your establishment.

With over twenty-five years in the off-site construction industry, our award-winning in-house Design and Architectural team, work with you to bring to life your new building aspirations. We are renowned for understanding individual school needs and providing intelligent and innovative building designs.

Our inclusive design service includes all the interior fit out of the building. We cater for high specification and specific subject equipment and facilities which can enable you to create dedicated and specialist learning spaces.



Our unique hybrid construction method enables us to solve all construction challenges. Our blend of modular construction mixed with customary or modern finishing means that we can design and construct buildings that are sympathetic to your estate. Our buildings have a traditional construction appearance and feel and can be designed to any size and layout specification. We take great pride in showing you what is possible – not what is available.

Over the years we have worked with many of the UK's leading

Preparatory and Independent Schools, and we are experienced with working with complex planning requirements and sites with difficult access.

Our Project Management team work hand in hand with Estate Teams and Bursars and provide everything that is required for your project to meet approval. A fixed price turnkey service gives financial stability to your project and peace of mind.

Our speed of delivery and construction results in minimal disruption to your site. Our primary aim is that you enjoy the experience of seeing your new building be brought to life and can celebrate this with your staff and pupils. We often engage with staff and pupils in assemblies or tours on site and are always happy to incorporate your building project into parts of the curriculum and make the experience as inclusive as possible for all.

On a recent school project, during the groundwork phase, we unearthed a selection of historical artefacts. This was of great interest to the school and the community and provided a real-life local history lesson!

"Our pupils and staff feel very lucky to have added such a wonderful asset to our school facilities. The impact of this reaches across the whole school as we not only use the new spaces for teaching, but we also have a dedicated therapy space too. Our main building is a stunning Grade II listed building; therefore, any new buildings have to be sympathetic to those already there. The process with Modulek was seamless. I have rather high standards and for me it was essential that the long-awaited new facilities were 100% perfect – I think we are there!"

Michelle Catterson – Executive Head – Moon Hall School Trust

"The single most important thing that impressed me about my experience with Modulek was the personal attention to detail!"

James Allen – Beech Hall School



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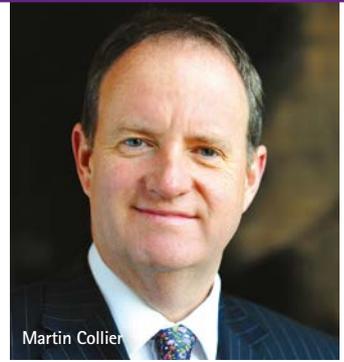
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Innovative Science & Technology facilities

School joins ground-breaking study of genetics



Martin Collier

Haileybury, Hertfordshire, has announced plans to create two state-of-the-art Science and Technology buildings to house globally renowned research and provide exceptional teaching and learning facilities for its pupils and the wider community.

The purpose of these buildings is to improve the already strong science offer at the School, install the latest technology to further challenge pupils and enhance their skills, and ultimately

revolutionise how science and affiliated subjects are taught at the School.

The Science Research Centre will also be home to several pioneering research projects including the prestigious Stan-X project led by Stanford University, in California, the United States. This is a ground-breaking study of genetics using fruit flies which is contributing to the efforts to find cures for human diseases such as diabetes and pancreatic cancer.

Haileybury has released plans for the two buildings which will be known as The Science Centre and The Science Research Centre. These new facilities will double the size of the current provision and include the latest in IT, biology and robotics laboratories, computational science labs, DT facilities, nine teaching and seminar spaces and a special outdoor courtyard that the pupils will own.

The unique design of the buildings, created by Hopkins Architects, will promote better connectivity between Science and Technology subjects by encouraging communications, collaboration and cross-discipline innovation. They will also incorporate a range of features such as green roofs (these are roofs that will be covered with vegetation) and cross-laminated timber to contribute towards the School's sustainability goals and journey towards becoming net zero.

Haileybury is the first school in Europe to participate in Stan-X and will work on university-standard research, alongside scientists at Stanford University and the University of Oxford. Existing Stan-X partnerships' research findings, co-authored by pupils and instructors, have been published in peer-reviewed scientific journals and presented at international meetings. Similar outcomes are expected from the Stan-X partnership with Haileybury.

The exclusive SciTech buildings will not only benefit and inspire the staff and pupils of Haileybury, but it will also be accessible to its partner secondary academy, Haileybury Turnford, which it sponsors as well as outreach programmes for local

prep and secondary schools to come and use the facilities.

The SciTech buildings will be a circa £20 million building project, which the School could fund over the next 30 years and is currently welcoming sponsors and donations.

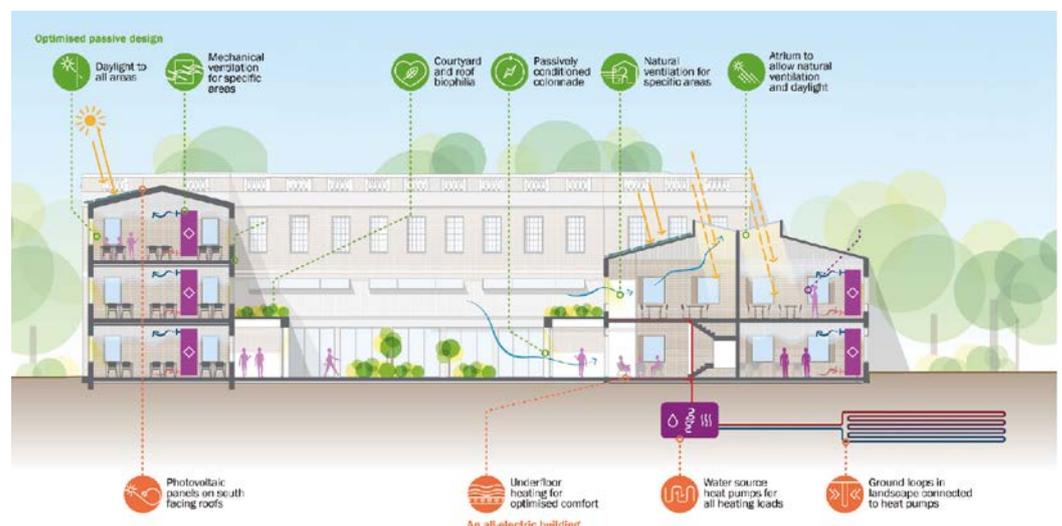
This huge investment is part of Haileybury's 15-year campus master plan to revolutionise not only its science and technology offer but will include plans for a cutting edge sports park and a state-of-the-art performance hub. The School has also recently invested in modernising its Form Room building, boarding houses and Modern Languages Department.

Martin Collier, The Master at Haileybury, said: "We are excited to announce our plans for the SciTech buildings. At Haileybury, we are creative, innovative and at the forefront of technology and are thrilled that these plans will see us continue to push boundaries and



provide the best possible teaching and learning opportunities for our pupils and community. The essence of science is discovery, and we want our pupils to aspire to progress to higher education to study Science and Technology subjects and we are committed to ensuring they are prepared to do so. These new buildings will present Haileybury's academic ambition, whilst continuing to enhance the architectural splendour of the School. It will demonstrate

in practice, energy efficiency and sustainability, subjects that will themselves be taught to pupils as part of our Science and Technology curriculum. We have invested significantly in educational, co-curricular and boarding facilities in recent years as we believe it's important to equip our pupils with the latest and best facilities in order to provide them with life-long skills; the SciTech buildings are a key milestone we continue to progress with our ambitious Master Plan."





The benefits of using modular timber construction in education

Timber is the oldest and most sustainable building material ever known but it is also becoming more popular in modern methods of construction. Not only does its use have significantly less environmental impact than steel or concrete, it has other properties which bring additional benefits to those using an education building day in day out.

Timber is the only construction material that is truly sustainable. 97% of timber used in Europe is registered under the FSC and PEFC schemes resulting in the European forested area increasing by 30%.

Timber uses far less energy to harvest and manufacture (-676kg/Co2e/m³).

Timber is not only a carbon sink (sun, water, carbon) it releases oxygen and improves air quality during its 60 year life cycle.

Timber weighs 20% the dead

weight of concrete and 6% the dead weight of steel.

According to the Athena Calculator, wood outperforms concrete and steel on a number of environmental measures.

Versus timber, concrete causes +470% more water pollution, 150% more fossil fuel consumption and 240% more smog potential. The respective figures for steel are 300%, 140% and 120%.

So on environmental considerations alone, a timber frame building solution is a good choice. However, when constructed well, a modular timber frame system can also produce a building which is net-zero carbon in use and one that looks and feels much warmer than alternatives.

Weitzer Parkett, ProHolz Austria and partners undertook a research project called 'School Without Stress' where the idea was to try

to scientifically demonstrate the advantages of using timber within a classroom and its long term benefits to students who study within them. They found that on average children in a timber classroom had 8600 less heart beats per day than those in a traditional building.

TG Escapes use modern methods of construction, traditional materials and sophisticated technology, to create standalone spaces that are net-zero in operation. They have provided over 800 buildings UK wide and were awarded Contractor of the Year at the 2021 Education Estates Awards.

Modular offsite timber frame construction minimises disruption, cost and risk and a fully inclusive design and build service means projects are easy to manage with customers rating them 4.9 out of 5 based on 166 reviews. The use of biophilic design principles, natural materials, easy access to the outdoors and natural light enhances well-being and educational outcomes.

A study by A Sigman shows that children exposed to nature:

- scored higher on concentration and self-discipline
- demonstrated improved awareness, reasoning and observational skills
- performed better at reading, writing, maths, science and social studies
- were better at working in teams
- showed improved behaviour overall.

TG Escapes conduct regular research to understand how timber frame buildings perform as classrooms, SEND spaces, studios, early years settings and more. The feedback shows that these 'natural' buildings provide spaces that feel very different:

"Giving the children a new setting to learn in has had a big impact on their motivation. Working amongst natural surroundings has enhanced the imagination and creativity."

Headteacher

"Talking to the pupils about the eco-friendly features has been a great way to teach them about sustainability and the environment."

Headteacher



"Both children and staff have really enjoyed working in this lovely new classroom, with easy access to the outdoors for play. A welcome bonus is that we have saved significantly on energy costs!"

Headteacher

"Working with TG Escapes was very good. The buildings provide a better-quality environment for staff and students."

Estates & Facilities Manager



For more information call 0800 917 7726 or email info@tgescapes.co.uk and visit www.tgescapes.co.uk for video case studies

Modular school building delivers on space and aesthetics

Gartree High School appointed modular provider Wernick to supply a standalone building to accommodate an increase in students. They required a seamless transition with minimal intervention from teaching staff and timely student occupation. More importantly, the building had to look the part, mimicking the school's existing building. With decades of experience within the UK education sector, Wernick specialise in the design and build of modern school buildings. Each project is managed by Wernick's dedicated construction division to ensure a thorough service and the utmost levels of health and safety.

Gartree's Deputy Head Ben Rackley and Assistant Head Edward Wilson describe the project and their experience of working with Wernick to procure their new building in Leicestershire...

How did you settle on a modular solution for the new building?

BR: Before obtaining our new building, all Gartree's classes took place within one large building. Student numbers have increased, and it was time to increase capacity by adding at least four new classrooms. A modular classroom block made sense to us due to the timescales involved. We were aware of neighbouring schools who have chosen this route, and they helped to demonstrate the speed and aesthetics achievable with this building method.

It was vital to us that the new addition matched the look and feel of the existing building, with green, metal window surrounds and brick cladding. Inside the new building would be two science classrooms and two 'all-purpose' rooms.

Why were Wernick Buildings chosen to deliver the new building?

BR: During the procurement process, Wernick's designs were the closest match to the school's brief: "they looked like Gartree". Wernick Buildings quoted for a 2-storey, 414 m² block and it was well within our budget – in fact, the quote gave us some room to specify additional features, such as reinforced flooring, triple glazing and PIR lighting.

Wernick really paid attention to every detail on the project – for example, I was pleasantly surprised to see that Wernick had included elements of the existing building in the new block without being asked.

What feedback have you received from users of the building?

EW: I'm lucky enough to teach in the new building and a few things are really clear; first of all we've noticed no difference in the behaviour of the children and students who are working in the building, which is exactly what we want.



Teachers find the new building very comfortable – air conditioning throughout ensures a consistent temperature year-round, which is something they are not used to! Rooms are also more spacious, the whole building has an open feel to it.

Triple glazing creates a peaceful environment which is ideal for pupils sitting exams. The quality of the

finish is really excellent, it's a lovely place to work in and we're finding that teaching here is a real pleasure.

BR: I wanted people to see this as a permanent building, and that is exactly what we have achieved. The modular building fits in perfectly and the finish gives it that wow factor when you walk in.

How did you find the process of working with Wernick?

EW: Wernick provided us with a bespoke, on-plan building that followed our wish for the new building very closely. I was genuinely impressed with that and impressed with what they have supplied.

BR: I had absolutely no time or inclination to manage a traditional building project, but Wernick's dedicated Construction division managed the project from start to finish. A Project Manager attended site every day – this was a major selling point for me. The team on site were brilliant and having the same point of contact throughout was invaluable.



Specialists in modular construction

Wernick have decades of experience in the education sector



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Sector leads the way in sustainable investments

Solar panels, buildings using modern methods of construction and electric vehicle charging points are the top sustainable investments independent schools are making within the next year.

Four in five UK independent schools are constructing or planning to construct new buildings

These are among the findings of new research which has revealed independent schools are responding to the climate crisis by investing in sustainable technologies and improving the efficiency of existing buildings.

The survey of UK independent school leaders discovered the most popular investments independent schools are making within the next year are solar PV or heating panels (44%), buildings using modern methods of construction (MMC) such as cross laminated timber and rainscreen cladding (33%), and electric vehicle charging points (27%). This is closely followed by green / living walls or roofs (24%) and triple glazing (23%).

Looking ahead to the next one to two years, independent schools are planning to invest in smart building management systems (40%), air source / ground source heat pumps (40%), and increased insulation

such as re-cladding and insulating older buildings (39%). Wind turbines (37%) and solar PV to battery storage (36%) are also popular planned investments within the next few years.

In the medium term, having a renewable energy supplier (35%), air source / ground source heat pumps (33%) and wind turbines (32%) are the top three investments independent schools plan to make within three to four years. Followed by triple glazing (29%) and smart building management systems (28%).

Four in five (83%) of UK independent schools surveyed are constructing or planning to

construct new buildings. Of which one in five (21%) independent school leaders said construction is currently taking place, while half (50%) will have new buildings constructed within the next one to five years. One in 10 (12%) independent schools plan to construct new buildings in more than five years time.

As many independent schools across the UK are investing in new buildings, in Wales it was recently announced that all new schools have to meet net zero targets from January 2022 and refurbishments, extensions and new builds at existing schools need to improve energy efficiency.

The survey was commissioned by Ecclesiastical Insurance and conducted by OnePoll with 275 UK head teachers, bursars and governors of whom 107 were from independent schools.

Government Net-Zero Policy for Heat and Buildings on School Estates

UK national policy remains to achieve net-zero by 2050, with an interim target of reducing emissions by 78% by 2035, based on 1990 levels.

In October 2021 several long-awaited policy documents were issued by the UK Government. These included the Heat & Buildings Strategy, which lays out

how the UK's domestic buildings and non-domestic sites are to be rendered net-zero. The latter includes school estates.

The strategy recognises that weaning us all off fossil fuels for heating buildings is set to be one of the toughest challenges the UK faces. It lays out the principles for doing this. Two policy nuggets are

of particular note to schools not connected to the gas grid:

- The UK should use the natural replacement cycle to phase out fossil fuel plant. This means that there will be no forced removal of existing heating plant: instead, from a declared operational target date, as replacements fall due the outgoing plant will have to be replaced by a low-carbon alternative.
- That date is currently proposed to be 2024 for estates not connected to the gas grid. This means that any oil or LPG plant that needs to be replaced beyond that date will need to be replaced by a low-carbon alternative.

Given the nature of most school estates, the most cost-effective design concept for the conversion to low-carbon heating is likely to be based around the installation of a district heating system.



The implication is that from the moment when one item of major plant requires replacement, that school will have to face up to a major project, i.e. the installation of a district heating infrastructure – even if not all buildings are put onto the district in the first instance.

This will be expensive and disruptive whilst the work is in progress. Schools will need to plan well in advance how they intend to tackle this task; and how to fund it.

Forewarned is forearmed.



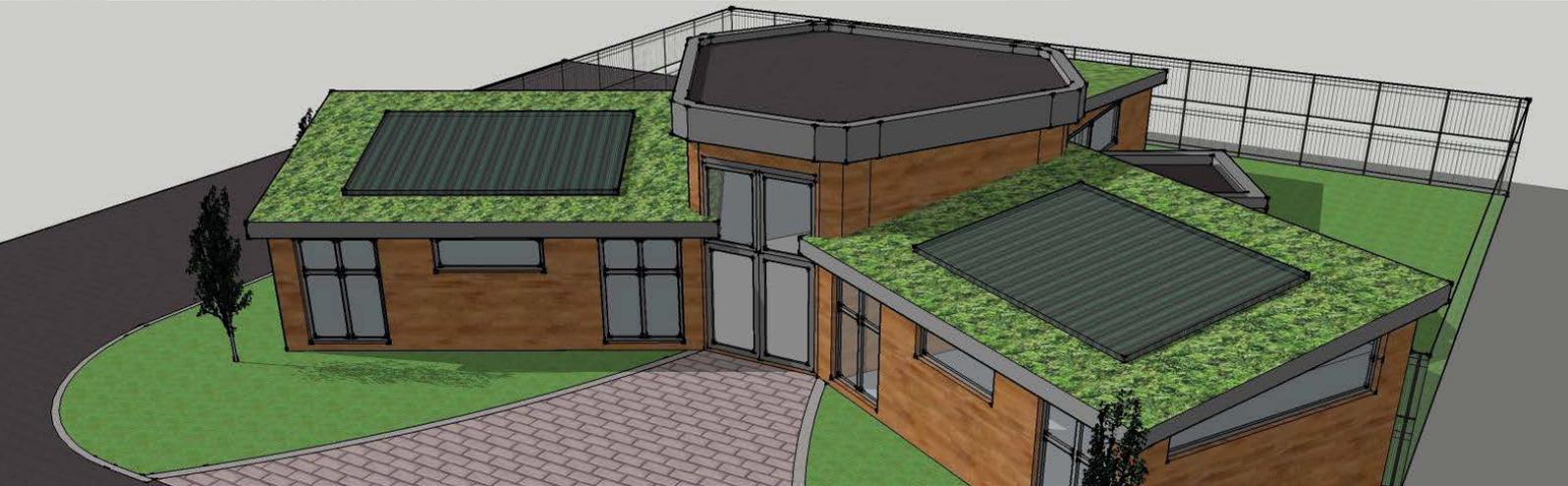
Nigel Aylwin-Foster is a director at ReEnergise. If any reader needs further advice about the points raised in this update please contact him directly, nigel@reenergisegroup.com



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No better time to take control of the cost and quality of mealtimes...

Independent School meals provider, **apetito**, talks to us about how schools can make changes to mealtimes whilst saving cost and labour, and in many cases, improve quality too...

As we come into the first few weeks of 2022, it's important that we all take the time to reflect on the impact the past two years of the pandemic has had on us all. Staffing shortages, unpredictable absences of children and teachers due to Covid illness or the need to isolate, rapidly increasing food and wage inflation alongside empty shelves in supermarkets, and fast-changing regulations to ensure the safety of staff, children, and their families.

At **apetito**, we're here to support the independent schools' sector and help make mealtimes a positive,

joyful experience at your schools. We know how important it is for our customers to ensure that every child can enjoy delicious meals packed with all the right nutrients. And we understand that the eating habits children establish during their time at school influence their health - not only throughout childhood but on into adulthood too.

The ongoing economic uncertainty and the continuing unforeseen staffing absences means that for many schools, there is no better time to look at mobilising change, and our team is on hand to help schools to achieve mealtimes in a

way that is easy, straightforward and stress free.

We provide over 200 different tasty and high-quality meal options for schools to choose from - meals that can be easily cooked from frozen without complex training or hungry time requirements. In line with growing demand for plant-based meals, we have a wide selection of more than 30 vegetarian and vegan meals in our range, all specially created by our chefs, and which are packed with flavour as well as nutritious.

Our online ordering system couldn't be easier for schools to use from which they can create balanced menus consisting of protein, carbohydrates and vegetables allowing for weekly change.

The system suggests popular combinations and there are sample menus available that have been developed alongside our Chefs and Dietitians. Schools also have the



flexibility to create their own menus from scratch.

Our food is delivered to schools free of charge, and because it's frozen the team won't need to cook anything they don't need. This is a significant benefit to schools whilst coping with fluctuating daily numbers of pupils due to covid cases - reducing waste and cost.

Our trained team is always on hand to offer help and advice and can help tailor menus to the bespoke likes and needs of pupils, ensuring that mealtimes continue to be a highlight of the day.



Why not try **apetito's** meals for yourself and experience the quality first-hand?

We offer free tasting of our meals to schools who would like to experience the quality of our meals first-hand: www.apetito.co.uk/school-meal-services

New co-educational era

Derby Grammar School has announced its intention to become a fully co-educational school within two years. The boys' school, which already accepts girls into its sixth form, will open its doors to primary-aged girls in September 2022. The following year, girls will be eligible to join Years 7-11, including via applications through the school's scholarship provision.

The move marks a major step forward for new headteacher Paul Logan, who took the helm of the 26-year-old institution at the beginning of the current academic year.

He said the decision, which had already received the broad backing of existing parents and school governors, reflected the direction of modern society.

It also reinforces the school's deep-rooted commitment to supporting family life, which has become of even greater importance as a result of Covid-19.

"During the pandemic, there's been much more emphasis on family," said Mr Logan. "We've had many

discussions with parents, and they are showing far more interest than ever before in keeping siblings together in school.

"We are very much focused on doing what is best for parents as well as the children, and it's so much easier for families if siblings attend the same school."

He said that parent-surveys carried out by the school had clearly highlighted issues such as transport, bus services, varying school holiday dates in the region and 'wraparound care'.

"All we are doing here is making those things less of a problem for parents and bringing us more in line with the way modern life is heading," he said.

"Although the planned co-ed route appears to represent a sea change for Derby Grammar School, girls in fact already make up one-third of our sixth form cohort, and are extremely proactive and visible members of the school."

He added that, with a far greater emphasis on mindfulness and well-being throughout the school, amplified by Covid-19, as well as experience of catering for non-binary pupils and those with other individual needs, the move to a fully co-ed school was the natural next step.

An application for a 'material change' to its education provision will shortly be submitted by the



school to the Department for Education.

Assuming the move is approved, parents of reception, infant and junior aged girls will be welcome to apply for places starting in September.

Parents should expect to learn whether or not applications have been successful by around mid-April. The release of places will be followed by an open week at the primary school, which boasts new purpose-built classrooms, at the end of April.

Derby Grammar School's largest class size numbers just 17 pupils, and its reception year operates almost on a one-to-one pupil-to-staff ratio.



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Developing Leadership Capacity

Leadership development programmes are in good supply with government funding to support colleagues in the state sector. For independent schools, the options are to pay for places on NPOs, support colleagues opting to develop their leadership learning through individual courses or develop bespoke in-house leadership programmes to meet identified needs and aspirations.

Middle leaders can add great leadership value in school, providing the right development, direction, support and challenge is in place. Bolton School opted for an in-house leadership programme with Helen MG Consulting to address both the challenges and opportunities of middle leadership development. They wanted to support their middle leaders with a programme that built on their established learning culture, encouraged continuous learning and improvement throughout the school and developed leadership team relationships through collaborative learning.

In this special feature, Helen Brandon, Deputy Head, and Helen Woodward from Helen MG Consulting, describe the initiative...

'A leader is someone who takes responsibility for finding the potential in people and processes, and who has the courage to develop that potential.'

Brené Brown

There's no shortage of leadership roles, positions, and opportunities in a large school.

Departments, projects, events, and teams all need someone to lead them. But leading well, adding leadership value, and building capacity are more challenging, and can lead to more questions:

- What does it mean to be a leader in this school?
- What is our leadership philosophy?
- What does adding leadership value look like?
- What impact does our leadership have on those around us?
- How do we develop a leadership culture of continuous learning for continuous improvement?

Where we began

With Bolton School's strong track record of academic success and extracurricular experiences, there is much to celebrate. One of our priorities for the Senior Leadership Team is ensuring a sustainable future through developing leadership confidence, capability, and capacity across the school. We knew that individual professional development would not be sufficient (Fullan 2001) and wanted to ensure a culture where leadership learning could thrive.

After consideration, we opted

for a bespoke programme in collaboration with Helen MG Consulting and began with an exploratory conversation. The purpose was to develop a shared understanding of the issues at stake and importantly, the preferred future we were seeking. Together we worked through a reflective exercise:

- Why were we looking for a leadership development programme?
- What issues were we seeking to solve?
- What opportunities did we want to create?
- How did leadership challenges manifest in school?
- How might unresolved issues impact our future?
- What would middle leadership look like if it was going really well?

The focus here was on surfacing our concerns:

'In a learning culture, the acquisition of new knowledge and skills is supported by aspects of the organization's environment that encourage surfacing, noticing, gathering, sharing, and applying new knowledge.'

Stephen J Gill

And noticing our responses:

'The range of what we think and do is limited by what we fail to notice. And because we fail to notice that, we fail to notice, there is little we can do to change; until we notice how failing to notice shapes our thoughts and deeds.'

RD Lang

Following our initial meeting, Helen returned with feedback. We agreed on a professional development programme for middle and aspiring leaders, enabling participants to:

- Build confidence and resilience to lead teams committed to their roles and responsibilities
- Understand narratives, behaviours and traits, and how these impact colleagues
- Understand transition and change processes (rational, emotional, and political) and how to plan responses

We were clear that the programme had to be informed by evidence-based research and leadership theory to ground ideas and practice.

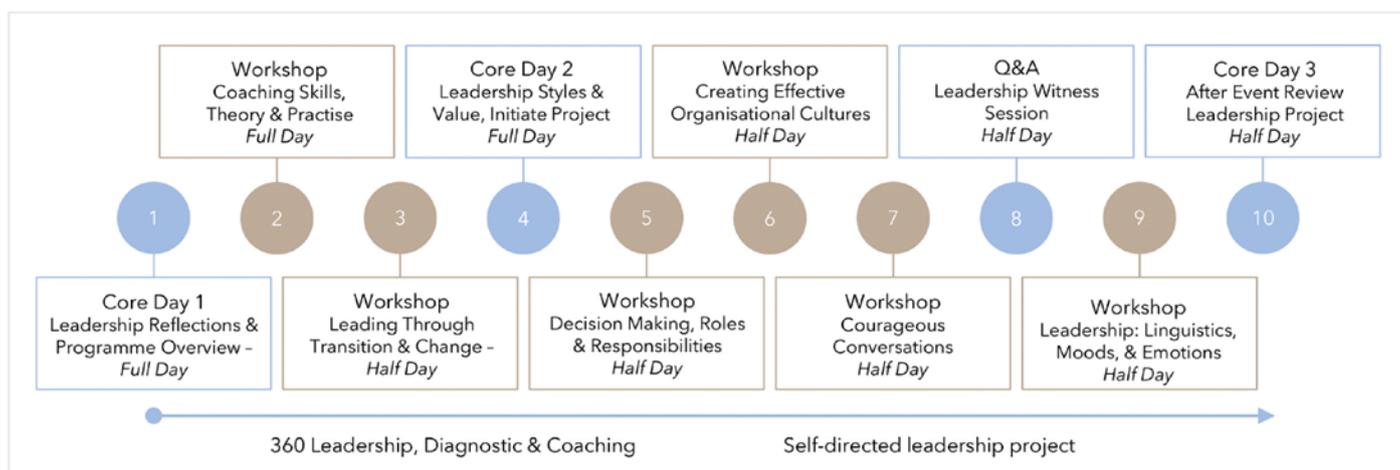
Key areas of concern to address included:

- Within school variation (some departments very successful, others less so)
- Issue avoidance

The Leadership Programme Overview

The proposed programme consisted of:

- Three core sessions at the beginning, middle and end of the programme
- Optional workshop sessions (with a suggestion that each participant came to at least 3 and preferably 5 during the year)
- A self-directed school visit exploring how an area of interest is led in a different context



- Real World Group 360 leadership diagnostic including briefing and feedback (90 minute 1:1 session)
- Leadership of a school-based project, contributing to wider school development and building on learning from the programme
- An end of programme review when participants were to feedback the impact of their leadership project and learning to the SLT

The programme embraces leadership theory and practices from various sources, and participants are encouraged to read widely and share their reading and reviews.

We began the programme in March 2019 with 10 participants from across the school.

Workshops included:

- Coaching Skills Theory and Practise
- Leading through Transitions and Change
- Courageous Conversations
- Creating Effective Organisational Cultures and Collaborations

By early March 2020, Covid-19 interrupted our flow. In discussion, we agreed not to move the programme online. The constant uncertainty, interruptions and online fatigue were key considerations.

We resumed the programme in summer 2021 intending to hold a leadership project feedback session in September 2021 (12 months later than scheduled.) Inevitably, some school-based projects were impacted. Some colleagues had completed projects as planned, some pivoted in response to the changes, but everyone had made great progress.

Facilitation style and process is a key factor in building the learning culture. Theoretical influences for Helen include Glaser, Schwarz and Egan. The key role of the facilitator is to increase the chances for the group to perform well, create strong working relationships and

improve wellbeing (Schwarz). Creating a caring and empathic space is foundational to enabling challenging questions to be listened to and reflected on and sometimes, we let the silence do the heavy lifting. One participant reflected:

“Helen Woodward is a great course leader, with vast knowledge and able to challenge you at every stage, but in a very constructive way. Her style is incredibly affiliative and you really feel she wants you to succeed. She allows lots of time for questions and lets the delegates debate with each other, and this has led to us all bonding well and sharing ideas.”

Leadership Programme Impact

The run-up to the review session created much excitement and some nervousness as participants prepared for After Action Reviews and practised their presentations. The emphasis was on leadership learning through the project and reflections on how new understanding could be applied in future.

The honesty, candour, humility, and self-reflection demonstrated was striking. Some shared how their leadership project had been prompted out of concern for particular groups of children (e.g. the quiet boys in school), some focused on curriculum development, and whole school initiatives were evident (Behaviour for Learning, Reducing the Carbon Footprint of the School).

As an SLT, we noticed the Leadership programme generated a great deal of interest and discussions in the staff room. Colleagues are sharing and recommending books and articles on leadership. Informal peer support networks have also emerged where participants can have open and curious discussions. It is wonderful to see a wider range of colleagues taking pride in leading projects and enjoying the professional satisfaction of that challenge.

‘All our teachers who have taken part in the course found it to be a thoroughly enjoyable, thought

provoking, challenging course. They have gained invaluable knowledge and experience to take into any middle manager role. This course has enabled them to become confident and efficient leaders, a no brainer for the school!’

Dave Palmer, CPD lead, Bolton School Boys’ Division

“This course is allowing those already in middle management to recentre themselves as leaders whilst those who are aspiring to be leaders can begin to build understanding and knowledge to support them on that journey. As an institution, we recruit teachers of the highest calibre and it makes sense that we invest in developing their capacity as Middle Leaders. Staff taking part have commented on the value of a course which paces learning, stresses continuity and allows for peer support, not “just on meet-up days but every day!”

Helen Bradford-Keegan, Assistant Head, Bolton School Girls’ Division

Evaluation data gathered from sessions

- 100% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the course had met its core objectives.
- 100% of respondents said their knowledge, understanding and skills had progressed.
- 100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed sessions were well facilitated, and that they had been challenged by the content.
- All respondents said that they would recommend the course to a colleague.

Requesting and giving direct feedback for improvement is a recurring theme and modelled during the programme. Qualitative feedback for improvement from participants included:

- An opportunity to participate in all the workshops (rather than select 3)
 - In school support for their school-based project
 - Opportunities to ask leaders questions about their experience
- In response Cohort 2 participants:
- Participate in all 5 workshops
 - Have a mentor for their school-based project
 - Will join in a leadership witness

session with experienced leaders where they can ask questions

Feedback from the participants

“I thoroughly enjoyed the course as there were a number of different techniques and styles that I had no idea about. It allowed me to think of what applied to me in terms of how I might go about things and what sort of a professional I am. I feel more confident going forward.”

“I valued the chance to think deeply about my work and to begin a course of personal study which has led to something which I hope will be useful to school and wider afield.

Many thanks!”

Next steps?

We began Cohort 2 in autumn 2021 with twenty participants from across the Foundation. Commitment is high and school-based leadership projects have been signed off.

The learning for all of us has been significant. Workshops have been reviewed and developed in the light of new research and feedback. This year everyone will have a school-based mentor to support with their leadership project.

Final thoughts

We always wanted more than a programme which developed individuals. We wanted to build on our learning culture and ensure leadership learning and capacity was built across the school embracing all that comes with it; honest feedback, projects that don’t go as planned, reflection, continuous learning and improvement. Importantly, the After Action Review process at the end of the programme values learning above project outcomes.

‘To create a culture in which learning is the rule, not the exception, nonprofits must remove the barriers to learning and reward behaviors that facilitate learning: risk taking, action learning, feedback, and reflection.’

Stephen J Gill

We look forward to collaboratively continuing our leadership learning journey!

Q&A with Helen Brandon
– see overleaf >

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- Helen Woodward. Helen MG Consulting provides consultancy, coaching and leadership development services for education and children’s services. www.helenmgconsulting.com

Developing Leadership Capacity (continued)



Q&A with Deputy head Helen Brandon

Q What is the cost of the course? Is it paid for by the individuals attending (if so, what do they pay?) or centrally by the school?

A The Middle Leadership Programme is 12 months long and costs £13,900 for up to 12 people. This includes 2 full days, 6 half-days, a 360 feedback and additional online learning materials. The school has invested in the course to build capacity in our staffing structures and enhance a research driven culture of pedagogy amongst our colleagues.

Q One imagines that it could easily be over-subscribed. How do you choose who can attend? Have you found that the course particularly suits people at a certain stage in their career?

A This is a significant investment in staff professional development so there was a great deal of interest and we had limited numbers. We invited staff to write a statement about why they wanted to join the course, to share what professional experiences had brought them to this point and how they anticipated the course would impact on their roles, in the short term and the longer term. In the first instance we sought to allocate places to staff who were new to Middle Leader roles or who were in contention for them. It was really useful for the learning dynamic to have a balance of colleagues who were in post and those who were on the cusp. We have found that the course is just as suitable for staff who are about 6 or

7 years into their career as it is for those who have had 10 years as a Head of Year or Department and are looking to evolve their leadership to address the needs of shifting educational landscapes and school staffing profiles.

Q Do those who finish the course receive any kind of Certificate which could be useful on their CV down the line?

A Colleagues receive certificates on completion and the assessment, which is to lead a school based project, is excellent concrete evidence of leadership for a CV and competency based interview.

Q How do you measure success? Apart from the initial feedback, is there any system of follow-up after a period? I wonder if you would expect the benefits to be primarily identifiable amongst the teaching team itself – i.e. staff who attend stepping up to leadership of staff teams and initiatives – or primarily identifiable for its effect on the student experience?

A Assessment is through a school based project process and there is an after action review based on their presentation of leadership learning, which they give to the Senior Management Team and the rest of the Middle Leader cohort. Student voice is frequently used to reflect on how specific projects have impacted on their experiences, which then enables staff to evaluate if further steps are needed or what needs to happen next to ensure their project has a purposeful legacy.



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Developing leadership through boarding

Past articles in this series have looked at the role Outdoor Learning, Music, Drama and Sport play in the development of leadership. Boarding brings many special things to a school, and in this article Andy Kemp and John Taylor explore how boarding can provide opportunities for students to develop their leadership potential...

The act of living within the school community creates a different level of buy-in from students when it comes to the question of student voice. Boarder's voice, whether formal or informal, provides excellent opportunities for students to develop their understanding of representative leadership. Here, students take on a role something akin to a local MP, where their role is to voice the views of the people they represent (whether that's their room, corridor, or house). They have to learn how to accurately, and meaningfully, develop an understanding of the issues which are important to their community (moving beyond the questions of whether there's enough toast!) and then they have to learn how to effectively represent these views to others.

In many ways, this process is equally true of any highly effective student council. However, in our experience, the things that boarders bring up – due to the difference in the nature of their interaction with the School – means that this creates a much more powerful training environment for them.

Using this as a framework we can create opportunities for students to

develop these skills in a purposeful, but also planned manner. At the start of the academic year, we can begin with some training exercises to get ideas from the group about the kind of issues we want to discuss, then share best practice of how we might engineer opportunities for the types of conversations which will help them understand the views of those they are representing. This is also a useful opportunity to model good feedback through systems such as sharing of 'you said... we did...'

Another great opportunity which arises from within the boarding community is getting involved in events organisation. The boarding environment offers far more possibilities for the house parent to encourage students to take on the organisation of an activity or event. Whether this is something as simple as a table-tennis competition between the members of the house, or an evening of baking cookies involving just a few members of the house, through to taking on a house assembly to talk about an issue which is important to them, all the way up to organising whole house activities or dinners. This might involve planning a budget, liaising with external suppliers, advertising,

risk assessing, and ultimately co-ordinating the whole thing either individually or as part of a team.

I can remember wonderful examples of student leadership, like the shy child who organised a house chess competition getting lots of the house involved and engaged. Or House BBQs where the House Captain of each house organised food and entertainment at the end of the summer term for the whole house. It was always a privilege getting to visit all the houses, and each one did something different, from Ceilidh bands to the inflatable sumo-wrestler suits, but they each listened to the differing needs of their communities.

Alongside these opportunities to co-ordinate a project from idea to execution – something which is rare in schools – are also lots of opportunities for senior boarders to learn about leading through influence. It would be an unusual day in a boarding school for there not to be a request for a group of students to come and help with some activity or event. Here the process will often be: the deputy head says to the house parent of the duty house, I need four students



Dr Andy Kemp
Principal
The National Mathematics and Science College



John J Taylor
Foundation Head of Boarding
Mill Hill School Foundation

to help with ushering in Chapel this evening; the house parent sees the house captain at break and passes on the message and trusts that the house captain will sort the rest out; the house captain then needs to think about who the best students are for the activity, and how they are going to convince them to get involved. Learning how to get people to do things they'd often rather not do is a key part of leadership and, for many a house captain, it's a skill they hone through the co-ordination of duties!

Boarding offers schools many more opportunities to develop the leadership of their students, in part just because they have so much more contact time. However, it is the space boarding creates which is the true magic which allows students to step up and practise leading in a meaningful way.



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The Governors of Stonyhurst have announced the appointment of a new Headmaster for Stonyhurst St Mary's Hall.

He is Fr Christopher Cann, currently Headmaster of Ratcliffe College Preparatory School in Leicestershire and previously Headmaster of Leicester Preparatory School and Denstone College Preparatory School.

He has a Master of Arts degree in

French from the University of St Andrews and in Theology from the University of Oxford. He is married to Honor, who works as a GP, and has six children and two grandchildren.

Fr Christopher is a former Anglican priest who was received into the Catholic church in 2011 and is now a priest of the Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham. Fr Christopher starts in September, following the stepping down of Ian Murphy at the end of the academic year after eight years as Headmaster.



The governors of King's College Wimbledon have appointed Zimbabwean-born Andrew Forbes to the headship of Wimbledon Common Preparatory School. Andrew has moved to WCPS from Benedict



Benedict House School, Kent, part of Chatsworth Schools, has a new Head, Mr Craig Wardle.

Mr Wardle, joins Benedict House

House Prep School where he was head for just over 2 years. Prior to that Andrew was the head of the Falcons School for boys in Chiswick.

Andrew lives with his partner David; they co-parent David's three children and enjoy getting out and about in the Surrey Hills and canals as much as possible.

from Cleve House School, Bristol. Prior to joining Cleve, Mr Wardle read history at Nottingham University and was Head of St Nicholas house prep school in Norfolk for 15 years.



Mrs Katharine Woodcock, Headmistress of Sydenham High School, South

London, will be joining Francis Holland School, Regent's Park, as Headmistress at the start of the next academic year in September.

Mrs Woodcock comes from a long line of teachers. Her first teaching post was at Oakham School, Rutland, where she taught French and Russian and was a Housemistress. Following a relocation to London, she joined Queen's College, London, as Head

of Sixth Form. She was Senior Deputy Head for her last four years there, before moving to Sydenham High School as Headmistress in April 2017.

Mrs Woodcock is a governor of a primary school and enjoys running in her spare time. She is married with two children; a daughter at university and a son in the lower sixth.

Mr Charles Fillingham, who has been Headmaster of FHS Regent's Park since January 2016, will be leaving at the end of this academic year to become Executive Head of Solihull School.



Conifers School, West Sussex, have appointed Miss Emma Fownes as their new Head.

Having previously been Deputy Head and Head of English at Boundary Oak School near Fareham since 2009, Emma was recognised for her 'Outstanding' qualities as a teacher and was awarded the

prestigious National Teaching Award for South of England. Emma holds a BA (Dual Hons) in English Literature and American Studies, as well as a PGCE.

Conifers and Boundary Oak schools are both owned by Quo Vadis (QV) Education, the education group led by CEO Aaron Stewart and Executive Head & Co-Founder James Polansky.



The Mount School York began the Spring term welcoming a new Principal at the helm, the 20th

since the all-girls' school moved to Castlegate in 1831 and the first male to lead the school since co-founder, William Tuke, retired in 1804.

David Griffiths joined The Mount

from Wycombe Abbey School, Changzhou, China, where he was Headmaster since 2015, developing an academic curriculum aligned with its UK-affiliated home school in Buckinghamshire.

David was Housemaster at Loretto School, Edinburgh (2013-2015) and Director of Co-Curricular and Housemaster of Mount St Mary's College, Spinkhill (2006-2013).

The Governors of Highgate School, London, have announced the appointment of the new Pre-Prep and Junior School Principals from September 2022. Sally Hancock will succeed Katie Giles as Principal of the Pre-Prep, and Philippa Studd will take over from Mark James as Principal of the Junior School.



Sally is currently Deputy Principal (Curriculum) in the Pre-Prep which she joined in

September 2020 from the Wren Academy where she had been Assistant Headteacher and Acting Primary Headteacher. Prior to this she taught in primary schools in Kuwait, Quito, Cairo and Hong Kong. Sally qualified as a teacher

at Plymouth University (Geography and General Primary) and also holds a Master's degree in applied linguistics from the Open University.



Philippa is currently Deputy Principal (Pastoral) in the Junior School

which she joined as Assistant Principal (Pupils' Personal Development) from Radnor House School in September 2017 having served as Assistant Head there for five years. Prior to this she taught modern languages at Chesterfield High School following teacher training and a degree in French and Hispanic Studies at the University of Liverpool.

Heads Hunted

Among the upcoming head and principal appointments:

| | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Crosfield School | Berkshire |
| Croydon High School | Surrey |
| Dallington School | London |
| Maynard School | Devon |
| Padworth College | Berkshire |
| Princethorpe College | Warwickshire |
| Sydenham High School | London |

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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