

November/December 2023

The Independent Schools Magazine



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In this issue...



New prep school

Sir James Dyson, via the James Dyson Foundation, has donated £35 million to create a new prep school at Gresham's, Norfolk.

The donation will be used to fund the purchase and restoration of Grade II Listed Holt Hall and will also include construction of a new building which will incorporate STEAM facilities for the pupils aged seven to 13.

James Dyson, Founder of Dyson and Gresham's alumnus, said: "Holt Hall is a magnificent setting and when it came up for sale we had the extraordinary opportunity to rescue this Victorian hall, to provide a new setting for a cutting-edge Prep School for Gresham's pupils.

"As the son of a Gresham's teacher, I had the free run of Gresham's grounds and playing fields in the school holidays – but the arcadian park of Holt Hall was out of bounds. The architecture and design of the new wing – with a mirrored external surface – will reflect the ancient woodland, allowing it to blend into its stunning setting. We will also restore the Victorian building and protect the surrounding ancient woodland for Gresham's pupils to discover and learn in...

"It is so important to inspire young people through problem-solving and discovery. I'm forever grateful for the generosity Gresham's showed me when my father – who was Head of Classics at the school – died when I was nine. Logie Bruce-Lockhart, the Headmaster, allowed my brother and me to continue our studies with a bursary, when it would otherwise have been impossible. I'm so pleased to be able to support the school and to see it shaping incredible young people who go on and flourish."

Pictured (l to r): Michael Goff (Gresham's Chairman of Governors), Sir James Dyson, Douglas Robb (Gresham's Headmaster).
Credit: Dyson

Cover background

Future heritage

Rossall School, Lancashire, has launched a project with the aim of safeguarding its heritage buildings not only to preserve the past but to support the future.

To find out more about the project see page 38.

Pictured: The chapel at Rossall School
Photography by Vincent Leserer

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Is Your School Mentioned? Schools featured in this issue include:

Alleyn Court Preparatory School; Bede's Prep School; Bede's Trust; Bedford Girls' School; Beech Lodge School; Brooke House College; Chelsea Hall School; Claires Court; Claremont Senior School; Colchester Prep & High School; Cottesmore School; Cranleigh School; Croydon High School GDST; Danes Hill Prep; Dollar Academy; Eaton Square School; Ellesmere College; Felsted Prep; Finborough School; Gosfield School; Gresham's; Highfield and Brookham School; The High School of Glasgow; Holme Grange School; Jersey College for Girls; King's Ely; King's High School Warwick; Kingswood School; Kirkham Grammar School; Leighton Park School; Leweston Prep and Senior Schools; LVS Hassocks; Maple Hayes Dyslexia School; Merchant Taylors' Girls' School; Merchiston Castle School; Oxford International College (OIC) Brighton; Radnor House Sevenoaks; Reigate St Mary's; RGS Worcester; Rossall School; Royal Hospital School, Suffolk; Sarum Hall School; Sevenoaks School; Solihull School; St Albans School; St Margaret's School, Hertfordshire; St Paul's Girls' School, London; TASIS England; Taunton School; Tring Park School for the Performing Arts; Westholme; Wrekin College; York House School

Season's Greetings

As has become our tradition, this is a combined November/December issue. The next magazine will be out in January.

The team at ISM wish all readers, advertisers, and contributors a pleasant Christmas and a successful, peaceful 2024.



With the UK recently playing host to the first ever Artificial Intelligence (AI) Safety Summit where the topic of AI safety and ethics were discussed by global leaders and industry professionals, we take a look at the role AI can play in the education sector if you are a bursar, teacher, or student...

The rise of AI and its impact on the modern bursar

What can AI bring to the role of Bursar, Chief Operating Officers, Directors of Finance and Resources or Managing Directors? Executive search specialist, Hayley Mintern, discusses...



Elon Musk said: “no job is needed” in the future because of AI. Other experts claim AI could: “spell the end of the traditional classroom”.¹

Similarly to the pandemic, the education sector is about to undergo change on a scale not seen in decades. It is true the remarkable advancement of AI will irreversibly change the way we teach and learn.

But such colossal shifts will also bring immense opportunity, none less so for the professional bursar, whose role is a fascinating illustration of the sector’s wider transformation.

Tag, you’re it

As critical as ever to a school’s operations, many schools have adapted their bursar roles to new titles such as Chief Operating Officer, Director of Finance and Resources or Managing Director.

Historically, the role of the bursar was primarily focused on managing the financial affairs of the school.

But over the past few decades, the role of a bursar has undergone significant transformations, driven by changes in technology, management practices, and the

increasing complexity of school operations.

The role of Chief Operating Officer is typical in other sectors – and even commonplace in other areas of education – but until a few years ago the role was not seen in schools. In retitling the role to COO, schools are acknowledging the growing complexity of their operations, and the modern bursar’s place within them.

The visionary vanguard

A school’s COO acts much the same as in other sectors. Their primary function is to implement an institution’s goals and objectives into daily operations.

Schools have always needed leaders with vision, passion and high emotional intelligence. Against the rise of AI, the sector’s call has never been louder for talent that can demonstrate immense versatility, innovation, and adaptability.

AI is set to reduce a lot of the bursar’s administrative burden yet at the same time introduce new complexities and challenges to this most crucial of roles.

Bursars of the future will need robust technological expertise to apply AI to school operations,

along with ethical awareness and a commitment to continuous learning.

The bursar will also have to assess and balance the cyber risks of AI versus its strengths. One prominent example is transparency surrounding GDPR issues. Individuals must be aware of how AI might process their personal data. The bursar must also be aware of the security risks when handling such data.

The bursar must be able to navigate the sector’s novel challenges and provide strategic leadership to their schools. Bursars must use AI to personalise responses and understand that people are not an array of datasets. They must be efficient communicators and have a thorough understanding of all departments such as admissions, marketing, IT, estates and academic affairs, to ensure that AI decisions are aligned with the school’s objectives.

The team advantage

At their most effective, the COO or bursar is supported by a dedicated team. This is a crucial change – where before a bursar was commonly seen as a ‘one stop shop’, many schools now recognise the management

responsibilities are too great for one person alone.

A true leader shows the courage to have a dedicated team around them that they talk and listen to, letting others be experts to come back with ideas. Not all AI will benefit schools. Leaders must make important decisions based on evidence, and the expertise of those around them. By specialising your team and then adapting your processes with AI, more of your bursar’s time will be freed to focus on strategic leadership and long-term adaptability.

Onwards together

AI may be two-thirds of the solution, but the final and crucial third is human. The AI revolution in schools will not happen overnight. The element of balancing old and new knowledge will continue.

Our AI-augmented future is set to be full of challenges and opportunities for education leaders to build a new vision for the sector – and new definitions for the roles within it. It will define the opportunities for the young minds they are there to enliven.

Hayley Mintern is a Partner at executive search agency Anderson Quigley, <https://andersonquigley.com>. She has supported the education sector for ten years, providing executive search and interim and consultancy solutions to Independent Schools and other education providers. Her speciality is understanding the education sector and connecting talent that is passionate about providing high quality inclusive education.

¹ AI likely to spell end of traditional school classroom, leading expert says; The Guardian, 7 July 2023; <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2023/jul/07/ai-likely-to-spell-end-of-traditional-school-classroom-leading-expert-says>



Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a force for good

While many educators are wary about the impact of AI, Headmaster at Sevenoaks School, Kent, Jesse Elzinga, believes schools should be embracing the technology to educate students, prepare them for future careers and help them to make the world a better place.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been heralded as the greatest disruption in technology in decades. Many schools and workplaces are worried about the misuse of AI, fearing plagiarism and are rightly concerned about data issues. We do need to be careful and considered about how we integrate AI into our lives, but the technology has huge potential for good. It will revolutionise the way we live and work, and it is our responsibility to equip our students with the relevant skills and perspectives that will prepare them for the future.



At Sevenoaks School we teach our students how to think critically, how to be curious and how to be change makers. This includes developing the technological skills and confidence they will require to navigate new technology as it emerges.

Teaching through service

As an IB school and an institution founded on philanthropy, students undertake service projects as part of our curriculum. These projects enable students to combine their knowledge with their passions and philanthropic values, helping them to flourish as individuals and to make the world a better place. In the past year, we have supported several of our students to explore how AI can improve people's lives.

Broadening access to competition chess

Lower Sixth student, Siddhanth Lohia sought to broaden access to chess competitions. Visually impaired players can play at the same competition level as all others; however, they have found it difficult to keep up with the digitalisation of chess and access online resources to improve their game play.

A passionate chess tutor, player and coder, Siddhanth developed Python-based software that translates online chess resources including YouTube videos and blogs into voice cues for screen readers. The software is free to download through his non-profit organisation: www.chessforall.in. This could have a tremendous impact for visually impaired chess players as it makes the entire repository of online chess resources accessible to them.

Channelling mental health and wellbeing support

In Year 11, Sevenoaks student Simran Vara developed an Alexa Skill to provide users with a means to talk to someone when they need support. A Skill is like an application for Alexa and uses voice commands to perform everyday tasks such as checking the weather, playing games, or accessing mental health support. Simran's programme offers motivational quotes and guided breathing exercises to help people who are feeling overwhelmed.

Her project was runner-up in the nationwide Alexa Young Innovator Challenge for which she submitted the Skill with an essay that addressed how this technology is beneficial in a world where "harmful issues, like social media, are affecting young people's lives". Her invention shows how AI and machine learning can support other secondary school students with access to talking therapies.

Discovering new ways to treat tumours

Upper Sixth student, Andrea Olsen, worked alongside student researchers to investigate the correlation between ageing and brain tumour growth to fight disease faster. During an internship, she co-authored a paper on using AI to identify



new therapeutic targets for glioblastoma multiforme (GBM) – the most aggressive and common malignant brain tumour. Using AI to screen clinical data, Andrea and her colleagues identified three new target genes linked to GBM and ageing.

Her combined interests in neurobiology and technology have led her to jointly author five academic papers before turning 18. Last year she spoke at Aging Research and Drug Discovery conference to inspire other high school students to consider work in this fast-growing field of medical research.

Prior to the project, Olsen said: "I never knew that AI could be so helpful in finding completely new therapeutic targets. For me, that was an incredible opportunity to dive into the field of research, aging, longevity, and neuroscience. It really kick-started my entire career." Andrea is now an undergraduate at California Institute of Technology.

Conclusion

Many people are worried that the mass adoption of AI will lead to malpractice including cheating in education. AI tools can make written tasks quicker and easier, but they make other skills, like critical thinking and looking at sources, even more important. AI already brings many advantages to our lives, and we need to learn to use it effectively, safely, and appropriately.

Through these philanthropic projects, students are learning how to use AI and other digital innovations in the context of solving social problems. Having chosen causes close to their hearts, they are proactively engaging with AI and using digital skills to make a difference.

Being more human

"We need to spend less time staring into screens. And more time with each other. We need more human connection and interaction. We need more time to spend in nature". Head of Cottesmore School, West Sussex, Tom Rogerson, explores how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can serve as an ally in achieving a more balanced, fulfilling, and human-centric educational environment.



Tom Rogerson

In the ever-evolving landscape of education we, as headteachers, school leaders and dedicated staff are entrusted with not just imparting knowledge but also with nurturing the holistic development of our students. It's a responsibility that can often leave leaders stretched thin, balancing the demands of administrative tasks, curriculum development, and our true passion – educating the next generation.

With the right application, AI can help us reclaim time for what truly matters – nurturing the well-being of our students and ourselves.

The Challenge for 2024 and Beyond

The fast-paced demands of modern education, with its incessant paperwork, data entry, and administrative processes, often threaten to overshadow the core mission of our schools.

As leaders in this sector, we know the value of creating an environment where students can thrive not just academically but emotionally and socially as well.

AI can be the key to reducing this administrative workload and allowing us to spend more time where it counts most – with our students, supporting our colleagues and even with our loved ones at home. AI has the power to automate many of the routine administrative tasks, streamlining the efficiency of school operations.

It can free us from the monotony of data entry, policy integration and scheduling, granting us the freedom to focus on the aspects of our roles that encourage and increase human interaction.

Meaningful Connections

We need more time with each other.

Imagine a world where AI handles complex scheduling, manages school resources, and even helps tailor individualised learning pathways for students via educational psychologists' reports and learning frequency diagnostic tools. This isn't science fiction; it's the promise of AI in schools.

AI-powered systems can take on some of the burden of logistics, leaving us with more time for those personal interactions that define the teacher-student relationship.

By automating time-consuming tasks, educators can focus on nurturing creativity, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence in students. With more meaningful interactions, we can foster personal growth and mentorship, helping students find their true passions and guiding them towards a more fulfilling future.

Personalised Learning and Learning Frequencies

At Cottesmore we are working with a developer on 'Learning Frequencies' which is a move towards academic empathy in the classroom through meta-cognition. It aims to democratise bespoke learning.

This piece of work is not actually AI-based but the information created through the 'frequency bots' will then be used to tailor the individual learning experience. I believe this to be one of the most exciting pieces of work with which we are involved presently.

The ability to adapt to each student's unique learning

frequency is a welcome change.

We are developing a system which means that we can understand and empathise with a girl or boy to a much higher degree and then tailor resources, lesson plans and interventions to the individuals' needs. This personalisation not only could enhance academic achievement but also could super-charge educators' desire to create inspirational resources and plans as they can then provide personalised rather than generalised materials.

Data-Driven Decision Making

Authentic data is invaluable. It can help guide our decisions and can help us continually improve the quality of our educational offerings. AI systems excel at analysing vast amounts of data swiftly and accurately. They can provide insights into student performance, allowing us to make informed decisions about curriculum adjustments, resource allocation, and staff development.

Moreover, AI could possibly predict trends in education, enabling us to stay ahead of the curve and offer innovative, future-focused curricula. By embracing AI in this manner, we can ensure our students are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed for a rapidly changing world.

Ethical Considerations

Cottesmore is presently involved in some very high-level conversations regarding ethics in AI and robotics.

Ensuring that AI-based decisions are fair and unbiased is essential. It's crucial for us, as educational leaders, to engage actively in discussions about ethics in AI, establish guidelines for

responsible use, and monitor AI systems to prevent any discriminatory or unfair practices.

The Future of Schools

As we look to the future, by leveraging AI to reduce the administrative burden, personalise learning, support mental health, and make data-informed decisions, we can build schools that are more human-centric and focused on the well-being of our students and staff.

The journey towards AI-enhanced education requires careful planning, continuous learning, and an unwavering commitment to the people in our lives.

Let us work together as a community of educators to explore the vast possibilities AI offers and ensure that it remains a tool for promoting well-being and human connection in our schools.

The introduction of AI into schools is not about replacing educators but empowering them. It's about giving our teachers and leaders the time and tools they need to truly connect with their students, to understand their unique needs, and to guide them toward a bright and fulfilling future. AI is not just a technological advancement; it's a path to a more balanced, human-centric education system.

AI has been around for years. The online retail industry, for example, has stolen a march on this technology and is years ahead of education.

We've been using it every time we shop online or book a holiday. Let's stop making a fuss about it all and give education the advantages that industry has had for years.

Thoughts from the IAPS National AI and Digital Learning Conference - see next issue...

ISA Awards 2023

The Independent Schools Association (ISA) has held its annual awards for 2023. Celebrating the impact and individuality of its Members' schools, the awards showcased the diverse ways schools across the Association use their independence to provide something special to the children in their care.

The event was hosted by Kriss Akabusi MBE, who took to the stage to inspire guests with his journey to success on the track, reliving the magical moment that

was the 4x400m relay triumph for Team GB at the 1991 World Championships in Tokyo.

Three new ISA Awards were introduced for 2023, making it a total of 15 categories in which best practice was recognised.

LVS Hassocks, West Sussex, were named the inaugural ISA SEND School of the Year, with the ISA Boarding School of the Year awarded to TASIS The American Schools in England, Surrey. The first ISA Award for Excellence in Future Readiness went to King's High School Warwick.



Pictured: Colchester Prep & High School celebrate at the ISA Awards 2023. Hosted by Kriss Akabusi

The full list of winners of the ISA Awards 2023 are:

ISA Senior School of the Year Award:

Leighton Park School, Berkshire

ISA Junior School of the Year Award:

Finborough School, Suffolk

ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in Early Years:

Gosfield School, Essex

ISA SEND School of the Year Award (New for 2023):

LVS Hassocks, West Sussex

ISA Boarding School of the Year Award (New for 2023):

TASIS England, Surrey

ISA Award for Innovation in Independent Education:

Maple Hayes Dyslexia School, Staffordshire

ISA Award for Excellence in Future Readiness (New for 2023):

King's High School Warwick

ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:

Chelsea Hall School, London

ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in Mental Health and Wellbeing:

Colchester Prep & High School, Essex

ISA Award for Outstanding Engagement in the Community:

Clares Court, Berkshire

ISA Award for Excellence in Sustainability:

Holme Grange School, Berkshire

ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in the Performing Arts:

Claremont Senior School, East Sussex

ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in Art and Design:

Eaton Square School, London

ISA Award for Outstanding Sport in a Small School:

Brooke House College, Leicestershire

ISA Award for Outstanding Sport in a Large School:

Alley Court Preparatory School, Essex

STEAM learning festival

St Margaret's, Hertfordshire, has hosted a local STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) learning festival designed to inspire and challenge primary aged pupils. As well as St Margaret's Year 5 and 6 pupils, the school also extended the invitation to a number of children from local schools, Little Reddings Primary and Ashfield Junior School.

The children participated in the half-day workshop of activities offering exposure to an array of enriching activities. The sessions were delivered by TA Education (supported by Adobe and Sky) and included a Lego coding challenge, where children were required to programme a robot to collect a Lego block and deliver it

to a designated drop zone, using the latest version of the Mico:Bit.

Head at St Margaret's School, Lara Pechard, said: "Events like these are super important because they encourage pupils to work together in a focused way and to come up with thoughtful solutions to real-world problems. It has also been wonderful to welcome more children into our school from the local community."

The children also took part in several other activities including using VR headsets to create their own 3D space before exploring their virtual worlds through the lens of the headset. Using video editing software, pupils were also able to edit and create a short movie clip.

Engineering also formed part of the range of activities, and pupils were challenged to improve the EPC rating of their Minecraft house by adding solar panels, changing lightbulbs and deciding what will make their houses the most energy and heat efficient.

Pictured: Pupils engage in Minecraft Challenge



Science and Engineering Awards

Pupils from Felsted Prep School, Essex, have seen success at the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art (Creativity) & Mathematics) competition, hosted by CSES (Chelmsford Science & Engineering Society) and held at Anglia Ruskin University (ARU).

Open to children in Years 5-13 from all schools across Essex, pupils are encouraged to enter any STEAM projects they've already been working on, including coursework, hobby projects, even entries from clubs or other competitions – to give them the opportunity to showcase their projects to members of industry.

The full-day event presented children with awards across 9 categories, covering all technical disciplines with Felsted pupils achieving several awards, including; Concept Design for a design to filter water to prevent disease, Technical Design for research on growing plants using recycled

Pictured: Felsted pupils with the speakers made from recycled materials



water, Design Execution for a Festival Shelter project and The ARU Sustainability Award for making speakers from recycled wood, plastic and parts from scrapped cars.

Assistant Head (Academic) at Felsted Prep School, Christina Bury, commented; "STEAM competitions like this offer a fantastic learning experience for the children and really allow them to grow in confidence with their ideas, execution and presentation skills, as well as honing their public speaking and interview abilities."

Educational resources for plastic changemakers

It is now well known that we are reaching a global plastic crisis. Raising awareness amongst young people is an important way to address this issue. Head of Reigate St Mary's, Surrey, Marcus Culverwell (pictured), who is also the IAPs Lead on Education for Social Responsibility (ESR), reviews some new free resources that have been developed for primary age children to help enable them to become plastic changemakers.



Much has changed in the last decade with regards to people's understanding

of sustainability and the environmental issues which threaten our planet. When I started developing educational resources around climate change, food security, resource depletion and ecosystem damage, most people didn't really understand what the term sustainability meant, and even less believed that climate change was even real.

Fast forward a decade and we are in a very different place. What this means for the young people coming up through our schools is that achieving sustainable

development will be one of the overriding challenges for the 21st-century and they know it.

In the past, the challenges of integrating economic development, social inclusion and environmental sustainability were local or regional, but in the 21st century, these are indisputably global, because we live in a global community where the impacts of our lifestyles are felt in far reaching parts of the planet.

Young people are particularly aware of the environmental issues that are facing our world, and they want to know how to get involved and how they can make a difference. And, with estimates of around 10 million tons of plastic going into our oceans each year,



plastic pollution is high on the agenda of 'what can we do?'

One of the biggest hindrances to their learning about what can be done is that many teachers don't know the answers to their environmental questions and therefore they are not well positioned to help students in our schools. So, when a free resource comes along, which addresses this pertinent issue of *plastic pollution*, I suggest every school should welcome it with open arms.

It is often said that there is no such thing as a free lunch and most of the time this is true. However, when a generous philanthropist cares deeply about the environment and sees a need he wants to meet, this is not necessarily the case.

Sebastian Breteau, who set up the Breteau Foundation, is passionate about education and he has put money from his charity into creating five lessons for primary school aged children all about becoming plastic changemakers. He has collaborated with the creators of the hit series, 'Miraculous Ladybug and Cat Noir', to produce a whole episode

specifically focused on supporting this plastic changemakers initiative. The Breteau Foundation states that everyone has a role to play in stopping the destruction of our planet, and their focus is on educating and inspiring children, equipping the rising generation with the learning and the tools to become plastic changemakers. Their goal is to inspire young people and build a sense of responsibility to help every young person become an ambassador with the passion to make an impact.

The lesson plans and episode of Miraculous Ladybug are free to download and help children to understand why single use plastics are so bad for the environment and all life on our planet. More importantly still they help children to understand that they can all make a difference. This is not only beneficial for the children, but as I say, the teachers who need to understand how to bring about change as well.

This is an important issue, children really care about it, and these resources are absolutely free – so why wouldn't you?

Ecology science project

A cohort of Year 8 students at Bedford Girls' School have earned Bronze CREST Awards for their work on a science project which saw them explore and examine the school ground's ecology.

Science teacher Emma Smart challenged her students to independently lead their own scientific enquiries into the live ecosystem around them as a way of bringing science to life, and helping the girls to embrace science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).

Students worked together in groups of three and four to decide their research questions, order equipment and design their experiments, ranging from measuring the PH of soil to looking at which plants attract the most insects. The students worked on their projects for several sessions across the term before presenting their findings in class, taking full ownership

of their investigations from conception to conclusion.

Ms Smart utilised the British Science Association's (BSA) CREST Awards, a nationally recognised scheme which introduces students to project-based work by empowering them to work like scientists to design and complete a project that addresses a real-world problem.

Ms Smart noted one of the great impacts on the students' development was the confidence they built through the process, which is especially important to empower girls within STEM and break down gender biases. By running their own experiments and investigating the world around them to answer scientific questions, then being rewarded with Bronze CREST Awards for their work, their growth and learning experience was both validated and celebrated.

To download your free resources visit
The Breteau Foundation Plastic Changemakers page:
<https://plastic-changemakers.breteaufoundation.org>





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Dr Clare Flanagan

Inspiring young learners to study a language

The number of students choosing to study modern languages at undergraduate level is dropping, but why? Head of Modern Languages at Merchiston Castle School, Edinburgh, Dr Clare Flanagan considers what is causing the disinterest in learning languages at school, and looks at what can be done to promote it to young people.

Since 2008, the number of students taking modern languages at undergraduate level in the UK has fallen by 54%¹. This is reflected in Scotland with the number of Higher entries for learners of modern languages having halved² since 1999.

Such figures stand in contrast with research undertaken by Dr. Begoña Rodríguez de Céspedes, Senior Lecturer in Translation Studies at the University of Portsmouth, which indicates a high demand for foreign language skills among UK employers and the 13.4 million users of the app Duolingo learning a new language in adulthood.^{3,4} Clearly there is an interest, and demand, for learning modern languages yet uptake of these subjects across the UK remains low, so how do we make learning languages a more attractive option for students at GCSE, A-Level, Highers and beyond?

Approach

With a thriving Modern Languages Department, here at Merchiston, we offer German, Russian, French, Spanish and Mandarin, with other languages available by arrangement.

Providing multiple options affords students the opportunity to explore

a range of languages throughout their early school years and ultimately go on to make a more informed decision when it comes to their GCSE, A level and Highers choices.

By presenting pupils with a wider array of different languages, they are exposed to multiple cultures and gain skills that will equip them for future employment.

Bringing Languages to Life

Teaching modern languages effectively requires full engagement from the learner. This is best achieved when the student is enjoying and actively participating in the lesson, whether that is by ordering a hot chocolate at a German Christmas market or playing a game of Pictionary in French class.

Here at Merchiston, we endeavour to bring foreign languages to life through a range of activities and quality experiences that go beyond the standard curriculum. From tapas evenings at a local Spanish restaurant to our annual Chinese New Year Dinner with St. George's School for Girls, students are encouraged to fully immerse themselves in foreign languages and cultures. Regular trips abroad,

language workshops and film clubs cement learning in a way that feels less like schoolwork and more like their favourite hobby!

Perhaps schools can learn from the likes of TikTok, where accounts such as @learnfrenchwithalexa have over 300k followers, while the hashtag #learnspanish has accumulated 2 billion views. Making learning languages engaging and accessible for young people is key to building the appeal of the subject and ultimately, cultivating a genuine passion for modern languages – one that lasts long after their school years.

Showcasing the benefits

While the career prospects of Maths or Biology may be more easily recognisable among schoolchildren, the professional opportunities opened by speaking multiple languages may be less apparent, yet incredibly wide-ranging and fulfilling.

Foreign language skills are vital for a wide range of sectors. From government to banking and business development, the ability to speak multiple languages is highly advantageous in an ever-competitive labour market. Regular career talks with accomplished

professionals also go to show students the many different avenues modern languages can take them, and how their language skills can boost their career prospects.

Outside the world of work, it's vital schools and government impress the social benefits of speaking a foreign language – be it by expanding one's worldview, or the ability to chat with an international student in their mother tongue!

By actively communicating the real-life, valuable advantages of modern languages we can expect to see an uptake in learners.

In our increasingly globalised society where international trade is thriving and travel tourism is predicted to become a \$15.5 trillion industry by 2033⁵, learning foreign languages is not a skill we can afford to lose.

By engaging students through a variety of interactive lessons, demonstrating the real-world value of a second language and offering pupils choice from a young age, we can cultivate a society that is curious, respectful of and engaged with other cultures across the globe.”

1 UK students are abandoning language learning, so we're looking for a more creative approach. The Conversation, 4 May 2023: <https://theconversation.com/uk-students-are-abandoning-language-learning-so-were-looking-for-a-more-creative-approach-202078>

2 Scottish education: Decline in learning languages is making us poorer. The Herald, 19 August 2023: <https://www.heraldsotland.com/politics/23731705.scottish-education-decline-learning-languages-making-us-poorer>

3 Students lacking language skills will miss out on jobs, according to new report. Phys.org, 24 January 2023: <https://phys.org/news/2023-01-students-lacking-language-skills-jobs.html>

4 Leading language learning apps worldwide in September 2023, by downloads. Statista, 2023: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1239522/top-language-learning-apps-downloads>

5 Global Travel & Tourism Catapults into 2023 Says WTTC. World Travel and Tourism Council, 26 April 2023: <https://wtcc.org/news-article/global-travel-and-tourism-catapults-into-2023-says-wttc>

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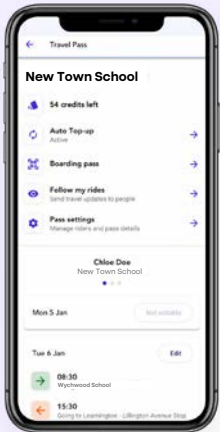
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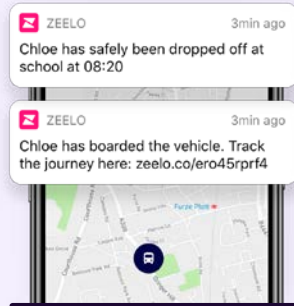
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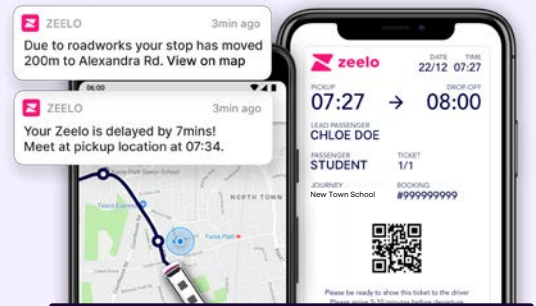
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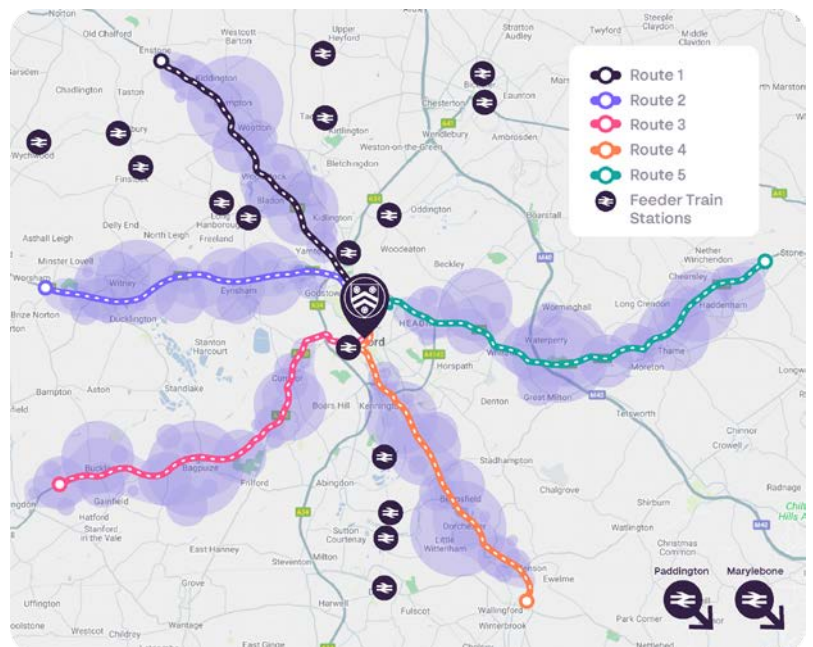
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Global issues in the curriculum

Understanding and devising solutions for contemporary global issues needs to be a part of a school's curriculum. Director of Learning at Royal Hospital School (RHS), Suffolk, Matthew Routledge, takes a look at where to start and outlines 5 key principles that can be used when embedding a problem-solving approach to these issues in school.



The job of today's educators has arguably never been more challenging. As we emerge from (and are still assessing the impact of) a global pandemic, the focus of our news cycle turns to growing and complex global issues, whether they be climate change, geopolitics, armed conflict or social inequality. Crucially, though, young people are increasingly attuned to such issues and are actively seeking means of engaging meaningfully with them. Alongside the traditional curriculum, how can we as educators constructively embed a problem-solving approach to such issues into our schools?

Having considered this at a whole-school level here at the Royal Hospital School, it is my view that schools can approach this area by following 5 key principles.

1. Identify the issues which engage and motivate your pupil body. The idea of embedding global issues into a school's

curriculum can at first appear to be daunting and intimidating in scale. Looking first at the issues which motivate your pupil body, allows you to prioritise accordingly. At RHS, we have used various pupil voice committees (such as the pupil council, diversity committee and philanthropy committee) to help identify the issues which most resonate with our pupils. This generates greater buy-in at the pupil level, helps get parents engaged and helps to focus thinking.

2. Promote opportunities for interdisciplinary, project-based learning. Identifying issues is usually fairly straightforward, but it is the problem-solving aspect of global awareness which often proves to be more challenging. Whilst we cannot immediately expect young people to solve the world's most complex issues, we can foster a culture of learning which replicates the skills

needed to address such issues in the future. If our pupils are to be the leaders of tomorrow, then the ability to think along interdisciplinary lines and to make connections between different fields is crucial. Just as important is the ability of pupils to work on extended pieces of work from an early age, preferably with a problem to solve or an enquiry in mind. For example, in our Year 7 Compass curriculum we task pupils with putting together a proposal for how £5,000 might best be spent to benefit the local community. This requires pupils to consider what local issues are, think meaningfully about how to resolve said issues, and to communicate a solution clearly. Whilst not global in scale, the skills being fostered are vital.

3. Leverage real-world scenarios. When looking to embed global issues into the curriculum, it is not necessary to reinvent the wheel: there will be natural overlap between existing curricula and global issues to be explored. It may be that generating a simple curriculum map allows pupils and staff to see when such issues occur in their subject areas, and it might only take minimal tweaking to use current affairs and issues as exemplar material. Pupils can often engage maturely with current issues when trusted to do so in an academic manner, and so exploring inequality through history, politics, economics or geography, or perhaps slavery and the impact of empire through ancient history is not so far-fetched. Bringing in speakers who are experts in their field to draw connections between current issues and historical precedent can then be very powerful in consolidating such issues.

4. Demonstrate to pupils that they have a voice which can be heard. Pupils often know that they have a voice which can be used in various aspects of school life, but it is crucial that we as school leaders ensure that pupils

feel their voices have weight. This goes beyond simply the activities of the school day. One initiative we have started at RHS comes from introducing our pupils to parliament and UK democracy – we get pupils to consider issues of importance to them and to write to their MP, or to a minister, to communicate it. Many pupils assumed that, because they could not vote, they do not have a voice; and so when they received letters of reply acknowledging their concerns and views, it gave their voice a credibility that they perhaps previously felt was not there. This has allowed our pupils to feel empowered to hold leaders to account and to consider their principles and beliefs.

5. Develop a culture of empathy and responsibility beyond the school environment. Finally, it is my strong view that solutions to global issues have to be rooted in the twin values of responsibility and empathy. Many schools do well to foster these qualities and place them at the heart of their school aims and vision. Pupils recognise the importance of such values, but we can be more explicit in showing them how vital they are outside of the school environment and how they as young people can have an immediate impact. Whether that is charity work, local outreach, positions of young leadership or simply being a strong social role model in the community, we must try to get pupils to live their lives with a sense of personal and social responsibility, allied with the emotional intelligence to see the world through another person's experience. Celebrating this in our schools and giving it overt attention allows us to develop young people with a keen eye for changing their world for the better.

New 'Apprenticeshop'

Beech Lodge School, Berkshire have opened a new look Apprenticeshop in Maidenhead.

Set up as a Community Interest Company (CIC), The Apprenticeshop offers work experience to young people with special educational needs & disabilities (SEND) in a real-life retail setting. The shop sells vintage, recycled and pre-loved homewares whilst simultaneously raising much needed funds for local charities.



Pictured: Staff and students outside the new Apprenticeshop

Originally launched in November 2021, the Apprenticeshop was created to underpin the vision of the school by developing students' social skills, self-esteem and self-confidence.

Over the last 3 years, despite the pandemic, many young people have completed work experience in the shop, learning about the retail industry from stocktaking, pricing up items, cleaning, advertising, point of sale, taking cash and card payments and dealing with customers.

Now, relocated and rebranded, the new Apprenticeshop CIC is offering opportunities for other Berkshire schools, including Forest Bridge School and Manor Green School to take part.

It also means that the Apprenticeshop can now be open every day of the week to meet the demand of the community.



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To stay or leave?

Teachers' Pension Scheme and the employer contribution rate rise.

Recently, the Government confirmed that the employer contribution rate to the Teachers' Pension Scheme will rise by a further 5% to 28.68% with effect from April 2024. This represents a further 21% increase in the employer contribution rate (on top of the prior 43% increase in September 2019) and confirms the previous steer given earlier in the year by HM Treasury which had indicated the "direction of travel" was towards a 5% increase.

As a result of this significant additional cost for independent schools, it is widely expected that there will be a further wave of consultations on the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) across the sector in the coming months.

Legal Director and specialist in employment and education law, Adam McRae-Taylor, explains the options available to independent schools and highlights the risk in delaying consultation.

How many schools have left TPS now?

Figures from the Independent Schools Bursars' Association indicate that over 338 independent schools have fully exited the TPS, and a further 122 independent schools have implemented phased withdrawal (see below). Around 150-170 independent schools are understood to be currently in consultation. This means approximately one third of the sector has taken some form of action with the remainder adopting

a watching brief until now.

Are many schools starting consultation in January 2024?

We have seen significant interest in recent weeks from schools looking to start consultation in the New Year. This planning is on the basis of a target exit date of 31 August 2024, which is now the earliest realistic date by which to implement changes, meaning those schools still in the TPS will have to bear at least five months of the higher contributions from April 2024.

What are the risks in delaying consultation?

The most immediate risk is having to absorb the higher contribution rate for a longer period of time. Experience from the last valuation in September 2019 also suggests that there is a limited window in which schools can argue that the increased contributions are 'new' and 'unaffordable'. Once the higher rate has been paid for a while, it becomes harder for schools to argue that it is unsustainable and thus becomes the new reality.

Does the likely prospect of a Labour Government affect the situation at all?

Current polling indicates that it is very likely that Labour will form the next Government at some point in the next 12 months. Labour's policy of imposing VAT on independent school fees will place further fiscal pressure on

independent schools, many of which are already operating on tight budgets in an environment of high inflation, rising interest rates and a general cost of living crisis. In this context, taking action regarding the TPS is one of the relatively few financial levers available to independent schools seeking greater financial stability.

It is also worth noting that the employment law environment is likely to tilt more in favour of employees under Labour. At its recent party conference, Labour again pledged to end the practice of so-called 'fire and re-hire', also known as 'dismissal and re-engagement'. This is currently the only means by which schools can push through changes to the TPS if, after extensive consultation, teachers still do not agree. If Labour legislates in this area, then altering pension arrangements will become considerably more challenging.

Are most schools fully exiting or using alternative models such as the 'hybrid' or 'phased withdrawal'?

In the first wave of TPS consultations, the focus was very much on securing a full exit from the scheme. More recently, schools have been keener to offer staff a choice under the so-called 'hybrid' model. This is where teachers can choose to stay in the TPS but have to bear the costs of increased employer contributions themselves alongside the alternative option of



Adam McRae-Taylor

a defined contribution scheme.

In the past year, we have also seen a notable increase in schools considering the 'phased withdrawal' model. Phased withdrawal allows schools to close access to the TPS to new starters whilst keeping current teachers in the scheme. It depends on staff turnover to reduce the burden of staying in the TPS, which means that any financial savings would only be gradual. For this reason, it is now common practice for schools to use phased withdrawal in combination with another option, such as the hybrid model, in order to control costs.

Are strikes likely if we consult about leaving the TPS?

The past 12 months have seen industrial unrest across many sectors, and schools have been no exception. Strike ballots (and often requests for union recognition as well) have been a tactic in the armoury of unions fighting changes to the TPS for some time. However, there does now appear to be an increased willingness not just to ballot for strike action, but actually carry it out as well.

Detailed scenario planning in this area is, therefore vital.



Adam McRae-Taylor is Legal director in the Schools & Charities Team at Moore Barlow. He specialises in employment and education law. www.moorebarlow.com

Artsmark Gold Award

Pupils and staff at Croydon High School GDST, Surrey, are celebrating after receiving an Artsmark Gold Award.

The Artsmark Award is the only creative quality standard for schools, accredited by Arts Council England. It supports schools to develop and celebrate arts and cultural education, putting creativity and wellbeing at the heart of the curriculum.

Director of Teaching & Learning and Head of Art and 3D Design, Elizabeth Smith said: "Mrs Webb (Assistant Head Co-Curricular) and I are absolutely delighted with the news that we have received an Artsmark Gold Award. Over the last four years we have been working on our statement of impact and as a school community developing our provision for the Arts and culture within our curriculum and we are looking forward to developing our journey even further."



Pictured: Junior and senior students collaborating to paint 'Gloria' the Giraffe - a collaborative piece of art for 'Croydon Stands Tall' to raise awareness for CRISIS

Creating an inclusive school community

From the first day a child walks into a school ready to start their education, the hope – of the pupil, the parents, and the school itself – is that they will feel welcomed, included; that they will feel it is the school for them. Deputy Head (Pastoral) at Radnor House Sevenoaks, Kent, George Penlington (pictured), shares the approach the school has taken to create inclusivity and a sense of community.



The creation of an inclusive school community requires a great deal of thought, preparation, and willingness to develop. This is no more firmly felt than in this post-Covid period, as all schools strive to rediscover the sense of community which was fragmented by the necessary 15 months of isolation and 'bubbling'.

Here are a few guiding principles that have helped us to become the school we are. This is by no means an exhaustive list and approaches inclusivity in a broad sense.

Keep the main thing the main thing

This has been something of a mantra for me since I moved into senior leadership. Regardless of the situation, if we lose sight of 'the main thing', then we will not achieve our goals.

In schools, the main thing must be the child.

This may appear an obvious statement, but, concerningly, it isn't always the case. For us at Radnor House, 'Celebrating Every Individual' is not just a tagline, but a fundamental approach to achieving success for the child. Each pupil must be afforded the opportunity to develop both general skills (ones for all) and those particular to their interests.

Establish inclusive policies

Whether relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI), SEND, Anti-Bullying, Equal Opportunities, or Careers (to name a few), the school's policies need to ensure that all pupils' needs are met. The school must outline clearly what it does, ensuring that they are compliant.

Provide support services

A strong SEND department and student support team are necessary to successfully uphold the policies. While tutors are the main support network for the pupils (each pupil has two tutors at Radnor House), and although we want to ensure that we provide for all pupils' needs

in the classroom, more specialist staff must be on hand to help pupils requiring more individualised attention, whether for SEN, language support, or counselling.

Encourage pupil voice and action

It is important we listen to the pupils. While it might not be possible to put into effect the requests of each individual, or each group, an open dialogue is still important, as is providing as much transparency as possible.

It is important to utilise the strengths of the pupils to help establish an inclusive community. We train Year 11 and Year 13 Peer Mentors. They are there to listen and to support. Sometimes that sense of inclusion comes from speaking to someone closer in age and who has experienced teenage challenges more recently.

Promote respect

At Radnor House, we have established one of our Four Core Values as Respect. This is vital if pupils are to feel both valued and included. It is also key to establishing an expectation of an outward view: one which focuses more on those around us rather than ourselves.

Zero tolerance policy

A school also needs to be prepared to deal with pupils who do not meet the expectations of the school. While it must be understood that children will make mistakes and will require clear guidance and education regarding inappropriate language and actions, it must be understood that there is no place for bullying, discrimination, and exclusionary behaviour.

Maintaining clear teaching, both explicitly in PSHEE and assemblies, and embedding inclusivity in the curriculum, is key to setting the tone.

Maintain a diverse curriculum

Where there is flexibility in the curriculum, we should seek to widen the experience of the pupils both in and out of the classroom. As

with many independent schools in the UK, our community is not very diverse (in terms of percentages), reflecting the demographics of the Sevenoaks area. We have, therefore, sought to ensure that the curriculum represents diverse perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds. A key area has been a review of the literature in the library and the guest speakers we bring into the school. In addition, our connection with the other Round/Square schools from around the world allows us to broaden the cultural experiences of the pupils.

Bring the pupils together

By bringing Year 7 to Year 11 pupils together daily (and the Sixth Formers every week) in a vertical tutoring system, it has brought the school community closer. It has diluted the intensity felt within a single year group, provided them with a more 'natural' environment, and has allowed the younger pupils to learn from the older ones' pro-social behaviour.

Bring the whole community together

Having established the pupils at the centre of everything we do, look at how you can bring everyone else together, ensuring they feel included too. Whether through large events (fireworks, family fun days etc), regular coffee mornings, or promoting active parent reps, it is important that parents feel included in the school too.

Additionally, create an impact in the local community through weekly community service, large scale annual events (Make a Difference Day), and maintaining active charity work.

Remember that creating an inclusive school community is an ongoing process that requires commitment, collaboration, and a willingness to adapt to the changing needs of students and the community. Constant reassessment and reflection are vital, engaging with all stakeholders throughout.

Get pupils on a path to loving mealtimes for life

Throughout our lives, mealtimes are central to our social and physical needs. Most people love food and sharing the social experience with friends. It's easy for schools to focus on the commercials and logistics of catering but it is vitally important children develop a good relationship with food from an early age.

Leading meals provider, apetito has just launched a Schools Guide on How to Make Mealtimes Easy and Enjoyable. This FREE guide is packed with vital information on how schools can get pupils loving food and engaged at mealtimes.

It explores everything from developing pupils' culinary tastes, to engaging parents in school catering. It's also packed full of ideas, hints, and tips on how to host tastings and explores how schools can make mealtimes interactive and enjoyable.

This guide is essential reading explains apetito's Head of Education, Rupert Weber: "Throughout our lives, meals are central to social and physical needs. It's vital that children learn to really appreciate food and embrace the social elements that go with mealtimes.

"We know that it's easy for schools to focus on logistical and financial elements when catering for pupils, but it's also really important that enjoyment of meals is not forgotten.

"That's why we've created this guide, so we can share our knowledge and expertise to help schools make mealtimes as engaging and get pupils on the path loving nutritious, tasty meals for life."

To access the guide simply click here:

<https://apetito.link/schoolsenjoymentguide>



Learn more about apetito's school meals service:
<https://apetito.link/ISM>

Designing a new educational building

Knowing where to start can sometimes be difficult. There is a wealth of guidance and information available which can lead to information overload and too many design options can make a situation over complicated.

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Educating about the Great War, 1914-18

With the Western Front Association introducing a Quality Mark scheme to recognise excellence in teaching and learning about the First World War, Principal Teacher of History at The High School of Glasgow, Chris Mackay, discusses the school's approach to teaching the Great War, why the school decided to go for accreditation and how other schools can get involved.

This year, The High School of Glasgow became the first school in Britain to be awarded the Western Front Association's (WFA) Quality Mark. The WFA is a charity whose objective is to educate the public about the Great War (1914-1918) and schools are important partners in achieving this. The Quality Mark has been introduced to recognise excellence in teaching and learning and schools undergo a rigorous audit of their curriculum, teaching and learning in History and across the wider curriculum, as well as across extracurricular activities.

Studying the First World War allows pupils to explore the heritage of our school, which in itself, is a powerful reason in its favour. It also permits us to reflect on international events which had a massive impact on the school community. Around 480 former pupils died in the First World War and another 150 or so died in the Second World War. In the 1920s, the school created a war memorial and erected a Memorial Pavilion in their memory. Former staff produced a record of those former pupils killed after both conflicts

and the first volume of the Book of Service and Remembrance was published in 1921. Over a hundred years later, it is a priceless source of information. We have scanned photographs of former pupils to create wall displays and we use them in the lead up to Remembrance Day as it offers some idea of the scale of loss from within our community.

Our work also takes into account the fact that the school community is more diverse today than it was 100 years ago. We spend time looking at the global impact of the war and include material on the contribution of India, Africa and China. We explore the High School's connection to Walter Tull, the first black Officer to command white troops in the British Army, as his niece went to the Glasgow High School for Girls. We also explore the role of women during the war which includes a focus on former pupil, Suffragist and Trade Unionist, Mary Macarthur.

Outside the classroom, we organise a Battlefields trip for around 100 pupils, enlisting the services of

Mercat Tours. We use Ypres in Belgium as our base, not only was it the scene of heavy fighting, it was the location of the first two casualties suffered by the High School in 1914. It also has the Menin Gate, one of four memorials to the missing in Belgian Flanders which cover the area known as the Ypres Salient. Two of our young pipers participated in the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate, which was a truly touching moment. We often have staff and pupils whose relatives have their names recorded upon it. This year we had around twenty who had provided details of relatives who had served on the Western Front. Where possible, a stop at one of the sites associated with them is arranged and the trip becomes more personal and even more memorable.

A visit to the Somme is another big part of our Battlefields trip. Our visit to the Thiepval Memorial, the Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, has connections to the High School, as the display at the entrance contains the photographs of 16 former pupils killed on the



Chris Mackay

Somme, with 45 former pupils named on the memorial. This year we presented a plaque to the Thiepval Museum in recognition of their work.

Our approach to teaching the Great War reflects a lot of the good practice which takes place in many schools around the country. I would recommend those who would like to apply for the WFA's Quality Mark, to do so. It's a relatively straightforward process involving an application form and evidence. We supplied our schemes of work which outlined our courses and highlighted the work we do with school trips, as well as sharing information we gathered for our Battlefields trip.

The Quality Mark accreditation lasts for three years and allows us to use a special logo on our stationary, publications and materials. We have been presented with a certificate and a plaque, and are eligible to be invited to the WFA Service of Remembrance at the Cenotaph in London which is incredibly special.



The High School of Glasgow pupils on their Battlefields trip



Further information on The Western Front Association Quality Mark is available at:

<https://www.westernfrontassociation.com/latest-news/2023/august-2023/the-western-front-association-announces-the-first-recipient-of-its-quality-mark-for-teaching-and-learning-about-the-first-world-war>

Wreath laying

Over 1100 pupils, staff, governors and invited guests gathered in the Great Quadrangle at Solihull School, West Midlands, to remember those who died in the World Wars and other conflicts.

Wreaths were laid at the War Memorial by the Head of School, Hannah Greenwood; CCF Cadet, Laavunya Arora; Flt Sgt Rob Reader, RAF (Jago 1992–

2003) representing all past and current Old Silhillian serving officers; President of the Parents' Association, Julie Jones; President of the Old Silhillians' Association, Steve Urry; President of Saint Martin's Old Girls Association, Louise Cox; Governor, Paul Newby; The Bursar, Richard Bate and the Executive Headmaster, Charles Fillingham.



Headmaster, Charles Fillingham laying a wreath at the War Memorial



Commemoration services

Royal Hospital School (RHS), Suffolk, commemorated Remembrance Day this year in various ways. As a school with a rich naval heritage, RHS marked Remembrance Sunday with pupils and many alumni proudly taking part in a Divisions Parade. General Sir Jim Hockenull KBE ADC Gen, a former pupil, attended as their inspecting officer, who is currently Commander of Strategic Command. Strategic Command develops and coordinates joint capabilities for UK Defence such as medical services, intelligence, support and logistics, digital and communication systems, cyber, special forces, training and education, and our overseas bases.

The school also welcomed visiting preacher, the Reverend James Francis, RN Staff Chaplain, to RHS' Service of Remembrance, whose sermon was about the importance of loving our neighbour. The School Chapel hosted two services on Remembrance Sunday, welcoming back many alumni to worship alongside the current pupils and family members. Mathilda and Oliver, Heads of School, laid the school wreath; during the second service Leighla in Year 7 laid a wreath on behalf of the Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk. The service also offered the school community the chance to make an act of commitment to work towards peace in all aspects of their lives.

Earlier in the week RHS' school band also participated in the Felixstowe Festival of Remembrance. Alongside cadets from the local area, pupils performed several marches, including their very own 'Holbrook' – and the Corps of Drums performed their full display.

Issey in Year 11 was also invited to play her bugle at the war memorial in nearby Stutton, as the community laid their remembrance wreaths, and was featured that evening on BBC Look East!



Pictured: General Sir Jim Hockenull KBE ADC Gen inspecting the Divisions parade (top) and Year 7 pupils wearing their family war medals (above)

Poppy appeal and assembly

Pupils and staff of Highfield and Brookham School, Hampshire have paid their respects to their war dead.

Head, Suzannah Cryer and her husband, Bob, read out the names of former pupils who lost their lives in the service of their country during two world wars.

The Act of Remembrance featured a two-minute silence, and an emotional rendition of The Last Post by trumpeter and former Highfield and Brookham music teacher Mark Atkins. There was also a special performance by Simon Gunn on the bagpipes, who played The Rowan Tree, When The Battle's Over, Green Hills, Castle Dangerous and the Flowers of the Forest lament as the children filed silently onto Chapel Field in their year groups.

Mrs Cryer said: "Like so many other schools, the Highfield and Brookham community was so sadly affected by the Great War from 1914-18 and the Second World War from 1939-45, and it's imperative that the sacrifice these brave souls made should never ever be forgotten."

The school has a strong link with wartime, with former headmaster Peter Mills having escaped from a prisoner of war camp in northern Italy in 1943.

Mr Mills, Highfield Headmaster from 1953 until his retirement in 1979 and former owner of the school now owned by his son, Bill, was imprisoned at Fontanellato, near Parma, during the Second World War. Locals, guards and a kindly commandant helped him escape along a route through the Apennines known as the 'Freedom Trail' after an armistice between the Allies and Italy which Germany refused to recognise.

Now, in peacetime, sections of the Freedom Trail are walked only by people keen to gain an understanding of a significant piece of history. As a result, an exchange programme between Highfield and Brookham Schools and the Istituto Comprensivo di Fontanellato e Fontevivo has been running successfully since 2018, with two Italian pupils spending a term at the school each year.



Pictured: Year 4 pupils with the ceramic poppies they had made in their art lessons especially for the wartime tribute

Nurturing healthy minds and bodies

In a world often obsessed with appearances, it's easy to forget that what we put into our bodies is of paramount importance to our health and overall well-being. Head of Nutrition for a school catering company, Valentina De Pascale, provides some nutrition tips for catering managers and discusses how making wise dietary choices, engaging in regular exercise, and cultivating the right mindset can empower students to unlock their physical and mental potential.

The Cognitive Connection: Food and concentration

The food we consume has a direct impact on cognitive performance. To maintain optimal concentration, reduce anxiety, improve positive thinking, it is crucial to avoid blood sugar spikes. A fundamental tip is to avoid high glycaemic foods on an empty stomach. Instead, opt for a high-protein and high fibre breakfast or mid-morning snack to prevent insulin spikes such as eggs on sourdough toast; porridge with seeds or yoghurt with fruit. A mid-morning snack rich in protein, such as hummus or cheese, helps maintain steady energy levels and concentration.

Protein should be a part of every meal and snack – either animal protein, like meat and yoghurt, or plant-based sources, such as seeds and legumes. Oily

fish, like mackerel and salmon, containing Omega-3 fatty acids, are particularly beneficial for brain health. Adding fat to a meal helps reduce its glycaemic load, which can prevent energy crashes.

Morning fuel for afternoon vitality

The foods consumed in the morning have a direct impact on energy levels in the afternoon. Catering managers should aim to provide options that keep pupils energised and attentive throughout the day, especially during exams. Banning certain foods can lead to a restrictive mindset and unhealthy eating habits. Instead, it is important to encourage students to have a holistic approach to food such as enjoying desserts after a high-protein meal rather than as an afternoon snack.

Intentionality: Understanding the impact of food

Educating children about the importance of food choices is paramount. Just as we carefully plan what we wear, we should plan what we eat, considering both pleasure and energy. With a deeper understanding of the effects of their choices, individuals can make meaningful changes and establish positive habits.

Social media often puts emphasis on appearances, but the focus should always be on making nutritious choices and catering managers can help instil these values and provide food choices that support these principles.

Personalised nutrition for sport

The nutritional needs of individuals vary greatly based on levels of physical activity and intensity. For instance, athletes require foods that provide sustained energy for extended training sessions. Foods – like honey and white bread – that could reduce academic performance for children in the classroom, can be essential energy sources for children that are exercising.

Mindset and muscle: Encouraging active lifestyles

During puberty, many girls shy away from sports due to a new body awareness and physiological changes. Supporting girls to focus

more on what their body is able to do instead of what it may look like is vital to improve self-awareness and encourage them to continue with their favourite sports. Sport builds muscle mass, the building block of the body, which is crucial for overall well-being for growth and prevents physiological issues in the future.

Addressing female health

Understanding the unique nutritional needs of girls and their menstrual cycles is pivotal. Different phases of the menstrual cycle require varying dietary approaches and training plans, influenced by oestrogen and progesterone levels. By educating pupils about their physiology, they can make more informed dietary choices to sustain physical and cognitive health.

Caterers and catering managers in schools can have a profound impact on pupils' nutrition and well-being and help them to understand what their bodies need to thrive and encourage a shift in mindset, emphasising the importance of what we eat over how we look.

Food is not just the main component of national identities, cultures and families, food is also fuel for the brain and the body and our daily choices have a great impact on our mental health and physical preparedness.



Valentina De Pascale



Valentina De Pascale is Head of Nutrition at independent school caterer Palmer & Howells. She has recently developed a 'Fuelling Potential' programme.

Running the extra mile

Twenty-four members of staff from across the Bede's Trust Schools, East Sussex, took part in the Beachy Head Marathon, 10km run and Ultra Marathon, raising funds for Sixth Form Transformational Bursaries. Together they covered over 400km and 11,074 metres in elevation.

Despite the challenging weather conditions, with the races coinciding with Storm Babet making for some wet, treacherous, conditions both up and downhill, Team Bede's remained undeterred.

CEO and Head Peter Goodyer commented, "The Bede's community embraced the opportunity to be a part of the Beachy Head marathon, a remarkable event that not only tested our endurance but also fuelled our passion for making a difference. Running for the Bede's Foundation, we know that the true essence of achievement lies not only in reaching the finish line but in the lives that our bursary programme could transform."



Pictured: Beachy Head Group Selfie

Mental health talk and run

To help mark Mental Health Awareness Day, Kingswood School in Bath invited Ben Smith to talk to students about the challenges in his life that led him to take on the challenge of running 401 marathons in 401 days, raising over £330,000 for two anti-bullying charities in the process.

Throughout his talk, Ben, who won the BBC Sports Personality 'Helen Rollason Award', along with other awards including the ITV Pride of Britain 'National Fundraiser of the Year Award' as a result of his achievements, talked openly and honestly about his background and the significant challenges he has faced and overcome in his life, leading to his life-changing decision in 2015 to become the only person in the world to run 401 marathons in 401 days.

Pictured: Ben Smith (centre) with Matt Deacon (3rd from left), with students

The students who attended the talk, also had the opportunity to run with him afterwards.

Head of Science and cross-country co-ordinator at Kingswood School, Mr Matthew Deacon said: "Mental health is such an important topic for everyone, and it has been great to see people becoming much more aware of such a vital aspect of our health as human beings in recent years.

"It is absolutely vital that we continue educating young people about mental health and by hearing stories like Ben's, it helps our students have a better appreciation of the struggles people can go through. But most importantly, it's about realising that there is always help and someone for them to turn to if times get tough."

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Enquire, Visit, and Meet

In preparation for every project, Fordingbridge offers complimentary site visits inclusive within the first stage of enquiry; granting the opportunity for clients and contractors to highlight ideas and share specifications with the Fordingbridge technical team, including identifying the space that requires cover, to formulate a detailed brief. At this time, conceptual discussions highlight key factors for consideration and outline pertinent specifications.

Survey, Proposal, and your Decision

Following on from the initial contact and enquiry stage, the team at Fordingbridge would then draft a proposal for review; detailing site and structural considerations and discoveries made within a technical site survey undertaken. This is the time that

the customer can decide whether to proceed to the next stage with the bespoke design. It is pertinent to remain completely transparent with the Sales Manager, as at this point refinement and amendments can be made in accordance with the specification.

Technical Design and Review

Once the green light is given, the manufacture team will fabricate the components required to build the structure, custom-designed from Fordingbridge's catalogue of components. The Fordingbridge drawing team at this time will take all of this into consideration and develop all required drawings and ground plans for the site team.

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At this stage of the process, Fordingbridge will liaise with the client once more to ensure the site is ready for the scheduled



deliveries, undertaken by Fordingbridge's own fleet of transport. The first of deliveries will happen as close to the start date of installation, ensuring that Fordingbridge's construction teams are in position to start the build of the structure and aid in the unloading of the delivery of materials.

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Profile

In conversation with Simon Larter-Evans

Born: Leicester

Married: Yes, deliriously

Children: No

Schools and Universities attended:

Kingsmoor Primary and Stewards Comprehensive Harlow, while also attending Harlow Ballet Club, Mudra in Brussels, Rambert Academy, Roehampton University then UCL IoE

First Job:

Bell hop at a local motel aged 14. The enormous cigar I was given as a tip nearly blew my head off. One puff and I was on the floor feeling very odd indeed. Never again

First Management Job:

Store Manager for Next

First job in independent education:

English and Drama Teacher, and house tutor at Pangbourne College

Appointed to current job:

Sept 1 2023

Favourite piece of music:

Impossible to answer

Favourite food:

Rack of lamb, pink. Followed by cheese. And bakewell tarts

Favourite drink:

Tea in the day; red wine in the evening

Favourite holiday destination:

Anywhere my wife Dawn is

Favourite leisure pastime:

Cycling, photography, cooking, gardening, snoozing

Favourite TV or radio programme/series:

Talking Pictures TV channel for all the old stuff that could never get made these days, and nostalgic public information films, and I fall asleep to Brain of Britain on Radio 4 iPlayer

Suggested epitaph:

That went quick

Q Your career began as a dancer which saw you tour the UK as well as internationally before a move into the PR and publishing industries. What then prompted your change of tack into teaching?

A I trained at The Rambert Academy, and then toured with a contemporary dance company into my early 20's. It was a great experience, and although I wouldn't say I ever gave up dance, I then found different, exciting avenues to explore. One way or another I ended up in the media world, selling advertising, then jumping ship to agency side, becoming co-director of a technology PR agency. It was a fun time, but I found myself wanting more.

I'd come to a point of wondering whether I really wanted to remain in the media world into retirement, so at the age of 40 I went to university for the first time, with the sole aim of becoming a teacher. Some said it was a courageous move, I didn't think so. Up until then, most of my adult life had been an unplanned adventure. This route had more purpose, with all the vocational ambition I remembered from being a dancer, only this time I was a lot older, and the decisions were more distinct.

Q Are performance skills a critical element of teaching? You will have a unique take on this.

A Yes, most definitely. Teaching is a performative act. You adopt a persona as a teacher, and you leave your private life at the door. That ability to switch modes, however you feel, and be professional with young people is a skill that performers know how to do.

It's also a political one, in the biggest sense. You are making choices about curriculum content, communicating big ideas, encouraging young people to think and take an active part in decision-making that might affect others. Being a creative performer also does that. The best performances change people's view of the world and this is certainly what I hope to achieve from teaching.

Q You believe that introducing the arts to children at a young age is 'critical' if they are to continue an interest into their teens. What evidence do you have for this?

A If young people don't know what is out there for them to experience and often enjoy, then their horizons of possibility are limited, and we must build the audiences of the future. I completely understand why many young people feel that certain art forms are 'not for them', and there is a bigger piece of work that needs to be done to help encourage young people, particularly boys, that the likes of dance is a perfectly acceptable and wonderful activity to enjoy.

I was lucky in that my parents enabled me to experience many different art forms such as theatre, ballet and opera, but I appreciate this is not always the case. But by getting out there and actively experiencing it, absolutely changes everything. And by encouraging young people to do so early on, will certainly inspire the audiences, and in some cases performers, of the future.

Q According to a recent report from The Tate, 'Schools that integrate arts into their curriculum show improved student performance in Maths, English, critical thinking and verbal skills'. Does that chime with your experience, and is there resilient research statistics to support the claim?

A Observationally, it can be true that some musicians have a gift for mathematics, and that teaching literature through drama can help to bring things alive in ways that close reading analysis misses. I think the point that The Tate is really making here is that integrating the arts into the curriculum matters because it helps people to have a more diverse view of the world.

Policy makers tend to want hard evidence, and that misses the point entirely. It is the arts that describes our culture, and provides a window into other people's experiences. It is what we leave behind in material ways to inform future generations of what life was like in the past, and can hopefully help them to learn moving forward. If you can't access the arts, then you limit your imaginative self in a way that can quickly become parochial. In my view, we should all start joining the sciences with the arts much more deliberately, whether there are statistics to support it or not.

Simon Larter-Evans is the new Principal at Tring Park School for the Performing Arts, Hertfordshire. His previous roles have included Head of Boarding and English at The Yehudi Menuhin School, Surrey, and most recently Head of St Paul's Cathedral School, London.



Q The arts are also said to help improve student mental health and wellbeing. How is this so?

A Performing arts is one way to promote attributes such as emotional resilience and self-belief, which in turn has a positive effect on combating anxiety, depression and stress. For several decades western culture has celebrated the self, and moved our collective understanding of what really matters away from communitarian endeavours. Young people are getting wise to the emptiness of that. This is where the arts can provide a different perspective, a release from the 'gimme gimme gimme' if only for a moment.

We survey our new parents annually, many of whose children come from non-specialist schools. Nearly three quarters of parents had noticed an improvement in their child's social skills and 86 per cent believe their child is happier since studying performing arts, with a further 83 per cent admitting they now appear more confident. We see, time and again, that when children with a passion for the performing arts join with likeminded young people they thrive and are happier.

When you play music with others, get a play script on its feet, create a narrative through dance, paint, write stories, make films, collaborating with people with different points of view, then suddenly you have access to something that has real potency. And when you become really good at it, it becomes an integral part of who you are.

Q Whilst the majority of your students leave to pursue careers in performing arts not all of them do. If a parent of a child with no interest in performing arts asked if your school could possibly be the right place for him or her, what would you respond? How do you balance academic and vocational study to ensure all students are able to follow the path they want?

A Ultimately, the desire to be here must come from the child. If they are not interested, if they don't have that fire in their belly to want to explore what performing arts has to offer them, then it is not the right place for them.

The question of balance between vocational training and academic schooling is tough. We aim to integrate as far as reasonable, and we're hamstrung to some extent by the narrowness of credentialing through public exams. I don't ever talk about having a plan B to our students, with regard to the importance of academics. What we aim to do is to keep as many doors open as possible, for whatever the young people choose to become in the future. In any case, nothing learned here about performing will ever go to waste. It is a skill for life.

Q A career in the performing arts is known to be tough, likely to be marked by peaks and troughs of employment. How do you help your students prepare for such a roller-coaster ride through their working life?

A I don't think it is ever easy to prepare young people for what lies ahead. Youth is, thankfully, incredibly optimistic about what is possible. Without that youthful optimism, we'd have no great art.

We need to pay attention to the language we use to describe life as a performer. Is it tough? Instead, we should ask, is it a life that everyone would thrive in? Probably not. The difference is that performers are driven in a particular way. It's not easy, but countless people continue to pursue this life because it offers an intrinsic satisfaction that is unequalled to them by any other careers. If you are driven by a vocation, and we see this often with the likes of clerics, teachers, medics and charity workers, there is a trade-off between personal sacrifice and extraordinary fulfilment.

Often, it is when that vocational drive is thwarted that people become miserable and unfulfilled.

Q Tring is often used as a filming location. With more schools starting to diversify their estate use to take advantage of the growing film and TV industry in the UK, what tips or advice would you give to anyone thinking about exploring this as an option? What needs to be considered?

A Get to know location agents, be nice to them, and even nicer to the cast and crew when they turn up. Be clear about what's possible, be honest in feedback, and see

it as a collaboration. Balance each opportunity carefully with the real needs of the school's estate, and where possible, share the excitement with your own community so that it becomes a school-wide experience and not simply an added burden.

Make sure you have a brilliant events manager to look after the relationship. The industry thrives on word of mouth, relationships and reputation. You might have a great building, but if you're difficult to work with, word spreads and they won't be back.

Q With recruitment and retention of teachers an ongoing topic of discussion in the sector, you are reported as saying that the devaluation of teaching is what's driving people to leave and putting graduates off the job. Could teaching unions and individuals help by not moaning so loudly about long hours, overwork, and poor pay?

A I don't think it's moaning, neither do I think it's entirely about pay.

Pay becomes the litmus in a world where the job becomes frustrated in other ways. Almost all teachers I meet, across all sectors, want to make a difference to people. They care, genuinely, about creating opportunities for others and are passionate about sharing understanding.

We've had decades of distrust of the profession, increasingly top-down instrumentalist policy, and constant audits that parents are also in thrall to. Even the training of teachers is now geared towards satisfying a relativist measure of what success is that meets its nemesis in league tables. There is confusion in the system, too, as the curriculum does, in fact, allow for a great deal of flexibility, but the assessment and exam machine drives teaching into ever safer performative action. That's disheartening for teachers, and a disaster for young minds.

Q How do you relax after a full working day at school?

A In this role, the job doesn't have a natural end, it's always in your head, but I cook, and scratch the dog behind his ears which makes his hind legs whirl about and he loves it and it makes me happy.

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Why do the world's leading dance universities and schools choose Harlequin floors?

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It is a common assumption that a well-designed sports floor will suit the needs of dancers, but this is not the case.

There are some critical factors that distinguish the requirements of dance from those of sports played on a sports floor. Unlike sportsmen who wear increasingly high-tech air-cushioned shoes to give grip and protect against impact injuries, the modest ballet shoe has barely changed in design since the mid-18th century. Made from soft leather, canvas or satin, the ballet shoe is very flexible, has a thin sole and offers little protection for the wearer.

But not all dance floors are the same, only a floor developed specifically for dance will do. There may be a temptation to specify floors for aesthetic or budget reasons, or to specify sports floors in the mistaken belief they will be suitable for dance but there have been some high-profile examples where floors have had to be replaced by a dance company after the building is complete and dancers have their first experience of dancing on the floors.



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New patron

Claire Sweeney has been revealed as a new patron for Tring Park School for the Performing Arts, Hertfordshire. The actor, singer and television personality is joining the community of long-standing patrons, including choreographer Matthew Bourne.

Currently appearing in Coronation Street as Cassie



Plummer, Claire has had a long and diverse career. She has not only starred in a plethora of primetime TV shows, such as her breakout role in 1991 in popular soap Brookside, but also on stage in musicals, taking on much-loved characters like Roxie Hart in Chicago. Alongside her role in Coronation Street, Claire is also in training for ITV's Dancing on Ice and is in the Channel 5 drama, The Good Ship Murder.

Claire first began her training in performing arts as a teenager, so knows exactly what the students at Tring Park School have in store for them and can offer practical guidance as they progress through their vocational study and into the industry. She has a long-standing history with the school with her godson once a student.

Pictured: Claire Sweeney

Indie rock star visit

Gus Unger-Hamilton – member of the global indie rock band, alt-J – took a trip down memory lane returning to King's Ely, Cambridgeshire, where he had been a student between 1998 to 2005, to judge the school's House Music Competition.

Gus joined the school as an Ely Cathedral Boy Chorister, before attending the University of Leeds to study English. It was here in 2007 where he and his bandmates formed alt-J.

Director of Music at King's Ely, Neil Porter-Thaw, persuaded Gus

to squeeze in judging this year's House Music Competition before he and his bandmates headed off on their tour of The United States.

The House Music Competition, where students from Years 9 to 13 take to the stage to perform, is an annual highlight of the King's Ely events calendar.

After much deliberation, Gus announced Osmond House (boys) as the winners of the ensemble performances, and Hill House (girls) were crowned the winners of the unison and overall performances.



Pictured: Gus Unger-Hamilton (right) and Director of Music Neil Porter-Thaw (left)



European Choir Games

Amabile choir from Merchant Taylors' Girls' School, has won Gold at the European Choir Games – the Olympic Games of Choral Music – in Sweden.

Representing Great Britain, they were crowned winners of their competition and awarded Gold. The girls also won a silver medal to add to their collection of accolades, putting the country firmly on the medals table.

The group took part in the event in Norrköping, home of the Norrköping Symphony Orchestra, 160km south of Stockholm and performed over several days.

The trip also included a workshop with internationally-acclaimed choral director, Michael Joseph Barrett. Michael guided the girls through a series of warm-up challenges, which helped enhance their choral abilities and he then proceeded to teach them a new song and style of singing, specifically Ke nna yo Morena,

Pictured: Amabile choir at the European Choir Games in Sweden

a traditional Sesotho piece from South Africa.

Amabile performed one last time at the Friendship Concert, alongside choirs from Greece and Sweden. This was followed by a spontaneous rendition of Leonard Cohen's Hallelujah with their new Greek friends, demonstrating the essence of the event; fostering connections with choirs from different countries, exchanging ideas and learning from one another.

The girls then had the privilege of attending the Sacred Music, featuring three of the world's top choirs from Denmark, Sweden and Italy, and they were amazed by the spectacle.

After winning the Girls' Schools Association Choir of the Year contest in Warwick earlier this year, Amabile qualified and then reached the finals of the European Choir Games.

F1 legend's charity concert

Ellesmere College, Shropshire has held a charity concert to raise funds for F1 legend Sir Jackie Stewart's charity for Race Against Dementia and collected £2,300 through ticket sales and a raffle.

Sir Jackie Stewart – who set up the charity after his wife Helen was diagnosed with frontotemporal dementia almost 10 years ago aims to raise funds to fuel five elite dementia research teams racing to fast-track a cure for dementia.

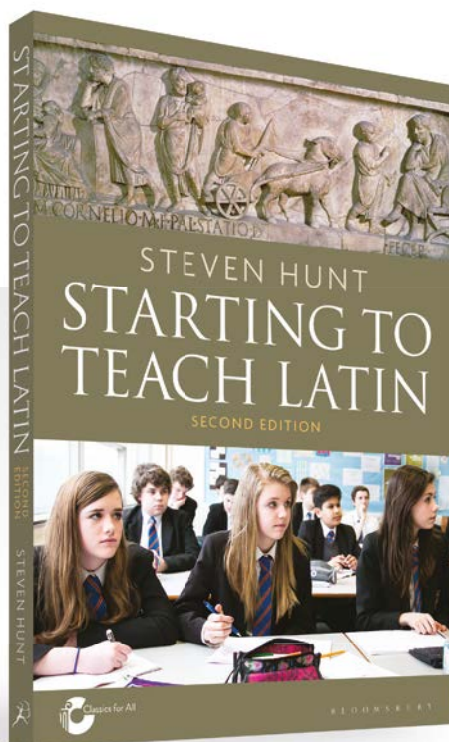
The concert included performances by the Lower School Choir, Chapel Choir, Chamber Choir, Lower School Band, Senior Orchestra and Choral Society – as well as the Choir of Adcote school.

Pictured: Members of Ellesmere College Choral Society

The choirs performed film music, musicals and popular music too such as Uptown Girl, American Idiot, With A Little Help From My Friends and Never Gonna Give You Up. Towards the end the audience joined in with What a Wonderful World.



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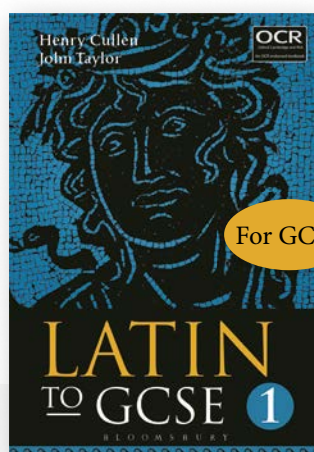
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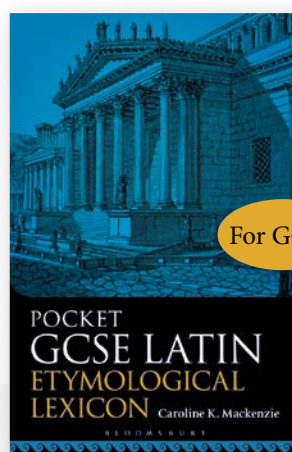
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Inspiring the next generation celebration

Gresham's School, Norfolk, has celebrated its ongoing relationship with Steinway with a launch event that included a performance from the school's Pre-Prep, Prep and Senior pupils playing on 17 Steinway pianos.

The event was held at the school's recently opened Dyson Building, the centre for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) education.

Gresham's first began its relationship with Steinway in 2012, becoming an All Steinway School.

The school is fortunate to be

able to offer its pupils, as well as children from across different communities and organisations, such as the Norfolk County Youth Orchestra and The Salvation Army Music Summer School, the chance to learn and play.

The school plans to continue to inspire the next generation of pianists and musicians, through rehearsals and performances, masterclasses and recitals, residencies and competitions, providing instruments and educational opportunities that promote excellence throughout the school and the wider community.



Pictured: Gresham's School pupils at the Steinway School launch

Special charity concert

Two combined choirs from Wrekin College, Shropshire, are set to take the stage alongside the Desford Colliery Band to light up this festive season at a special charity concert.

Singers from the Wrekin College Chapel Choir and the school's Community Choir will be performing alongside the band from the East Midlands who have been the National Champion Brass Band on four occasions, the European Champions and starred in their own ITV documentary a few years back.

First established 125 years ago, the band has produced a number of successful albums and won no less than 35 major championships. It is currently ranked in the top 25 brass bands in the world.

They will be joined by Wrekin's Chapel Choir who have recently performed at a number of high profile venues themselves including singing for Mass at the Vatican in Rome earlier this summer.

Previously, they have sung at both the Royal Festival Hall in London and Symphony Hall in Birmingham

Pictured: Wrekin Chapel Choir in Rome



after reaching the final of the Barnardos National Youth Choral Competition on two occasions.

The Community Choir, which features over 50 singers aged from 15 to 85, has also taken on a number of ambitious projects and is now stepping up to support the fundraising efforts planned for December.

The event aims to raise funds for both Cancer Research and the Midlands Air Ambulance.

The concert is on December 9th at St Chad's Church in Shrewsbury, with the concert starting at 7pm. Ticket info can be found at www.ticketsource.co.uk/wrekinarts

Advertorial Feature

Bloomsbury launch a free competition for all Classics students

Calling all Classics teachers and departments!

What do your students love about studying Classics?

As part of their wider *Where Can Classics Take You?* campaign, Bloomsbury have launched a new Classics Student Competition – *A Love For Classics*.

Bloomsbury feels passionately about the benefits of studying Classics. We know that studying a Classical subject brings so much more to a student's learning experience than simply learning about Classics. It teaches transferable skills that can be applied to all areas of the curriculum, and supports

students with a number of different career opportunities.

This competition, open to all UK secondary students studying Classics aged between 11-18, is a chance for students to get creative and share what they love the most about studying Classics to encourage others to consider studying the subject (and in turn be in with a chance of winning some prizes for your school and themselves!)

Entries can be submitted any time up until December 31st 2023 and would make a great classroom project this term.

Register your interest and you'll be sent an entry pack along with a beautiful poster to display in your classroom.

Good luck!

Find out more and register at www.bloomsbury.com/ALoveForClassics



The Big Draw

The Art department from Danes Hill Prep, Surrey, has played host to community event, The Big Draw, to celebrate the school's love for creativity and to raise money for local charity, the Oasis Children's Trust. The Big Draw gives pupils and parents the opportunity to come together and work on a community art project as a collective.

The Oasis Children's Trust provides help to vulnerable families and children, supporting those that are in crisis and struggling to cope, and those that have no voice and no power to change their home environment.

For the event, the Dining Room at Danes Hill School was transformed into a large and bright art studio and artist Steve Chapman led the evening's events.

During the evening, the Danes Hill Art department also held a raffle with art prizes and a silent bid for two pieces of Steve Chapman's artwork. The raffle and silent bid raised over £1000 for the charity.

This Christmas, the Danes Hill School community are also planning to support the Oasis Charity with their provision of Christmas food hampers.

Pictured: The Big Draw at Danes Hill School

'Being dyslexic'

A Year 4 pupil at Sarum Hall School, London, has surprised the teacher who taught her when she was just 5 years old by dedicating her book 'Being Dyslexic' to her.

Sukie Dell, who was diagnosed with dyslexia when she was six, wrote and illustrated the short story documenting her experiences and feelings at school. The book aims to help and inspire other children who may be struggling to cope with their dyslexia.

The back-cover states: "Being dyslexic is hard, but if you work hard you can do anything".

Sukie said: "I was diagnosed with dyslexia when I was 6 years old. It had a big impact on my life and school, but I knew that I was surrounded by my friends, special people, and my family. I wrote this book to help other dyslexic children realise that they are smart in their own way."

Miss Paul, Sukie's Year 1 teacher commented: "Sukie is an excellent story teller with a wonderful imagination. It was really important to me that her dyslexia should not be a barrier to her future learning. I'm delighted that she has published her first book, and I hope there will be many more to come!"



Pictured: Sukie Dell with her Year 1 teacher Miss Rebecca Paul

Deliver more in 2024

Are you ready to 7X your world?

As we continue in our next normal, Tracy Shand writes about how to 7X your world with meaning to serve, share and care.

How are your resolutions from 1 January 2023? Are they completed or a distant memory? As you reflect on the year that you have had, are you where you wanted to be?

Moving forwards, one word or situation can change everything. So to do more in 2024, let's look at one word that can help you move forwards.

Investments + Meaning = Investmeants

Welcome to a new word for 2024. But, is it new? How have you invested with thoughts and actions to the people around you? What meaning have they attached to this?

Everyday in our lives we invest in the everyone economy. An economy that is full of thoughts, feeling, intentions, actions and behaviours. As a result of these, your lived experience happens both at work and home.

For you to be more in 2024, it is time to start the 7X Investmeant Challenge for you and your community.

1. Think about a meaningful investment for you- personal or professional. For example. To improve my wellbeing
2. Create an action a day to help you move forwards your way with these words.

FOR YOU	WITH YOU	BY YOU	TO YOU
SEE YOU	TO NEXT YOU	FREE CHOICE	

An investmeant a day can help you build your future your way. 365 small investments. 365 small steps to step into your next.



The journey begins.

If you are looking for specialist investmeants to be more in 2024, watch this space.

Why the heat is on Heat

In my article in the September issue of ISM, I explained the purpose of a school estate decarbonisation plan (EDP), and how it is pulled together by the EDP study team. In this article I'd like to explain why so much focus is put on heat decarbonisation in developing an EDP.

The two charts show typical carbon footprints for independent schools. These are both authentic footprints – not contrived to support this article, but they are similar to the

patterns and proportions that would be seen in many other school footprints.

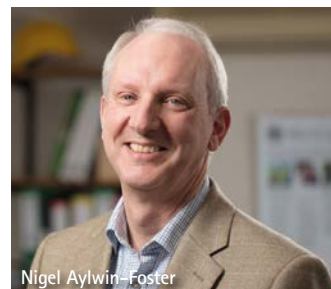
To unpick what these footprints mean in practice, it would be useful to explain the way carbon emissions are categorised. According to the internationally accepted Greenhouse Gas Protocol, drawn up in 2001, there are three categories or scopes of emissions:

- **Scope 1** = direct emissions from resources owned & controlled by the organisation. In a school this generally means fuel for heating and transport.
- **Scope 2** = indirect emissions from the generation of energy used by the organisation but by resources not owned by it: for most schools this will be primarily purchased grid power.
- **Scope 3** = any emissions arising from the operation of the organisation not included in scopes 1 and 2: for example, in a school this would include staff commuting, school catering, or other supply chains.

This categorisation is not just pointless additional bureaucracy: it serves to indicate what scope organisations have to control or influence the extent of the various types of emission. And therein

lies the rub. Working through the scopes in reverse order:

- **Scope 3 reduction.** Schools can only usually influence these emissions: they cannot mandate changes. For example, staff and parent commuting to and from a school is nearly always a major component of the footprint, but it would be a brave school that instructed parents to subscribe to a given scheme – encourage, yes; mandate, no.
- **Scope 2 reduction.** National Grid, the grid operator, is working to meet a UK Government mandate that the grid should be net-zero ready (subject to security of supply) by 2035. So, from a school perspective there is no need to install any on-site power generation (and storage) to reduce this part of the school footprint: the grid will do the work. There is usually good reason to focus on on-site power generation in the short-term, but this is for financial gain because grid electricity is expensive: it's not a necessary carbon reduction measure.
- **Scope 1 reduction.** This is the only part of the carbon footprint that a school can, in practice, manage directly: and indeed, it must do so, if the school is

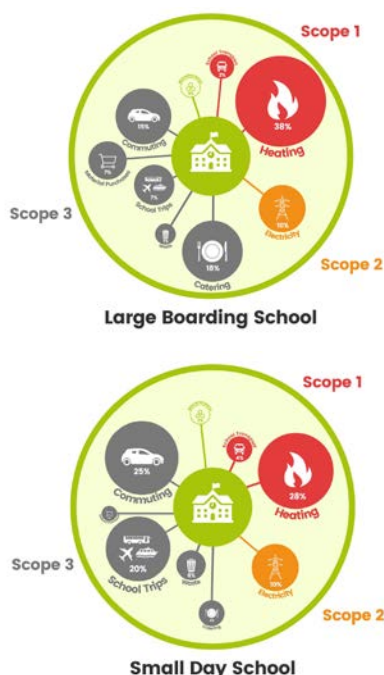


Nigel Aylwin-Foster

ever to become net-zero carbon. Within Scope 1, emissions arising from the generation of heat on the school estate are usually much higher than transport emissions: and within the footprint as a whole heat is often the largest category.

In summary, the decarbonisation of heat is entirely within the gift of, and totally dependent upon, the school's actions. It also happens to be the most difficult, disruptive, and expensive aspect of estate decarbonisation, therefore needs to be given due priority in terms of planning. That is not to say that the implementation of the heat decarbonisation plan needs to be rushed: but the planning for it should be done at the start of the school's net-zero transition, because it is such a formative component of the plan in engineering and financial terms.

But time is up, unfortunately, so the detailed explanation of that last statement will have to wait until a later edition of the Independent Schools Magazine.



Nigel Aylwin-Foster, Business Development Director, ReEnergise, Nigel@reenergisegroup.com

Sustainable building

A group of students from Merchiston Castle School, Edinburgh, recently spoke at the Houses of Parliament as part of the British International Education Association's Youth STEM Forum.

They were selected to speak at the Forum after winning the Sustainable Building Design Award in the British International Education Association's international STEM competition.

Competing with hundreds of other schools from across the globe, including Poland, Pakistan, Canada and Spain, the Edinburgh pupils' fuelled by predictions that much of Leith will succumb to flooding by 2030, won the award for their design of a versatile, flood-resistant

yet energy-efficient building. The final report showcased a solution that could be adapted to diverse global locales.

Merchiston's MerchiSTEM coordinator, Mrs Chapman, said of the win: "The British International Education Association STEM competition allows pupils to come up with innovative solutions to real-world problems.

"Merchiston's extracurricular STEM group, MerchiSTEM, embraced the challenge wholeheartedly... Speaking at the Houses of Parliament about their design proposal was an incredible opportunity, and one I am sure the boys will not forget for some time!"



Pictured: MerchiSTEM students with their winning design



Blue Plaque

RGS Worcester has celebrated the installation of a blue plaque. Unveiled by the Mayor of Worcester, Councillor Louis Stephen, the newly installed plaque for Sheila Scott OBE has joined that of Alice Ottley, the founder of what became The Alice Ottley School where Sheila went to school. In 2007 The Alice Ottley School merged with RGS Worcester.

Born in Worcestershire in 1922, Sheila attended The Alice Ottley School between 1927-39 and is known for her pioneering achievements in aviation. Sheila broke over 100 aviation records in her flying career including being the first British pilot to fly solo

around the world in 1966 and latterly in 1971 completing an epic 34,000 mile "world and a half" flight where she became the first person to fly over the North Pole in a small aircraft.

Honorary Secretary of The Civic Society, John Wickson, who also taught at RGS Worcester for a number of years said: "This is an appropriate location to place a plaque in recognition of Sheila Scott, not least because her achievements have the potential to inspire inquiring pupils who will be looking at the plaque as they come in to school each day."

Pictured: RGS Worcester School Captains, Callum, Catherine, Callum and Izzy, with Mayor Councillor Louis Stephen and Sheila Scott's biographer, Judy Lomax

..... Advertorial Feature

Upholstery workshop for schools and colleges

Sarah Lousie Dix Upholstery have developed a uniquely, tailored, traditional upholstery workshop package for schools and colleges.

This footstool workshop will open up knowledge of a really interesting industry and highlight the culmination of a number of design processes, including fabric, furniture and interiors which are major commercial sectors globally. This could be invaluable for those showing interest in art and design.

The package has real longevity for schools. Once the package has been purchased which, includes a video, images, written instructions, tools, beach wood frames and materials, there is minimum future outlay.

The workshop is great fun and really different. It's very much hands on, practical and uses all natural plant based materials and traditional methods.



Visit from actor and comedian

Actor, writer and comedy legend Matt Lucas has visited Westholme, Lancashire, reading an excerpt from his musical novel, *The Boy Who Slept Through Christmas* and shared his inspiration behind the book with students.

The visit which was organised by Book, Bean and Ice Cream was attended by over 400 students from 10 schools from across Blackburn.

Matt talked about how losing his hair at age six to alopecia shaped his life. The comedian told the audience how he turned this adversity into something positive – putting himself

in the limelight throughout his career.

The youngsters also enjoyed an interactive Q&A between Matt and Hannah Penny from the book's publisher Farshore – talking about everything from his lockdown 'thank you baked potato' song, his love of roast potatoes and why Matt decided to write a musical novel.

The Boy Who Slept Through Christmas has over 20 songs, accessed through QR codes throughout the book so readers can sing-along as they read-along.



Pictured: Mrs Louise Cowan, Assistant Head and Westholme students with Matt Lucas

Sarah Louise Dix

Student Enrichment Opportunity

Traditional Upholstery Workshop Package

One-off outlay for easy to follow video, images, written instructions & tools.

Then purchase footstool frames & materials as required. Workshop package has great longevity.

Creative and Hands On

The activity involves upholstering a drop in footstool pad using traditional skills, tools and materials.



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Castle Minibus will become Rivervale from January 2024

Following the sad death of Castle Minibus' owner Chris Maynard in July 2022, Castle Minibus was purchased by Rivervale in February 2023. This acquisition brings two of the largest minibus providers in the UK together; they will now not only have the vast vehicle numbers and choice of Rivervale but also the safety and education services that Castle were renowned for. After months of planning, from January 2024 Castle Minibus will become Rivervale.

Rivervale, based in Brighton, provides leasing, purchasing, servicing and vehicle management for cars, vans and minibuses.

Rivervale have already restored some of Castle Minibus' services including 'Driver Training' and have created job opportunities. Bicester will remain the home of the minibus operation, with plans for significant expansion of the minibus offering and the Bicester premises in 2024.

Although the well-known gold-and-orange turret of Castle will no longer be used, all of Castle's existing services will continue. Rivervale are working on developing these services further, starting with improvements to the free 'Minibus app' in 2024.

Making Motoring Manageable

Rivervale has ambitious plans to improve its minibus operations in 2024 for the education sector. Their vision is 'to be the UK's most trusted vehicle provider'. With the addition of Castle Minibus' resources, knowledgeable staff and dedication to safety, we expect Rivervale's minibus offering to go from strength to strength.



We are very excited to be adding Castle Minibus to the Rivervale Group. Existing customers can rest assured that nothing significant will change for them in the day-to-day running of our minibus operations, including the team they are familiar with. Rivervale's experience and expertise in car-leasing means we can offer a wider range of manufacturers and vehicles to Castle customers. With more choice and our combined sales force, customer service is improving rapidly. Our mission is to 'Make Motoring Manageable.' Whether a school, charity or any other organisation, we aim to find the right vehicle and budget together with the services to help maintain them. Bringing together the Castle ethos of 'Minibus Safety', our offering is now second to none.

Vince Pemberton
CEO of Rivervale



What does this mean for existing Castle customers?

Vince continues: "We want to reassure existing Castle customers that nothing will change initially beyond the branding and logos they will see on our correspondence. We are in the process of launching a new, dedicated minibus area of the Rivervale website, where you will find all the helpful information you have come to expect from Castle, as well as a wider choice of vehicles to lease, hire or buy. We hope this transition will be seamless, but of course if any Castle or Rivervale customers have questions or concerns, I would encourage them to get in touch."

Trust Rivervale with all things **minibus**

Rivervale are 'Making Motoring Manageable' for independent schools with minibus safety inspections, driver training and additional safety services.



Find out more by calling
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The influence of the independent school sector on social mobility, politics and culture

Educationalist, Andrew McEwen, takes a look at how the sector impacts society and reflects on the responsibilities that come with it.



Much has been discussed in recent years regarding the continued influence that independent

Education exerts, both overtly and covertly, over society in general. This influence is independent of intention – indeed, influence does not necessarily imply forethought – but however unintentional it may be, it is still manifesting itself in outcomes. Some may say “’Twas ever thus” and there is little doubt that this is so. However, it was anticipated that the degree of influence would diminish over time as efforts to stimulate social mobility expanded, as exemplified by the greatly increased spending on public education during the Blair government. Nevertheless, it appears that social mobility has stalled as evidenced by numerous studies and parliamentary committee investigations.

Taking just one example – the educational background of elected British Prime ministers in the 20th and 21st centuries provides an interesting detail. Before 1964 almost all PM’s were privately educated. We then experienced an extended interregnum of non- privately educated PMs running from 1964 through to 1997, 33 years. This included three conservative PMs (Heath, Thatcher and Major). All these PMs attended Grammar schools. Since 1997 we have returned to the tradition of predominantly privately

educated leaders. The interregnum was driven by the growth of the Grammar school sector which grew steadily in its presence from WWI through to its peak in 1965 when there were over 1,300 Grammar schools, educating some 22% of secondary school pupils. In 1965, 8.5% of secondary pupils attended private schools, giving a combined total (Grammar plus Private) in 1965 of close to one third of secondary pupils. By 2023 the number of Grammar schools had dropped to fewer than 170 schools educating around 5% of the secondary cohort, whilst private school pupils now represent around 7% of the cohort.

Many believe that the Grammar school was key to the increase in social mobility. Many of the professions, such as the Civil Service, Medicine, Law, the Armed forces, Finance, and the Arts saw a significant number of entrants to these careers coming from Grammar schools. In addition, much of the increase in the representation of women in these professions, especially Law and Medicine, came about through the significant number of Girls’ Grammar schools educating future lawyers and doctors. Recent data increasingly shows that far from seeing Comprehensive schools fill the gap created by the demise of the Grammar school, it has been the private sector which has increased its presence in these professions whilst seeing its pupil numbers slightly diminish.

Few would be surprised to hear that 57% of the House of Lords were privately educated nor that 49% of Senior Army Officers were likewise educated. That around 65% of senior judges attended private school is equally not a surprise. What might surprise some, though, are the levels of representation of the privately educated in other areas. Examples of these are: professional Rugby players 37%, Newspaper columnists 44%, professional Cricket players 43%, Olympic medalists at the Rio games 31%, Pop-stars 30%, and 67% of British Oscar winners over the last twenty years were privately educated. Thus, not only can we see the potential for influence on society coming from professions which directly affect our everyday lives, such as in Medicine, Politics and Law, but also the softer influence of those working in Media and the Arts. As I suggested earlier, this influence is not necessarily overt or intentional. It may well be unintentional and simply the effect of background.

The continued influence that the privately educated have over society brings with it great responsibility. It is not clear that this is fully accepted as such. I believe that the independent sector needs to reflect upon its role in helping to promote a more equitable society. The rise of Nativism and Populism around the world presents a threat to the stability and cohesion

of our societies. A significant number of protagonists in the fostering of such attitudes have been privately educated and this does not bode well for the future. It is not sufficient to focus on academic outcomes. Such a narrow vision can blind the beneficiaries of a private education, where expectation of and aspiration to success are a given, to their duty to help mitigate the inequities to which their advantages have contributed. The population at large depend upon the honesty and virtue of its leaders. The Media influences attitude and belief, such that manipulation in opinion forming may determine the sustainability of democracy. Actors and pop stars in their professional lives and through social media help to embed attitudes and aspirations in their followers. Combined, the aggregate of all these influences greatly exceeds the raw numerical presence of privately educated citizens, on society at large.

In conclusion, the independent school sector has an influence on society, through the education of its future leaders and influencers, that greatly exceeds its numerical presence. This carries with it a duty to attempt to promote in its pupils the understanding of their responsibility to ensure that the benefits they have received through their education are shared with the wider community.

Andrew McEwen MA, FRSA, has been Director and Chairman of IES (International Education Systems Limited) responsible for the development of schools in new markets, and Trustee and Director of three independent schools in the UK and two in South Africa, and is a member of BELMAS (British Educational Leadership, Management and Administration Society). He has also served on the Board of ISA (The International Schools Association) and the Advisory Board for the MA programme in International Education at NHLStenden University in the Netherlands. For nearly 20 years he has worked as a partner with National School Transfer where he helps buyers and sellers achieve their goals in the schools acquisition market.

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Baby it's Cold Outside:

Winter adventures in outdoor education

The winter months present opportunities unique to the season. Headmaster at York House School, Hertfordshire, Jon Gray, discusses the importance of getting children outside at this time of year and how the colder months can bring benefits, skills and experiences especially those geared towards self-reliance and resilience.



Jon Gray

With the sparkle of frost on the ground and wildlife in abundance, the great outdoors can be a place of beauty and wonder for young children during the winter months. Outdoor education during this season is also great for building strength of character. After all, it is well recognised that exposure to tougher outdoor conditions breeds more resilience. Coping with a little bit of adversity often convinces children that they have more capacity than they might have previously believed.

If you look through the steamed-up windows of a classroom on a dark and damp winter's day, you'll likely see children and teachers alike, going stir crazy. What they all desperately need is to get out into the cold air and unless the weather is truly biblical, they will all feel the benefit. Outdoor Education can always adapt to conditions and the key to success in the harsher months is to keep the legs moving and the blood flowing.

Getting kitted out

Getting the right kit together is an important part of self-reliance when learning outdoors. Whilst the gentler months of the year can be great fun and most activities can happen in shorts, t-shirts and bare feet, the necessity for proper planning and preparation during winter brings extra beneficial layers to that process. Most mountain trekkers will have clear recollections of the day the weather was not kind to them, and they had forgotten their gloves, waterproof trousers or a beneficial beanie. We run an "Exceptional Performers (EP)" team for the outdoor education side of school life and their annual camp out normally happens in January. Ironically, the team hope for harsh weather – as their pupil members famously cite that "EP doesn't stand for Easy Peasy."

With a large number of resident animals onsite, we like to

incorporate the welfare of animals and wildlife into our winter outdoor education too. There are a small number of our animals, such as the tortoises, that will need to move inside for the winter months. Most other animals can adapt to cope outside whether that is natural – the sheep growing their woolly winter coats – or assisted support from the smallholding team such as putting a rug on the pony and the donkeys. Our fish become fairly dormant during these colder months and live on their reserves.

The children also love to add some festive cheer to the smallholding, which epitomises the real wish the children have to share joy with the animals. One of the harshest jobs in the deep winter days is breaking the ice from the water troughs. That is a tough task, but of course vital for the animals. Chickens produce far less eggs during the winter and their bedding needs to be regularly cleared out, kept dry and deep, as well as shelters built to protect them from the wind. Very young or very old animals may need extra adaptations, which is a good life lesson for human society.

Getting ahead of the weather

When developing activities that are better suited to the winter months, some activities work really well on frozen ground – cyclo-cross for instance, can be refreshing and, in a way, easier than on the softer autumn or spring ground. But beware the perils of marking out your cross-country track with white cones during winter – one January the inevitable heavy snow came down and navigation became a struggle. That said, activities such as completing a night navigation with the frost coming down, cold clear nights with stargazing on the activity list etc. are some of the things that children will definitely remember from their

experiences in winter outdoor education.

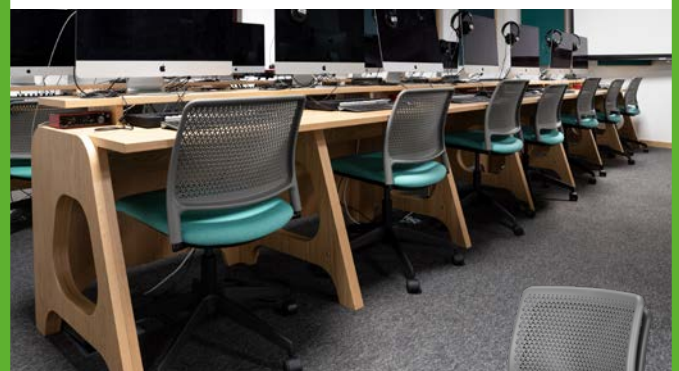
Winter camp outs in particular, carry a real sense of adventure. Recognising that the mat and layers beneath you are even more important than the layer on top is a realisation worth achieving. It has been said that each layer beneath you when sleeping outside is worth two on top. Children may assume that piling lots of kit on top of them will make them warm when sleeping on cold ground but of course you will never warm up by sucking the heat out of you to give a miserable and sleepless night. Other acts to mitigate the risk of cold include getting pupils

to share tents (and therefore warmth), giving a hot drink before they go to their beds, and ensuring there are plenty of calories consumed. On a cold night outdoors, it is remarkable how almost all hot food tastes entirely delicious.

When conditions are challenging, the need to look after the person next to you becomes essential rather than desirable. Sharing kit, cheering each other up, and encouraging others all fits into our pupil aim of "leaving people and places better than you find them." On a similar token, the morning after a camp, it is always an aim to "leave no trace" which is a respectable way to approach the environment.

Rosehill

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Future Heritage Project

Rossall School, Lancashire, has launched a project with the aim of safeguarding its heritage buildings not only to preserve the past but to support the future. Headmaster, Jeremy Quartermain reflects upon the challenges of maintaining the architectural heritage of schools.

Schools within the independent sector face mounting challenges. The current cost of living crisis and the spectre of VAT on school fees places considerable pressure on even the most robust of school finances. Our budgets have already been stretched by inflation-busting rises in labour, food and energy costs, and it only seems like yesterday that we dusted ourselves off and emerged from the Covid pandemic. Independent schools certainly live during interesting times!

Our first priority must be to provide an outstanding quality of education for our children with a context that safeguards their wellbeing. As educators, we are naturally drawn towards easy wins that enrich our children's learning experience. Projects such as the installation of touchscreen televisions in classrooms and the refurbishment of boarding houses provide instant and tangible benefits. Conversely, maintenance and capital expenditure budgets tend to suffer most when senior executives and boards of governors feel pressure to balance the books.

Inevitably, there is always a temptation to defer a non-urgent project until the following year. Viewed in isolation, such deferrals may make perfect sense but, collectively, the postponement of such projects will inevitably lead to a period of managed decline. Benign neglect results in

the gradual deterioration of the physical fabric of our buildings and the cost of remedial work spirals with each passing year. Prevention is always better than a cure.

It is extraordinary to reflect upon the fact that Rossall School is home to no less than twenty percent of Fleetwood's listed buildings. We are custodians of these buildings and it is our moral responsibility to preserve and protect them; not just because they are a physical manifestation of the collective memory and identity of our community, but because they are of very real significance in terms of the architectural heritage of the nation.

The majority of Rossall's historic buildings are situated in and around our spectacular square. They date from the mid-Victorian period and range from 'Big School' which is a rather whimsical example of Gothic Revival to the perfectly proportioned Sumner Library which resembles a Lowlands Scottish Kirk. Originally built as the School Chapel, it was soon outstripped by a burgeoning pupil body which was fuelled by the expansion of the industrial cities of the North.

The prolific Lancastrian architect Edward Paley, designed our new school chapel in the early 1860s and it is this elegant chapel which houses such gems as our Harrison and Harrison organ (currently being restored thanks to the beneficence of Old Rossallians) and

the 'Memorial Chapel' designed by the brilliant Scottish architect and furniture designer Robert Lorrimer. The Memorial Chapel contains some exquisite sculptures by Alice Meredith Williams and a number of wooden carvings that attract particular interest from art historians.

Time does not stand still and these buildings are now in need of urgent repair. Were we to prevaricate, then it is the case that crumbling masonry, corroded metal, rotting roof beams and leaking pipes would threaten their very survival. Our coastal location makes salt corrosion a particular challenge; so too do the winter winds of the wild Fylde. In hindsight, sandstone was perhaps not the wisest choice of building materials. Looking after such buildings is a true labour of love and an extremely expensive one at that. Meeting the exacting requirements of external bodies is time-consuming. The lofty idealism of bodies such as Historic England, who insist on the use of like-to-like materials, often conflicts with a School's need to achieve greater energy efficiency or keep a lid on costs.

Increasingly, it feels unreasonable to expect hard-pushed fee-paying parents to shoulder the burden of subsidising the restoration of such buildings. In any case, the preservation of these buildings is surely the responsibility of the wider school community. We are fortunate that the Rossall Foundation helps us to raise the funds necessary to undertake ambitious projects such as the re-roofing of Big School and the repair of the East Window in the Chapel. There is an inevitability that schools will have to become increasingly resourceful and creative in terms of their approach to raising funds for such projects. Glossy brochures, slick launches and drone shots only get you so far. Ultimately, success is dependent upon our ability to tell the story of our buildings and explain why donations to



such projects support our future ambitions and are not just exercises in dewy-eyed nostalgia.

Collectively, Big School, the Chapel of St John the Baptist and the Sumner Library constitute the intellectual, spiritual and creative heart of our community. The first phase of the Future Heritage project is essentially restorative. Phase two will focus upon ensuring that the buildings support the ambitions of our pupils well into the future. The School has a reputation for excellence within the performing arts and Big School hosts the annual musical which, in recent years, has included sell-out performances of Chicago and West Side Story. The technical capabilities of the building in terms of sound, lighting and staging are in need of an overhaul. We would all agree that professional standard performances are deserving of an appropriate level of technical support. The library will become a modern study space that is responsive to the way young people learn in the twenty-first century. Finally, the Chapel will become an increasingly adaptive space that reflects the School's ecumenical character. It is right that the use of our most precious buildings should evolve over time. Given the turbulent economic and political landscape, it seems not unreasonable to presume that the current boom in new buildings will most likely subside. Schools will need to think creatively about how to utilise existing buildings more effectively.

Preserving the past must go hand-in-hand with a desire to build for the future. Indeed, the future does not need to be built in concrete, steel and glass. Instead, we should see a renaissance of interest in preserving and adapting our historic buildings so as to ensure that they support the hopes and dreams of future generations of children.

For more information, or to make a donation, please contact foundation@rossall.org.uk



Company Profile:

CWC Containers

In the ever-changing landscape of education, one company is redefining the concept of adaptable classroom facilities. Led by co-founders Tom and Chris, CWC Containers has created the perfect solution to meet modern needs and budgets, transforming shipping containers into versatile and creative modular buildings.

Central to CWC Containers' offerings are their modular education rooms. Meticulously crafted for maximum flexibility and tailored to meet the unique requirements of each educational provider, these spaces offer a wide range of potential uses. From breakout spaces, soundproofed music rooms, and well-stocked libraries, to sports changing rooms with cloakroom and bathroom facilities and SEN spaces for children with additional needs, these dedicated areas foster an inspiring and inclusive environment, allowing every child the opportunity to flourish.

With their refreshing approach, CWC Containers offer advantages that go beyond the conventional classroom setting. Encouraging schools to actively participate in the design process allows them to create the exact space they require, rather than attempting to

adapt their needs to fit the space available. These education rooms are also built with longevity in mind; a standard prefabricated building has a lifespan of around 10 years, but CWC's classrooms go decades beyond this, offering schools not only a solution but also peace of mind.

In the pursuit of usability, style and comfort are not compromised. These rooms are crafted for durability and can come equipped with any and all cutting-edge facilities required to meet contemporary educational requirements. They come fully insulated as standard and optional extras like underfloor heating and air conditioning ensure a comfortable learning environment throughout the year. External cladding and design options, along with a choice of fixtures and fittings, enable these structures to seamlessly blend into any school layout or stand out as eye-catching aesthetic features.

These rooms not only lead the way in terms of flexibility, but also set a precedent in terms of pricing. With a starting price point significantly lower than traditional brick-built extensions, CWC Containers goes the extra mile in ensuring cost-effectiveness



by aligning with funding options such as Pupil Premium, PE & Sport Premium, and the School Improvement Grant.

As the new structures are physically separate and operationally independent from existing buildings, there is also opportunity for schools to generate income by opening use up to external teams who offer wraparound care, clubs, or forest school sessions outside of the traditional school day.

The vast majority of the construction work occurs off-site and is completed prior to delivery, ensuring a swift and efficient installation process. Schools receive their new buildings in a 'plug and play' state, thereby avoiding any interruptions to students' education and almost eliminating disruptive and hazardous construction work.

With a commitment to excellence and a passion for creating spaces that truly meet students' varied needs, Tom, Chris, and the dedicated team at CWC Containers are paving the way for a new era in educational design. This small yet highly experienced team takes pride in their dedication to excellence, envisioning a future where school standards are elevated in Greater Manchester and beyond.

We're passionate about our container buildings. They provide great solutions to many challenges facing traditional construction techniques. First and foremost, they are extremely cost-effective and customisable, so can be made to suit any situation or budget. With the modular units being prefabricated in our yard, there is only minimal disruption on site, with typically a 1-2 day installation once delivered, ready to be used as soon as the installation team leaves site.

Tom Carliil
CWC Containers, Director



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www.cw-containers.co.uk

Hawking building

St Albans School, Hertfordshire, former alma mater of Professor Stephen Hawking CH, CBE, FRS, FRSA has named its new science facility the Hawking Building in his honour.

Dr Jane Hawking, the former wife of Professor Hawking, unveiled the plaque after receiving a tour of the site led by the Headmaster, Jonathan Gillespie, along with Dr Hawking's husband, Mr Jonathan Hellyer Jones.

She said: "Science was obviously hugely important to Stephen in

his schooldays, and it is an honour to see his legacy continued at his former school..."

The Hawking Building, as it will now be known, houses the Science Department with dedicated physics, biology and chemistry labs and prep rooms, new facilities for Computer Science and teaching rooms that have been completely refurbished.

In addition, the building houses a telescope that belonged to Professor Hawking, kindly donated to the Astronomy Club by the family.



Pictured (l-r): Jonathan Hellyer Jones, Dr Jane Hawking, Jonathan Gillespie, Mayor of St Albans City and District, Councillor Anthony Rowlands

Futures Institute

Dollar Academy, Clackmannanshire has been granted planning permission to build a Futures Institute, designed to provide a physical home for the school's educational programme – the Futures Institute at Dollar's Academy (FIDA).

Launched in 2021 in collaboration with figures from industry and education, FIDA offers young people across Scotland the opportunity to learn in a different way, by undertaking courses that are built on three core principles:

- learners are required to design a solution to a real-world problem;
- each course is rooted in one of the UN Sustainable Development Goals;
- all content is co-created with experts from industry and/or universities.

The building will allow FIDA's existing offering, which primarily runs online and during weekends and school holidays, to develop and expand. In addition to Dollar Academy pupils, young people from

Pictured: Artists impression of the Futures Institute building



schools across Scotland will also have access to the Futures Institute, free of charge.

The domed building, which will sit just inside the main entrance to the school, has been designed with a focus on sustainability. Designed by architect Andrew Whalley OBE, Chairman of architecture practice Grimshaw, the Futures Institute building will deliver teaching and learning environments, including maker spaces, a digital prototyping suite, a science lab and creative art spaces which will facilitate interdisciplinary learning.

With the majority of funding for the project now in place through investment and donations, it is hoped construction will begin shortly.

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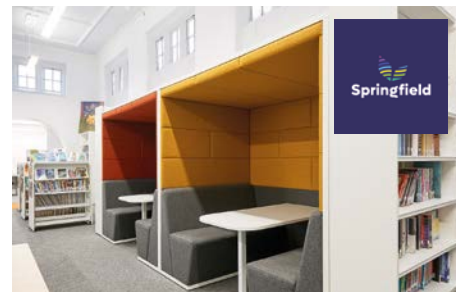
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Enhancing Independent Schools with TG Escapes' Net-Zero Modular Buildings

Independent schools strive to provide a holistic and exceptional learning environment for their students. TG Escapes' modular eco-buildings have emerged as an ideal solution for independent schools looking to expand their facilities while maintaining a commitment to sustainability and high-quality design.

Sustainability and Eco-Friendly Design

Independent schools are increasingly focused on sustainable practices and environmental responsibility. TG Escapes' eco-buildings align perfectly with this vision. These structures are designed with a focus on energy efficiency, reduced carbon footprint, and sustainable materials. Independent schools can proudly promote their commitment to the environment while providing an aesthetically pleasing yet practical and inspirational space for their students.

Quick and Efficient Construction

One of the biggest advantages of TG Escapes' modular eco-buildings is their speed of construction. Traditional building projects can take months or even years to complete, causing disruptions to school activities. In contrast, modular eco-buildings are constructed off-site and can be installed within a matter of weeks. This means less disruption to the school's routine, a significant benefit for schools that need to accommodate growing student populations or create new learning spaces quickly.

Customisation to Suit Educational Needs

Independent schools often have unique requirements and specific



educational programs. TG Escapes understands this and offers a high level of customization. Schools can work with their design team to create a modular building that perfectly suits their educational needs. Whether it is additional classrooms, art studios, science labs, sports pavilion or a quiet library space, TG Escapes' modular buildings can be tailored to fit the school's needs.

Aesthetic Appeal and Integration with Natural Surroundings

TG Escapes places a strong emphasis on the aesthetics of their modular eco-buildings. Independent schools often value

the appearance of their campuses and how the new buildings integrate with their natural surroundings. These eco-buildings can feature timber cladding and green roofs that blend seamlessly with the environment. The result is a structure that not only serves a functional purpose but also adds to the beauty of the school campus.

Energy Efficiency and Cost Savings

As tuition costs rise, independent schools are under increasing pressure to manage their budgets effectively. TG Escapes' modular eco-buildings are designed with energy efficiency in mind, leading to reduced operational costs. Improved insulation, energy-efficient heating and cooling systems, and the use of renewable energy sources mean that the buildings are net-zero in operation resulting in substantial long-term savings, allowing schools to allocate resources to other educational priorities.

Adaptability for Future Needs

TG Escapes' modular buildings are not only quick to construct

but also easy to adapt or expand as needs evolve. This adaptability ensures that schools can respond to changing educational requirements without a major overhaul or new construction project.

Customers Score 4.9 out of 5 Based on 187 Reviews

A recent 10 classroom building at Ratcliffe College was awarded Project of the Year in the 2023 Modern Methods of Construction Awards. Their Head of English said: *"It has all been received very well by parents and staff from other departments with comments like 'Wow! This is amazing.' Because it is the best building in the school. The most impressive building."*

Headmaster at Collegiate School, Bristol: *"Excellent, would recommend them to any school."*

Estates Manager at Claremont Fan Court School, Esher: *"Working with TG Escapes was very good. The buildings provide a better-quality environment for staff and students."*



TG Escapes are a certified supplier to the Boarding Schools Association.

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Mubina Asaria

NSPCC
www.nspcc.org.uk

These statistics can be overwhelming, but what's positive is that children will talk, and the person they are most likely to talk to is their parents. This is why it is so important that we work collaboratively and creatively to engage with parents about online safety, so we can help protect and empower children and young people together.

Advertisement Sales: 01242 259249

A collaborative approach to computer science and creative technology

How to nurture skills and competencies that are truly valuable to students. Deputy Head and Director of Innovation at St Paul's Girls' School, London, Giles Bennett, shares his thoughts on fostering digital skills and how working together can maximise educational benefit for all.



Recent years have seen a rapid increase in technological advancements and many schools are grappling with some of the most pressing questions: How do these emerging technologies fit within our existing curricula? How can we best support the development of 21st century skills in our students? How can we promote equitable access to these technologies and associated knowledge?

At St Paul's Girls' School, we have taken a multi-faceted approach. Students no longer receive traditional ICT lessons, but instead core digital skills have been woven through our curricula and are supported across all subjects at every level. Our computer science and creative technology (CS&CT) school-directed courses provide a platform for students to engage with a vast array of skills and techniques, from coding to app and website design, from 3D printing to VR game design, and from robotics to the ethics of AI.

A team of our Y12 students, SoySquad, were one of the global winners of the Microsoft Imagine Cup Junior 2023. They developed an AI app called StreetSmarts that displays the safest route for pedestrians, enabling easy and safe navigation through the busy streets of London and around the world. A team of Y9 students from St Paul's

and one of our partnership schools took their robotics knowledge to the First Tech Robotics Competition and came sixth nationally. With a focus on collaboration, creativity and problem-solving, this competition provided a fantastic scaffold for our students to develop some highly sought-after 21st century skills alongside their robotics.

Our students have access to a dizzying number of clubs and activities centred on the inclusion of these core skills. Through our year-long tech electives programme, students can explore any project that interests them, which has led to students building steam engines out of scrap metal, programmable puppet eyes and a theremin (electronic musical instrument).

With a wealth of academic enrichment on our doorstep, engaging with the wider community has let us bring in expertise that goes above and beyond our staffroom. PhD candidates from Imperial College, QMUL, UCL, UAL and Goldsmiths have been working with staff and students to develop our collective understanding of various cutting-edge technologies. We have also been fortunate enough to have industry experts, including Nihir Vedd (founder of Glimpses.ai), provide coaching on programming with artificial intelligence.

Through our partnership work, we have also hosted several events that have opened our doors to a wide range of visitors. The London Youth Robotics Conference, pioneered by our CS&CT Department, saw 200 students from across London visit and engage in activities ranging from engineering Mars rovers with UCL to playing with the latest humanoid robot from Cambridge University's Robotics Society. At the TeenCodeX Hackathon, we saw teams of students create a prototype that could improve people's health, guided by mentors from across the software engineering community. Our students shared their enthusiasm for technology with students from other schools and extended their social networks. We also have plans to expand our robotics team to include additional members from schools across the West London Partnership, which brings local academies into collaboration with their independent neighbours.

But let's not forget the foundational skills. I am a firm believer in the enabling power of touch-typing, from writing sonnets in iambic pentameter to machine-learning scripts in Python. While voice to text and similar technologies are exciting, they are far from perfect and are not practicable in many environments: offices, classrooms, exam rooms, libraries or noisy settings. We

introduced KAZ-Type in the spring, an online touch typing program that teaches the basic keyboard in just 90 minutes. It has personalisation options such as audio guidance, different fonts and colour schemes which means that it meets the needs of learners with dyslexia and that our very diverse student body can all access the program.

Two of our students were placed first and second in the national typing competition, which put us in the fortunate position of being able to donate an annual license to one of our partnership schools, Hammersmith Academy, further spreading the benefit across our local community.

In such a busy environment, it is essential to keep our principal objectives in mind, namely, to provide an outstanding education for all students, whilst fostering the skills and competencies that are truly valuable to them. Through the projects and partnerships that we have developed to date, it is resoundingly clear that collaboration across the education sector is key to meeting these aims. It is through our collective experience and understanding of these emerging technologies, built by working together, that we will be able to forge a path that maximises our chance of providing educational benefit for all.

Educational and environmental benefits of a Digital Learning Project

Launched in September 2021 at Jersey College for Girls, a Digital Learning Project, according to a new report, has improved learning for all students involved as well as reducing paper consumption by 40%.

The project was inspired by how the College turned to technology during the covid lockdown to continue to provide learning to its students. This led to discussions

about how technology could be used more efficiently to enhance the teaching and learning experience, bridge gaps in learning and support students absent from lessons.

In September 2021, all Year 7 students were asked to come to College with a digital device – equipped with a camera, track-pad keyboard and digital stylus. Due to the success of the project

with Year 7, it was expanded the following year to include students in Years 10 and 12 and from this September to all students.

Improved organisation, fewer books to carry, easier submission of work and improved typing skills are just some of the benefits the students reported.

The project has also helped reduce anxiety of missed learning by enabling students to access all

notes made in the lesson.

In addition to the educational benefits, the project has helped reduce the College's paper consumption and printing costs, which in turn meant funds could be repurposed to other educational projects with a direct impact on student learning.

The College has also reduced its carbon footprint with respect to use of paper/printing and shipping.

Read the full report here: <https://jerseycollegeforgirls.com/pages/academic/technology-learning>

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Heads Hunted

Among the upcoming head and principal appointments:

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Imperial Oak Prep School	London
Dauntsey's School	Wiltshire
Terra Nova Pre-Prep	Cheshire

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.



*The Independent
Schools Magazine*

Vires per Verum – Strength through Truth

The Independent Schools Magazine is read by decision-makers – Governors, Heads, Bursars, Departmental Managers – and reflects news, ideas, influences, and opinions in the independent education sector. A personal printed copy is mailed to heads and other key personnel in fee-paying independent schools plus opinion formers in governments, political parties and educational associations. It is also available as a free eMagazine and online.

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Wellbeing ROCKS

Oxford International College (OIC) Brighton, West Sussex, has recently opened after much planning but how does student wellbeing fit in to this new environment? Deputy Principal: Pastoral and Wellbeing, Jonno Melia, outlines the five key components that form the foundation to their approach and discusses the creation of their own actions known as OIC Brighton ROCKS.



Jonno Melia

At the start of this academic year, we officially opened our doors to students after months of strategic planning and can safely say that opening a new college is not for the faint hearted! Since opening, it has been a priority of mine to ensure that wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do at OIC Brighton, and have enjoyed working with inspirational colleagues and our wonderfully aspirational students to make this happen.

Academic excellence is one of our key focuses, and the pursuit of excellence takes place in every lesson, every day, where our students are supported to achieve their very best. We know that in order for students to attain the highest academic standards, they need the personal skills to manage rigorous academic demands. One of the ways that we do this, is through regular assessment, which is key to ensuring that students are making continued progress, are able to receive regular feedback, and develop healthy practice habits. This helps our students to cultivate a growth mindset and develop resilience and a positive attitude towards learning.

And, while we place emphasis on academic excellence, we place equal focus on student wellbeing. Why do we do this? Because we know that wellbeing has a direct impact on academic outcomes. At OIC Brighton, we define wellbeing as our students being satisfied with their College lives, having positive experiences at, and feelings about, the College and believing that what they do during their time with us gives them purpose and meaning. Ultimately, it is the sense of purpose and meaning which is incredibly important and a key strand to our wellbeing programme.

Our bespoke approach to student wellbeing is underpinned by five key components:

1. It is researched-based

We draw upon the latest research and expertise – from The Anna Freud Centre, Oxford University, The University of Cambridge and the New Economics Foundation, where we have put an OIC Brighton spin on its Five Ways To Wellbeing¹ – to best inform our wellbeing programme. We have also used the results to inform how long our lesson time should be and have specifically curated the daily timetable so that students have a five-minute break between lessons to reduce anxiety.

2. It is pioneering

We use different systems to track wellbeing and the pastoral care of each student and produce pioneering data that enables teachers and tutors to ensure the best personalised learning experience for each student.

3. It is student centred

Our approach is purposely student centred to ensure that our students feel understood, valued and heard; we don't believe in a one-size-fits-all approach. In practice, this means that we undertake regular student surveys, 1:1 meetings and complete student focus groups to make sure that we are always listening, providing a medium of students' voices to be heard, and using what we learn to make active, impactful decisions.

4. It is data centric

There is a notion that wellbeing can be hard to analyse, contextualise, or give numerical value to. At OIC Brighton, we collect data on our students both academically and pastorally. To do this, we use the Cambridge Wellbeing Check to ensure that

we are tracking the latest data for each individual student. We also encourage all staff to regularly contribute to pastoral notes for each student, which are stored on our CPOMS System.

5. It is location specific

We are fortunate to be located in a beautiful area, just a stones' throw away from the seafront and Brighton city centre and are surrounded by the South Downs National Park. This means that our students get to reap the benefits of outdoor spaces, which we all know is good for the soul.

Wellbeing runs through the heart of everything we do, just like the words in a stick of Brighton rock. One way that we are doing that on the ground is using the New Economics Foundation's Five Ways To Wellbeing but amending so that it is specific to our College. We have called it OIC Brighton ROCKS and are encouraging our students to do the following:

Relate – socialise and connect with their friends;

Observe – take notice, have a break from technology;

Care – give back to the community;

Keep learning – learn a new skill through our many student-led societies;

Stay active – in the wonderful green spaces that surround our College.

Our wellbeing programme is something that we are really proud of at OIC Brighton, and we are looking forward to our students reaping the benefits of it during their time with us, so they embrace challenges, view failures as opportunities for growth and improvement, and have a belief in their ability to learn and succeed.

New holistic learning rooms

Bede's Prep School, East Sussex, has developed a new 'Nurture' room, designed to provide a supportive and enriching environment for pupils, fostering holistic growth and encouraging pupils to develop their potential academically, socially and emotionally.

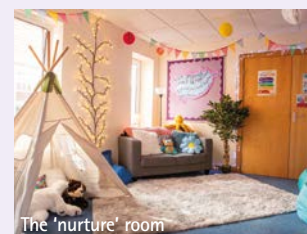
The 'Nurture' programme at Bede's Prep aims to help pupils overcome emerging social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH).

In the new Nurture room, sessions are guided by dedicated practitioners who have received training through Nurture UK, an organisation dedicated to improving the social, emotional, mental health and wellbeing of children.

Identified through Bede's pastoral team, pupils who would benefit from Nurture sessions have the opportunity to engage in these small group sessions. These sessions take place during the school day and help to ensure pupils receive the support they need to thrive both inside and outside the classroom.

Alongside the new Nurture room, Bede's Pre-Prep building has a new addition of a serene sanctuary, named the 'Learning Lodge'. Designed specifically for pupils in Early Years and Key Stage 1, the room offers a jungle-themed environment, carefully crafted to inspire the children.

In the Learning Lodge, children can explore a wealth of resources that encourage creative thinking and emotional resilience – from small world toys to a wide range of books. The Learning Lodge is designed to be screen-free where children can disconnect from technology. It hosts story times and small group PSHE sessions to empower young learners to thrive academically and emotionally.



The 'nurture' room

¹ New Economics Foundation Five Ways to Wellbeing: <https://neweconomics.org/2008/10/five-ways-to-wellbeing>



National Schools Rugby Festival

Kirkham Grammar School, Lancashire, have claimed a maiden St Joseph's College, Suffolk, National Schools Rugby Festival.

Student, and 'Player of the Tournament' Ollie Davies earned victory for the side in the final seconds of the final which finished 8-7 against RGS High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, with a drop goal. This saw Kirkham Grammar School crowned St Joseph's College Rugby Festival 2023 Trophy Champions.

The National Schools Rugby Festival invites schools from both the state and independent sectors to take part. For 2023 these also included Denstone College, Staffordshire; Cheltenham College, Gloucestershire; Brighton College, East Sussex; Blundell's,

Pictured: The Kirkham Grammar School winning team

Devon; Wellington College, Berkshire; Strathallan School, Perthshire and Kinross; Trinity School, Croydon; Millfield, Somerset; RGS High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire; Hampton School, London; Whitchurch High School, Cardiff; RGS Newcastle; Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Wakefield; and Dulwich College, London.

Kirkham Grammar School, have come close to taking the trophy before, being in the final in their debut season in 2019 and then with competitive runs in 2021 and 2022. The KGS side of 2022 won the Sedbergh 10s in the spring as they matured, and now as a more Upper Sixth based side they have added this St Joseph's Festival title. They are now planning a charge at the Continental Tyres Schools Cup.

Trampoline title

Lower Sixth student from Cranleigh School, Surrey, Will M, has won the Trampoline National League 3 title.

He faced stiff competition from 18 other qualifiers at the League 3 Finals in Sheffield, but was leading the pack after the first two routines. An excellent voluntary routine in the final secured his first ever National title.

Pictured: Will M



Will has been trampolining at a high level for a number of years, jumping with his club, Max Force, based in Dorking.



World Biathle and Triathle Championship

Six students from Leweston Prep and Senior School, Dorset, have competed in the World Biathle (run – swim – run) and Triathle (shoot – swim – run), held in Bali.

Day one of the competition saw the Biathle Semi Finals with Reuben C, Josh H, and Jay C all competing well and going through to the final in the U17 age group.

Leweston pupils all raced in the World Triathle Championships on day two. In the morning, the U13 girls and U17 boys competed in the semi-finals with Izzy K (U13), Reuben C, Josh H, and Jay C (U17) all making the final. They also

Pictured: The Leweston athletes

raced in the Triathle mixed relay in the afternoon along with Izzy W (U17), and Lexie C (U11).

Overall, the athletes finished with some fantastic results. In the U11 girls, Lexie C finished in the GB Triathle with team Silver, in the U17 category Izzy W had a great race to take individual Bronze and team Silver. In the U17 boys Triathle, Reuben C, Jay C, and Josh H put in fantastic determination in their race, just missing out on a team medal to finish 4th. In the Biathle the U17 boys raced well with Reuben C and Josh H part of the GB Silver team and Jay C also racing the Biathle.

Women sports leaders

Taunton School, Somerset has appointed a female Director of Hockey completing a quartet of women sports leaders.

Four women now hold key sports management roles at Taunton School for the first time in the school's history, making up four of the nine sports leaders who give overall direction to how sport is delivered at the school.

Laura Bennett, the new Director of Hockey joins Beth Mottram, Head of Swimming, Lisa Manley, Head of Netball and Rachel Lewis, Head of Basketball.

Laura Bennett, who has experience in coaching for England Hockey, at Performance Centre, Futures Cup and HiPac, will lead both the Taunton girls' and boys' hockey programmes. It is the first time the Director of Hockey role has been held by a woman at Taunton School and there are very few female Directors of Hockey in the country.

"I am delighted to be stepping up to this role," said Laura. "I have

Pictured: Laura Bennett



been so lucky during my career because I have been championed by other females who created opportunities for me to coach at the highest level. But clearly, on a national scale, we still have some way to go."

Within the last five to ten years, when attending high-performance assessment camps she has often found herself to be the only female coach there.

Similarly, earlier this year, Laura attended the National Hockey Finals with the Year 9 Taunton School boys team and was the only female coach out of the eight competing teams – each with three or four members of staff.



English department at Ratcliffe College completed 2022

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 **TG ESCAPES**

A photograph of three students in school uniforms. On the left, a young woman with dark curly hair in a ponytail, wearing a light blue button-down shirt and a dark blue plaid skirt, is smiling and looking towards the right. In the center, a young man with dark hair, wearing a light blue shirt, a dark blue V-neck sweater, and a yellow and purple striped tie, is smiling and looking towards the right. On the right, another young man with dark hair, wearing a light blue shirt, a dark blue V-neck sweater, and a yellow and purple striped tie, is smiling and looking towards the left. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a building and trees.

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