

# *The Independent Schools Magazine*



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...the professional journal for Management & Staff



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# In this issue...



## Alexander Armstrong on song at school

Alexander Armstrong, of 'Pointless' fame, visited Grimsdell, Mill Hill Prep, London, along with the team from Classic FM, as part of their '24 concerts in 24 hours' tour raising money for the charity 'Global Make some Noise'.

Grimsdell were selected as the only school on the quest, with venues such as St Paul's Cathedral and Wembley on the list!

Year 2 children were treated to a stunning piece performed by Alexander himself, wearing a black Tuxedo and having no sleep for the last 20 hours.

Then Year 2 performed their own song 'I'd like to teach the world to sing' which they did with great musicality and feeling. The bell of awesomeness was rung three times by the pianist!

The visit was organised by Lucy Dobson (Charities and Community Links Coordinator) and Katy Gale (Head of Music – Maternity Cover).

Our cover picture shows Alexander with Head teacher Kate Simon.

### Cover background

## Boarding investment

Bede's Senior School, East Sussex, will open a new £8m boys' boarding house next September. Our autumnal aerial view shows the facility starting to take shape. Full story and image on page 37

## 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 2022.*

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## Is Your School Mentioned?

### Schools featured in this issue include:

Abercorn School; ACS International School; Ashville College; Bablake & King Henry VIII School; Ballard School; Bede's School; Bedford School; Blenheim Schools; Blundell's School; Bolton School; Brabyns Prep School; Bradfield College; Bradford Grammer School; Brentwood Preparatory School; Bryanston School; Charterhouse; Cranleigh School; Fairfield Prep School; Francis Holland School; Froebelian School; German School of London; Grimsdell Mill Hill Prep School; Highfield & Brookham Schools; Hurlingham Prep; King Alfred School; King Edward's School; King Edward's Witley; King's House School; King's School; Loughborough Amherst School; Malvern College; Moultsford Prep School; National Mathematics & Science College; Old School; Our Lady's Abingdon; Rishworth School; Royal Hospital School; Salisbury Cathedral School; Solihull School; St. Faith's School; St. Mary's School; Stroud School; Tranby School; Ursuline Preparatory School; Warwick School; Windlesham House School; Wychwood School  
plus all those schools whose Alumni took part in the Tokyo Olympics



## Chief Masters spanning eight decades represented at tree-planting ceremony

Former Chief Masters of King Edward's School, Birmingham, gathered to mark the planting of 10 new cherry trees along the driveway.

The trees will return the drive to blossom every spring, replacing a number of cherry trees that have been lost over the years. Their location is being recorded as part of the Queen's Green Canopy tree-planting initiative created for Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022.

Joining Dr Katy Ricks, who has been Chief Master since 2019, were former Chief Masters Hugh Wright (1991-1998), Roger Dancey (1998-2005), John Claughton (2006-2016) and Keith Phillips (Acting Chief Master 2018-2019). Veslemoy Lunt, the widow of Ronald Lunt (Chief Master 1952-1974) was also in attendance, along with family members of the Chief Masters, current staff, governors, the School Captain Bhavanjot Aulakh and three

Vice-Captains.

Dr Katy Ricks said: "As we celebrated the renewal of our site, we took a moment to reflect on the contribution of those who have served as Chief Master in recent decades and the life and growth of King Edward's during this time."

Following the ceremony, the guests enjoyed afternoon tea in the school's Dining Hall, before former Chief Masters and their families had

an opportunity to visit Vince House – the Chief Master's residence on the school site – where they had all lived during their time at the helm.

King Edward's School occupies a 50-acre site in Edgbaston, which it shares with King Edward VI High School for Girls. Among the other notable trees on the site is a graft from the Lincolnshire apple tree that is believed to have led to Sir Isaac Newton discovering gravity.

Pictured: Dr Katy Ricks, Veslemoy Lunt, Roger Dancey, John Claughton, Keith Phillips, Hugh Wright and Bhavanjot Aulakh. Credit: David Ash Photography.

## Olympic star unveils all-weather facility

An ambitious sports project that has been more than two decades in the making finally came to fruition in a golden ceremony at Highfield and Brookham Schools, Hampshire, last month (October).

Team GB Olympic hockey star Crista Cullen, who won gold with her teammates at the Rio Games in 2016, cut the ribbon to officially open the all-weather facility.

It proved to be third time lucky for both the school and the hockey player, who had twice been denied the chance to unveil the two hockey pitches because of the coronavirus pandemic.

But the grand opening was certainly worth the wait as Cullen, 36, who also picked up a bronze medal in London in 2012, wowed pupils, parents and staff alike with a stirring speech and a coaching

masterclass as she put Highfield's Year 7 and Year 8 hockey players firmly through their paces.

What also endeared the visiting Olympian to the young pupils, aside from her obvious top-class talent, was the time she happily spent signing a wealth of hockey sticks and various other bits of sporting apparel, posing for pictures with excited children clutching her gold medal and, of course, the obligatory selfies.

Armed with their new-found skills and techniques, Highfield then welcomed Twyford School for a series of matches to christen the multi-coloured surface.

The pitch project was set in motion in 1999 and will be fully complete when its associated café overlooking the floodlit pitches is opened later this year. The all-

weather surface, which is available for hire, is currently used by Haslemere Hockey Club, Liphook

United Football Club, and as a performance centre for England Hockey juniors.



# Why Self-compassion is a Superpower

How come so many school leaders feel 'flat' asks former head Jan Cresswell, as she discusses how 'self-compassion' can make a real difference...



Jan Cresswell is the Founder of Caritas Education Consultancy which helps school leaders build thriving communities through a compassion-led approach to personal and strategic development. A longstanding advocate of compassionate practice, Jan has over twenty years' experience in senior leadership in 3-18 HMC, GDST and IB World Schools, most recently as head of a selective independent senior school. [www.caritaseducationconsultancy.co.uk](http://www.caritaseducationconsultancy.co.uk)

After a year like no other, when testing in schools took on a whole new PPE-clad meaning and the logistics of lunchtime required Bletchley levels of problem-solving, it was a relief to reach a new academic calendar.

So now that it's in full swing and thoughts have already turned to carol services and other end-of-term plans, there are calls on your energy and vision to re-establish a rhythm of school life that has some forward momentum. Once again, your team is looking to you for leadership and inspiration: you are 'Anchor. Kite.' to borrow one of Simon Armitage's epithets – as head you are both the grounding presence and the wind that nudges new ideas into flight.

There's a sense of wanting to move on, to bank the gains in resilience and emergency IT-upskilling and begin to imagine growth again, whether that's with a curriculum innovation left stranded when the world ground to a Covid halt or with a staff development programme that finally looks beyond generation of grades and moderation of assessment. Whilst the weight of leadership during the pandemic has been anything but virtual, it's good to return to the 'irl' experience. And on one level you're raring to go.

So how come so many of the school leaders I speak with feel, frankly, a little flat? Maybe you've been wondering why the beach break you snatched in August already feels a lifetime ago or why you start even Monday's assembly feeling tired. Just as you can't pour a decent cuppa from an empty teapot, you can't be the refreshing blend your school needs unless you can find ways of topping yourself up. Leading in times of crisis and challenge draws on our deepest reserves and,

whilst we've taken strength from the ingenuity and resourcefulness of our school communities, we need to think about our own needs as leaders. And I don't mean what you pour into a glass on Friday evening to herald the weekend.

Decades of research led by pioneers in the field including Drs Kristin Neff and Chris Germer have revealed the extraordinary benefits for leaders and their organisations of practising the skills of self-compassion; in fact, I'd go so far as to call it a superpower for heads. So if it's not about a perfect playlist for the Saturday park run or booking time on the slopes this Christmas, what is it all about? Ironically, self-compassion starts by acknowledging that we're not superhuman. It starts where we find ourselves in this moment, accepting what's good and what's tough about it, and encourages us to ask, what do I need right now? Maybe you're about to face a difficult conversation and you need to find a combination of patience and persuasion. Maybe you're carrying the knowledge of personal challenges your team have chosen to share with you in confidence and you need strength to be there for their offloading. Perhaps you're facing your leadership role with heart and head elsewhere, wondering whether an ageing parent is coping with a hospital appointment today or whether your newly fledged youngest is settling into her university course after a bumpy freshers' week, and you need a moment to acknowledge your anxieties.

Self-compassion invites us to 'take the perspective of a compassionate other towards ourselves',<sup>1</sup> addressing the needs we have in the moment as best we can, knowing that the realities of the situation can't

be magically erased but offering comfort and reassurance that we'll get through this, that we'll listen and we'll find the best words we can and go ahead with making decisions, being our 'only human' selves.

It quietsens our inner critic, that nagging voice that undermines, picking the point in the day where we're at a low ebb to remind us that we promised HoDs we'd refresh the review programme this year and we still haven't got a working group together. We know from the research that our brains have a negativity bias – it's why we obsess about the minor detail we missed out of our report to governors or take to heart the one unhelpful parent comment at Open Morning. It evolved to keep us safe, to allow us to spot threats and give us a chance of taking action to survive. It means we're wired to be super-sensitive to the bad stuff; as Rick Hanson has it, 'our brains are like Velcro for negative experiences and Teflon for positive ones'.<sup>2</sup> And if we don't check our self-judging behaviour it's all too easy for our sense of self-worth to get out of kilter.

Psychologists talk about 'contingent self-worth',<sup>3</sup> where our self-esteem is strongly tied to approval or success. Maybe our sense of our own value was built on being an academic success story or bounding up the career ladder. So what happens when someone else gets the promotion we wanted or despite a buzzy open event we don't seem to attract the numbers we hoped for in Sixth Form? Like the mood crash after a sugar high, we feel deflated, the phrases of self-judgement quickly undermining our confidence and implying that we've failed. Working in a culture of targets and KPIs hardly helps.

So how does self-compassion make such a difference? It reminds us that we are all still learning (somehow although we aim to nurture a growth mindset in our students we often expect ourselves to be the finished product). Self-compassion enables us to take in the good stuff from feedback and avoid letting the slightest criticism eat away at us. Plus there's no need to develop an unhelpfully tough skin if we recognise that we're growing rather than being measured once and for all. There's evidence too that practising self-compassion boosts our compassion for others: we judge less and we deal honestly and kindly with people when there are nettles to be grasped. So there's no brushing things under the carpet either. The sense of authenticity is empowering<sup>4</sup>.

Being kind to ourselves can feel alien at the start. But it works: practising self-kindness triggers oxytocin production, reducing anxiety levels and counteracting the unhelpful levels of cortisol that stressful situations stimulate.<sup>5</sup> It works because self-compassion uses love as a motivator rather than fear. And the evidence<sup>6</sup> suggests that, as well as giving ourselves some slack when we don't always get it right, it makes us confident to be more ambitious, to try new things. Time to get some of those kites flying.

1 Kristin Neff, *Self Compassion*, Hodder and Stoughton, 2011

2 Rick Hanson, psychologist, senior fellow of the Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley and author of numerous books including *Hardwiring Happiness*, at <https://www.rickhanson.net/take-in-the-good/>

3 Kristin Neff is, along with Paul Gilbert, a leading authority on research into self-compassion. Associate professor in human development at the University of Texas, her eminently readable book *Self Compassion* is subtitled 'stop beating yourself up and leave insecurity behind'. Also check out her comprehensive website: <https://self-compassion.org>

4 <https://www.google.co.uk/amp/s/hbr.org/amp/2018/09/give-yourself-a-break-the-power-of-self-compassion>

5 Kristin Neff, *Self Compassion*

6 Kirkpatrick, K., Neff, K. and Rude, S., *An Examination of Self-Compassion in Relation to Positive Psychological Functioning and Personality Traits*

# Behaviourist versus rationalist approach

Dr. Julian Murphy, Head at Loughborough Amherst School, Leicestershire discusses the language of learning...



I recently enjoyed my 'fifteen minutes of fame' in the national press when broadcaster and television personality, Piers Morgan, got hold of something I had said in an interview about finding the use of the words 'good' and 'bad' unhelpful when dealing with pupil behaviour – a principle at the very heart of our Minerva learning culture here at Amherst School.

This led to what was, for me, the unique experience of being lambasted as a 'woke liberal'. Though, responses from the public and other well-known figures were not all questionable. In fact, our findings that underpin the Minerva culture were supported by clinical psychologist, Dr. Genevieve von Lob, in an article in Grazia. She agreed that "labelling our children 'good', 'bad', 'clever', 'clumsy', 'sporty', 'lazy', 'gifted' or 'too sensitive', puts them into boxes", and can affect a child's 'underlying self-worth'. Which, in essence, was spot on.

There were more perceptive reactions to my observations, most notably by comedian and Guardian columnist, David Mitchell, who suggested that my real aim was to make 'bad' behaviour appear more as 'stupid' behaviour so as to remove from it the glamour of rebellion.

At Loughborough Amherst School, one of our learning culture aims is to create an environment in which behaviour that is unhelpful for the learner and/or their classmates,

comes to be subliminally understood as clumsy and unskilful rather than as somehow rebellious.

And here, the key phrase is 'creating an environment', because I think that peoples' behaviours and mindsets are rarely shaped by rational discourse and one-on-one communication. In fact, they are shaped by environment and habit. To put it bluntly, the mind is largely shaped by the mindless.

Following the media attention, debate seemed to centre on whether I was 'woke' or whether I was, in fact, a traditionalist. The distinction between progressive and traditional education styles is crude, out-of-date, and unhelpful. For me – and here I am coining jargon – the far more practical and important distinction is between what I would call 'rationalists' and 'behaviourists', and in that debate, I am firmly on the side of the 'behaviourists'.

For the last few decades, educators have worked harder than at any point in our history on nurturing creativity, resilience and happiness in our young people, and the results so far are not broadly encouraging. So, what do we need to do differently?

The more I have thought about this conundrum, the more I have concluded that our problem is that we are going about things in a far too rational way. We are trying to break through deep instinctual defences and habits with the

battering ram of rationalism and information.

In reality, what we really need to do is change the learners' environment so that their behaviour and, lastly, their mindset, follows suit. When I think about this challenge I am reminded of Aesop's famous fable of the north wind and the sun – in the tale, the north wind blows, with all its might, in a futile attempt to remove the traveller's coat after which the sun simply heats up the environment so that the traveller's coat became an obviously unnecessary and uncomfortable burden to him, and he takes it off.

At Amherst, we firmly believe that the mindset of the individual and, ultimately, the prevailing norms of the group, are not solely shaped by rational instruction or exhortation.

We work on a principle of nurturing the learning culture we want, by focusing on the physical – habits and routines – rather than on the mental – the rational appeal to the mind of the learner.

In practical terms, if a school is trying to instil certain habits of growth mindset, resilience and skilful learning in its pupils, then the following methods will likely prove ineffective for three reasons:

- Assemblies, inspirational guest speakers and other attempts to inspire or exhort people towards the desired mindset – these will tend to be ineffective because

(i) moments of inspiration rarely alter peoples' fixed patterns of behaviour, and (ii) an overload of inspirational messaging, even if well-intentioned, can have a negative effect on mental health.

- One-off workshops or extra-curricular activities – these will tend to be ineffective because anything non-routine is either subliminally classified by pupils as trivial/unreal or proves too difficult to carry over into existing routines,
- Rational explanations and discussions of theories of growth mindset and other aspects of skilful learning – these will tend to be ineffective because evidence suggests that rational discussion/explication rarely has a profound effect on peoples' routine behaviours and mindsets.

If rational and non-routine methods of changing the learning culture are likely to fail, then it seems sensible to instead turn to a behaviourist approach.

Of course, while none of this is entirely original, it does echo Aristotle, Hume, the Buddha and Nietzsche, to name just the few – but I find that reassuring. My point is that, in education, it is perhaps time to bury the profoundly unhelpful 'traditionalist versus progressive' tags. I would argue that if we are looking for a new set of battlelines, then rationalism versus behaviourism is a debate genuinely worth having.

## Helping stock 'The Pantry'

Children and staff from Brabyns Prep School, Cheshire, celebrated Harvest by focusing on helping the local community.

Food poverty has featured heavily in the news this last year, and the efforts of role models such as Marcus Rashford have highlighted that this is a nationwide issue that desperately needs addressing.

'The Pantry' is a community foodbank run by a team of

volunteers from All Saints Church at their 'All Connect' community hub based in the heart of Marple. Brabyns children donated essentials as part of their Harvest offering. These were then delivered directly to the pantry by the Year 6 team – assisted by Year 5 teacher and KS2 Lead Mrs Alex Munro, who was also supporting this community project with her own personal fundraising target!

Mrs Munro was due to run the

Manchester Marathon back in 2020, but had to put her plans on hold as it was cancelled due to the pandemic. Instead she devised a special marathon which covered the 26+ miles running to visit each of her Year 5 pupils who were learning from home at the time.

As the Manchester Marathon returned this year, Mrs Munro once again donned her running shoes and completed the course – raising £600 for 'The Pantry – Marple'.



# Thinking twice: mandating covid vaccines for school staff



Double Covid-19 vaccinations are now mandatory for care home workers in England. Solicitor Joanna Lada-Walicki advises school leaders to think twice about introducing such measures within schools...

Schools have been asked to host Covid vaccination clinics for 12–15-year-old pupils as part of the Government's drive to vaccinate more of the UK population and to reduce the risk of school closures.

Many school leaders have received threatening letters from a range of anti-vaccination groups. Protests outside the school gates have also caused further disruption, as well as anxiety for staff, pupils and their parents.

Schools have adapted remarkably well to the effects of the pandemic, which includes implementing comprehensive remote learning programmes and hybrid teaching to ensure that pupils at school and those isolating at home have the same teaching experience.

As we approach winter, and continue to see Covid-19 cases rising, many staff are questioning what will be asked of them next?

From this month ( November) it has been mandatory for care home

workers to be double vaccinated. While the risk Covid-19 poses to those in care homes and schools is different, some schools - boarding schools in particular - are beginning to consider if this is a beneficial road for them to take too, whether this becomes mandatory or not.

My advice is that schools should avoid imposing a requirement that staff, or certain categories of staff such as school nurses and boarding staff, must be vaccinated.

Instead, schools should provide staff with information to help them make an informed choice as to whether or not to be vaccinated. Many staff have already chosen to do so.

Seeking to impose a requirement that staff must be vaccinated risks legal claims for breach of contract, as well as a range of discrimination claims, for example in relation to disability, religion and sex.

Any requirement to be vaccinated should, at the very least, ensure that medical exemptions apply and

should only be introduced following a consultation period.

Before this commences, schools will need to consider carefully whether all or only certain categories of staff should be vaccinated.

As this is likely to be a change in the employees' terms and conditions of employment, schools may need to consider serving notice on dissenting employees. This would end their current employment with an offer to immediately re-engage at the end of the notice period on the same terms, except for a requirement to be vaccinated.

This is a drastic step and should only be considered as a last resort. Schools should seek legal advice on the consultation process and ensure that they are aware of all the reasons why staff are hesitant about agreeing to a mandatory requirement to be vaccinated.

An alternative approach would be to ring fence dissenting employees and allow them to remain unvaccinated.

However, this could cause conflicts between those who agree with mandatory vaccinations and those who don't.

Many staff already feel that they have been in the firing line with threats from various groups that are opposed to the vaccination of children as well as to other measures designed to keep everyone safe, such as mask wearing.

Staff are also exhausted by the additional demands placed on them by remote and hybrid learning, and the pressures arising out of the process of providing teacher assessed public examination grades.

Ultimately, schools and their staff have been at the forefront of a very difficult and challenging two years. They have had to navigate very choppy waters, facing a range of different challenges while trying to do their best for their pupils and their staff.

Joanna Lada-Walicki is an independent schools specialist at leading law firm Moore Barlow. For more information, please visit [www.moorebarlow.com](http://www.moorebarlow.com)

## Introduction to womens' rugby 7's

Wychwood School, Oxfordshire, has introduced Rugby 7's to its pupils for the first time at a festival hosted at Oxford Harlequins RFC.

The school opened the event to public and state schools to encourage young girls to take up the sport and were overwhelmed by the response. More than 100 girls aged between 10 and 13 took part with guests from Oratory Prep School, Unicorn School, SS Philip & James' Church of England VA Primary School and St Andrew's Church of England Primary School, Headington. More than 50% of participants were from state schools.

The Wychwood girls were treated to an inspirational assembly to start the day from special guests Gemma Rowland, Wales women's rugby

player, captain of the British Army rugby team and Wasps women's player. Plus Jane Leonard, former England Rugby women's player, captain of the British Army rugby team and Guinness World Record holder for rowing the Pacific Ocean in 60 days beating the previous record by 2 days.

Oxford Harlequins' Pat Metcalfe-Jones, a triple Oxford Blue, head of women's rugby at Oxford Brookes University and former head of women's rugby at Oxford University coached and oversaw the day.

The girls learned the basic skills of the game, culminating in an exhibition game and prize giving. This festival of rugby builds on the school's commitment to enhance its sporting focus which saw it relaunch rowing in partnership

with Hinksey Sculling School as a curriculum sport last year.

Andrea Johnson, headmistress at Wychwood said: "It's wonderful to

see so many girls eager to develop in Rugby 7's, which I believe provides a positive physical outlet to complement their academic studies."



# Vocational learning has stepped up a gear

Schools must keep pace with the increasing options available to school-leavers' says Mark Mortimer, Head of Bryanston School, Dorset...

The Bryanston motto, 'et nova et vetera', means to embrace the old and the new. This is exactly what pupils should be able to choose between: the conventional university pathway or credible and respected vocational apprenticeship programmes.

It is vital for every school to flex and adjust whilst reflecting the constantly moving sands of perceptions and values. Nowhere is this more important than when it comes to preparing pupils for the next stage in their education. Today's school-leavers have far more opportunities and choice than their predecessors, and the onus is on every school to help inspire and encourage each pupil to choose the best path that will help them to fulfil their aspirations. That could be a traditional university placement here in the UK, an overseas scholarship or an ever-growing number of vocational options. The current resurgence and increasing appeal of apprenticeships is a particularly significant development.

The history of apprenticeships are rooted within the medieval craft guilds of the Middle Ages. This enabled well-to-do parents to send

their children away to live with a master craftsman, who would then train the apprentice over several years – an average of 7 – in return for a fee. Everyone benefitted and it was seen as a respectable, desirable and aspirational career path.

Apprenticeships in skilled trades such as the construction industry, thatching or engineering have never gone away, although they have been overshadowed in recent years by the significant increase in school-leavers going onto university. With such a high number of students having a good set of A Levels or a university degree, such qualifications are no longer the cast-iron guarantor of success they once were. Employers are now looking for much more, as are many parents and many young people.

Another factor is the welcome rehabilitation of the phrase 'vocational training'. After all, teaching itself is a highly skilled vocational profession. For too long, too many parents have supported the idea of vocational training, while simultaneously thinking, 'just not for my child'. It is great to see this mindset is beginning to shift. However, the responsibility is still on schools to ensure parental perceptions and expectations are fully aligned with the respective benefits of the various options now available to their child. Likewise, there is still some way to go to ensure all pupils are well informed about the viability and relevance of increasingly diverse apprenticeship pathways and have easy access to up-to-date information so they can make informed decisions.

Of course, the appeal of universities remains strong. Indeed, many are adapting and adjusting their service provision to cover both degree and non-degree apprenticeships. There are clear signs, however, that the number of pupils who go straight from school to university to study the traditional 3 or 4 year course is beginning to fall.

A number of blue-chip companies are also offering degree apprenticeships, with the most capable and impressive sixth formers their key targets. A growing number of young people are attracted by the chance to work for a world-renowned organisation, gain experience alongside qualifications whilst getting paid at the same time. This route also side-steps student debt. It is an attractive proposition.

There is a significant amount of evidence that supports the benefits of experiential (i.e. on the job), learning. Just consider the merits of working hard, trying something difficult and failing in a non-threatening environment, mentoring and advice from more experienced colleagues, the chance to use one's initiative and the opportunity to be immersed in the company's culture.

A recent Head of School at Bryanston is now in his second year with JP Morgan doing exactly that – getting work experience, a salary and also a degree from Exeter University. Likewise, another pupil who left in the summer of 2021 has recently started at the Dyson Institute. The benefits to both, as they see them, are similar. As a result, they are getting a head start in a prestigious work environment and gaining the



Mark Mortimer, Head of Bryanston School

skills and experience needed for employment in the competitive workplace.

Traditional university courses will remain an attractive and sensible route for many school-leavers for the foreseeable future. Understandably, I would always argue for the importance of academic pursuit; to expand knowledge, understanding, and creative thought at university. However, degree apprenticeships are forging credible pathways to match the educational value of universities.

The growing recognition of the renewed importance of vocational training both at school (for example the IB careers-related programme) and beyond is a very welcome development. Ultimately, our country needs people who are highly skilled and competent in a wide range of areas. The crucial thing for schools is to help each pupil to navigate both traditional and new options to identify what is right for them in order to support them in their aspiration.

"Et nova et vetera".

## "More needs to be done" – UCAS

Insight published by UCAS indicates that over half of students looking to apply to higher education in 2022 are interested in apprenticeships, but find it difficult to access the relevant information that they need about them.

A third of students at schools and only half in colleges said that they were not told about apprenticeships, despite there being a legal requirement placed on schools to do so, known as the Baker clause in England.

The research highlights that more needs to be done to highlight the benefits of apprenticeships – only 8% of students surveyed associated apprenticeships with leading to a good job. An apprenticeship offers

on-the-job training and is a great path to a good career in a variety of sectors, yet only 4% of students associate the word 'prestigious' with apprenticeships compared with 76% for a traditional university degree.

This research provides an opportunity to better explain what an apprenticeship is and UCAS is currently working on plans to bolster its offer for would-be apprentices, aligning with its services for prospective undergraduates.

UCAS intends to take a key role in the progression of the recently published Skills and Post-16 Education Bill through Parliament. Ensuring the wealth of information on [ucas.com](https://ucas.com) about all the different pathways available is more accessible, so that students can make informed choices, is crucial and UCAS is working hard to deliver this over the next 12-months.



Pictured: Cameron Robertson, a former Head of School at Bryanston is now in his second year with JP Morgan – getting work experience, a salary and also a degree from Exeter University

Is now the time for every school to teach Engineering?

# Putting the 'E' in STEM

Former deputy head of St. Faith's School, Cambridgeshire, Margaret White, reflects on an initiative at the school which has now spawned an Engineering course available to all...

A former headmaster recently asked me to explain the difference between children learning Science and Engineering. When I explained that in Engineering pupils apply their knowledge of science and maths to solve real-life practical problems, it triggered a distant memory. 'I remember doing that once in a science lesson!' came back the animated answer. The recollection of that single lesson beamed across the decades.

St Faith's has been teaching Engineering as an academic subject from Year 3 to Year 8 now for six years, and it is thoroughly and deeply embedded in the timetabled academic curriculum. As popular with parents as with children, the pupils love learning on their feet, working in teams, identifying and exploring problems, brainstorming solutions and prototyping design solutions. Working through the engineering design process entails testing and evaluating their design solutions, communicating their findings and refining them. Curiosity, teamwork and creativity all flourish, as does the pupils' knowledge and understanding of science, maths and computing.

The impetus to teach Engineering was entirely educational: it felt like a good way for children to learn, and this has proved to be the case. Applying knowledge from other subjects (across the sciences, arts and humanities) both consolidates and enhances that knowledge – it's a two-way process. As Year 4 design and build environmentally-friendly nesting boxes, they recognise the importance of sustainability and

humanitarian considerations: a good engineering solution is one that benefits the environment and the community. In designing a rocket to maximise the distance travelled, and in ensuring safe landing for a space craft, Year 7s apply and develop mathematical computation and computer programming skills.

As pupils build an appreciation of the way in which problems can be solved, they develop a confidence to do so that they apply not only in Engineering, but as a life skill. Commenting on Engineering at St Faith's, the Tatler Good Schools Guide comments, 'This learning makes for enquiring young people who develop tremendous resilience and little fear of failure.' Pupils gain a sense of agency, and a can-do attitude towards whatever problems they encounter.

Over the six-year course, pupils tackle eighteen projects. Breadth of understanding is forged in solving problems across a wide range of engineering disciplines from acoustic and electrical to civil and aeronautical. Rigorous exams in Year 7 leave no doubt that the subject is treated academically, while simultaneously valuing ingenious imaginative solutions, refined practical workshop skills, and strong aesthetic design elements. The statistics show girls and boys achieve equally highly.

At the end of Year 8, pupils demonstrate their ability by identifying a real-world problem to solve in an independent project of their choice. Recent examples include inventing a can opener that can be used by someone with only one hand, designing and 3D-printing a self-release stirrup to prevent riding accidents, and solving the problem of the optimal keel size for a given sail area. 'Engineering has inspired me never to give up no matter how hard the thing you're doing is,' said one Year 8 pupil in his end-of-year feedback. Engineering provides the

perfect opportunity to understand the relevance of their subject knowledge.

Having been trialled and refined over a six-year period, with the support of IAPS all the teaching materials for Engineering have now been edited and published, and are available free of charge to member schools, as well as to all state schools. They are also available for purchase by senior schools and other bodies. To date the Engineering Schemes of Work have been accessed by over 90 IAPS schools in the UK and abroad, and over 50 schools have sent teachers on Engineering training courses. Engineering has been widely celebrated in the UK (winning TES Educational Initiative of the Year 2018, and St Faith's winning Prep School of the Year 2019) and already featured at an education conference hosted by



Peking University and the Yidan Foundation in China.

There is one good reason to introduce Engineering in schools: it's good for children. The next step is for us to forge the strongest possible links with partners and networks to ensure that as many children as possible benefit from this opportunity. In future decades, then they too will be able to recall how they learnt to apply their knowledge and use their skills, so that whatever problems came their way they could tackle and solve them with confidence.



This article was written in collaboration with Nicola Hoyle, Head of Engineering, St Faith's, and Nigel Helliwell, Former Head of St Faith's.

If you would like to know more about introducing Engineering in your school and the teaching materials which are available please contact:

Dr Nicola Hoyle, Head of Engineering at St Faith's School, on [nhoyle@stfaiths.co.uk](mailto:nhoyle@stfaiths.co.uk)

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# Building Management Systems are Saving Schools 60% in Energy Costs

Energy contributes to a significant proportion of non-staff costs for most schools. Heating and lighting account for more than 75% of energy use, and without effective building management systems in place, much of this energy is often wasted.

Schools face a myriad of challenges from fluctuating enrolment figures, promoting health and wellbeing, and the mounting pressure to demonstrate a commitment to the environment, to operational concerns of reduced budgets, and ageing buildings and equipment. Educational facilities have never been under more pressure to do more with less, whilst guaranteeing a safe, optimal learning environment.

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and audits, connecting building systems to our Carbon Cloud platform, running analytics, and delivering energy reduction works based on the findings.

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bill and deliver a clear pathway towards achieving Net Zero.

## Carbon Cloud

Our award-winning cloud-based system is a secure platform that allows clients to access real-time energy data anytime, anywhere.

## Did you know?

Lighting can account for up to 50% of total energy use. By switching to energy efficient LED lighting, you could reduce your lighting energy consumption by up to 80%.

## Case Study Ipswich High School

### Overview

Carbon Numbers successfully delivered building controls solutions for Ipswich High School; a large independent school, seeking improved comfort, control, and lighting with a reduction in its carbon footprint.

### The challenge

Built in 1776, Woolverstone Hall is a Grade I listed building set in 87 acres of parkland on the banks of the River Orwell. The historic building has been used as the school's premises since 1992, and as such, many of the systems needed to be upgraded and modernised.

The building had a dispersed heating network with no integrated controls and very minimal metering. The systems were not visible outside of local plantrooms, resulting in increased energy usage and a lack of control over the building environment.

### The solution

#### Trend IQ System Installation

Carbon Numbers installed a real-time user interface, providing graphical information to enable the school to manage its building environments effectively. Energy dashboards provide a dynamic view of the school's energy performance and identifies areas for energy saving opportunities.

#### Sub Metering Installation

Brand new bespoke graphics and panels were installed as well as sub metering. This allows the school to measure its energy consumption within a particular area or a specific piece of equipment.

#### Ex-Or and LED lighting

Honeywell's Ex-Or lighting controls have been installed in a phased rollout in conjunction with energy-saving LED lighting. The control system monitors occupancy within rooms and turns lights on or off accordingly.



Combined with LED lighting, this has significantly reduced energy consumption, improved lighting conditions, and provided a smart building solution.

### Funding

Ipswich High School has been able to fund this project through an Energy Performance Contract. The work has been funded 100% by Carbon Numbers, and the client only pays based on the energy savings.

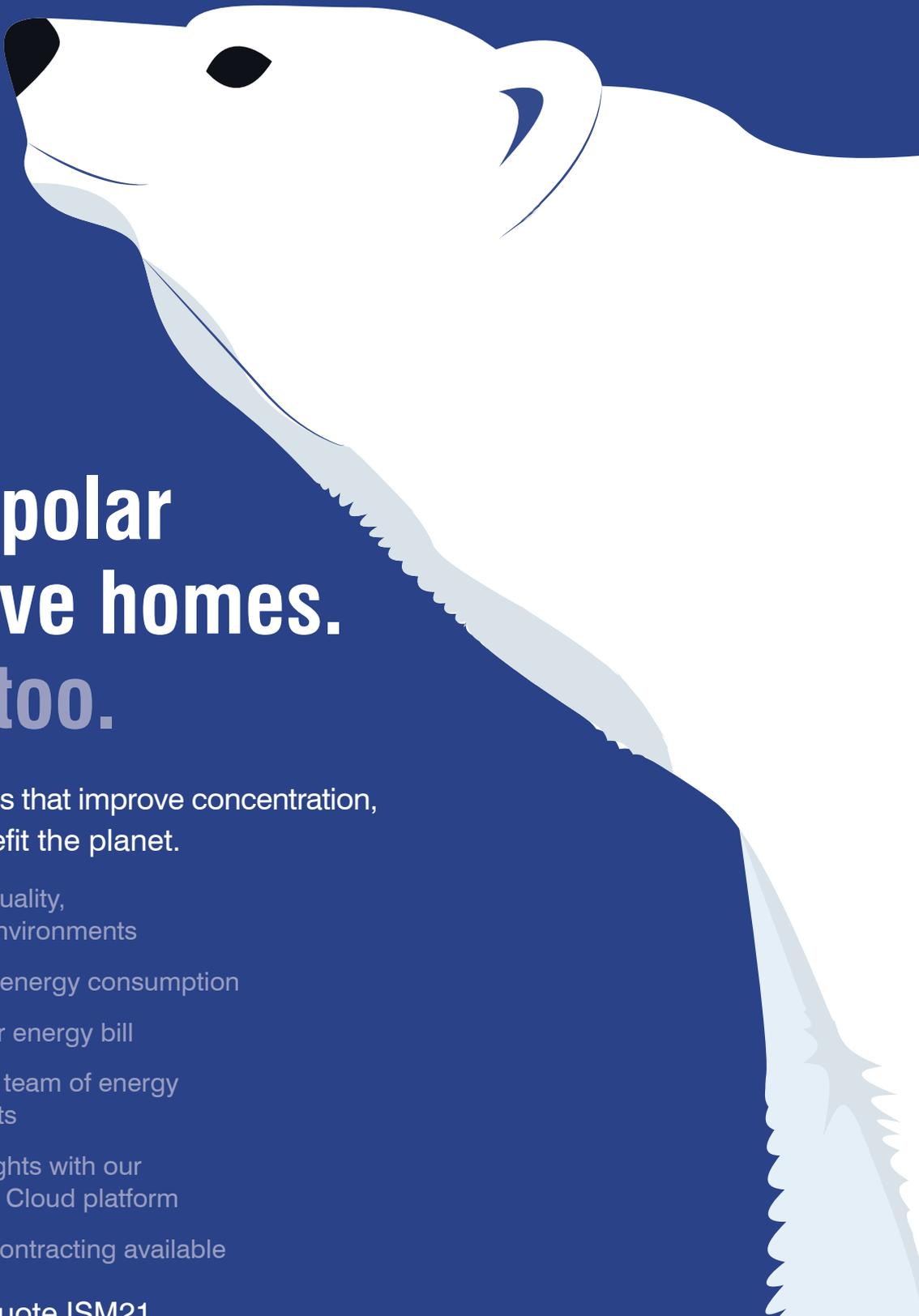
### The benefits

- Improved comfort control, aiding concentration levels

- Increased visibility and remote management of building systems
- 60% reduction in energy bills
- Management information to plan future projects that support the school's journey to Net Zero Carbon

### Client Comment

Sam Ramsell, Estates Manager, Ipswich High School, stated: *"The improved functionality of a cloud-based BEMS has enabled us to monitor systems, schedule events and proactively manage our building systems to support our core business."*



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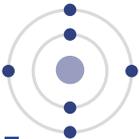
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# Developing common sense – restoring a forgotten goal of education?



All schools are aware of the challenges in the face of the developing picture in what we can probably now call the 'mid-covid' landscape. Perhaps what is not known is the damage done to what we used to call old fashioned common sense? In fact, is the previous level of common sense even needed in an age when information and answers are readily available? Head of Brentwood Preparatory School, Essex, Jason Whiskerd reflects...

It is easy to blame everything on the pandemic and the temptation has been for some to do just that. Let's remember that the educational landscape was not perfect before COVID reared its ugly head, and that educators and learners were already grappling with the question of when technological solutions to educational problems become the expectation rather than the norm.

There are those who'd argue that using technology to overcome problems is the very essence of what common sense is. The answer is available via technology so why wouldn't we use it?

The reality is that the reference sections of most libraries are dwindling at a steady rate and have been for some time. If you want to find out how to build a shed or cook a sea bass to perfection then you'd probably be an outlier if you didn't tap into Google or even a YouTube instructional video. The youngest pupils at our schools can navigate search engines without too much bother and will not even consider the reference library approach unless asked to do so.

In schools, we are promoting instructional blogs and 'how to' video clips as a means of demonstrating a degree of mastery. Conversely, I suspect most schools

do not teach or push common sense as a curriculum area or particular agenda. Should we be doing this to combat the everyday issues pupils are facing? My personal feeling is that strategically planned opportunities in and out of the classroom will soon get common sense levels up to an acceptable level but it is unlikely that common sense will ever be top of the list of a school's priorities.

Young children are struggling with socialisation, but also with such basics as tying shoelaces, holding a knife and fork correctly, getting changed quickly after PE and more academic demands such as pencil grip, organisation and moving from class to class quickly and efficiently. Is this due to a lack of common sense or part of a culture that, in the words of the Canadian rock band, Arcade Fire, really does promote an Everything Now society?

Have children lost the basic concepts of learning by their mistakes to such an extent that they can find a way of never having to make any mistakes at all? The answer should be an unequivocal 'no' to this question, but I do think that pupils believe that they have all the answers they need at their fingertips via a search engine or

demonstration video. Surely, the secret is to create a curriculum where a combined approach is the key to overcoming challenges. Many schools (including Brentwood Prep) have made a conscious effort to force the agenda of challenging pupils to be hands on, creative and option oriented, applying common sense throughout. Sometimes we use technology to help in this process and sometimes we don't.

The one thing we do know is that the technological tools available to us in terms of adaptive learning may well be the answer. These programmes (Atom Learning and Century to name but two) claim to be able to target the precise academic issues that pupils are now struggling with. Young children are completely intuitive to this kind of technology, and it may well be that the academic challenges we face will be long forgotten within a year, with a normal school (and common sense) trajectory firmly back on track for the pupils. Is it not common sense to allow such programmes to work to our benefit? Once academic attainment is back to pre-pandemic levels, we will need to be resolute in not over using automotive learning to the detriment of all other methods that have been so successful for so long.

But what about developing common sense in pastoral issues? Put simply, many young children are struggling with the key developmental aspects of socialisation. Concepts such as sharing, waiting your turn and other basic social skills appear to have been hit hard by the pandemic. Our very youngest children have not been to day nurseries, enjoyed play dates or even met with their family for vast tracts of their lives and schools are seeing the effects. The usual 'common sense required' experiences that pupils ought to have undergone may not have been as natural an occurrence as we would expect and this is something of a challenge to fast track this process as we (hopefully) return to an uninterrupted education.

According to the Oxford dictionary, common sense is 'the ability to think about things in a practical way and make sensible decisions', in essence our ability to judge things in a manner which is 'commonly' shared by most people. But just as generations evolve and society changes, so surely must common sense? Maybe the question we should be asking ourselves is not whether common sense has been lost or forgotten, but whether Gen Z has its own variation?

## £6000 for Air Ambulance

Following two years of fundraising, The Froebelian School, Yorkshire, was delighted to present the county's Air Ambulance with a cheque for over £6000.

Throughout the lockdowns and challenges over the last two years, the whole school community has come together to carry out some new and imaginative ways of fundraising; from a virtual Roman Marathon to hot chocolate days. One of the younger pupils

embarked on a 3-day hike with her Dad across North Yorkshire raising over £1000 alone.

Headteacher, Catherine Dodds, said: "I am overwhelmed by how the Froebelian family has embraced the fundraising over the last two years - with individual and group efforts from pupils, staff, parents, friends and the FPTA. It is a tremendous achievement to have raised such an astonishing amount."



(L to R) Vickie Bowden from YAA, Headteacher of The Froebelian School Catherine Dodds, and Polly the Paramedic with The Froebelian Charity Captains

# Education forward: tending to the digital shoots of lockdown learning

*“In technology terms we have probably leapt forward further in five weeks than we would have achieved without the virus in two years.”*

Trevor Taylor, COO  
The Constellation Trust, Hull

On the 18th March 2020, we all watched on, slack-jawed, as Gavin Williamson announced that after schools shut their gates in two days’ time, they would remain closed until further notice. It was inconceivable – a chilling marker of the predicament we were in with Covid-19.

Eighteen months on, and a new normal has settled upon schools, along with new vocabulary and new routines that permeate our daily lives: remote learning, ‘Teams’ and ‘Meets’, close contacts, enhanced cleaning, social distancing, lateral flow testing, isolation. Schools are left dealing with the legacy of lockdown on children and young people’s learning and mental health, as well as the challenges to continuing educational provision posed by an endemic virus running roughshod through their halls.

Yet in this, there is one legacy of lockdown that could be extremely helpful – and that is the learning and insight we gained into the use of educational technology over this period. Not only online/digital teaching and learning resources, but also the cloud computing, productivity and collaboration tools from Microsoft and Google that for most schools became the bedrock of remote learning.

Of course, there is no substitute for in-person teaching, for the interaction that happens in a real-life classroom and for professional teaching experience and expertise. Yet what we saw emerging from remote provision at a zoomed out, national level is the many ways that technology can be used to enhance teaching, learning, and learning management, assist teachers to manage their workload, and engage different learners with varying needs, learning styles and preferences.

What we saw – and are still seeing – is educators collaborating online, using each and every tool and type of media at their disposal to make lessons interactive and engaging for students isolated in their own homes. Teachers creating their own interactive resources or curating the best available free and paid-for sources from the internet to build repositories of resources stored in the cloud and therefore readily shareable and reusable, avoiding duplication of effort not only in-year but through successive cohorts.

What’s more, we saw how many pupils engaged with technology with relish and aplomb. Lots of students actively liked the fact that they could take a degree of control over their learning, pacing it according to their own needs, rather than being swept along in the general current of a class. This is something that should ideally be capitalised on now that they are back in school too (Though sadly, device availability and connectivity may get in the way). With the right set-up, technology allows over-stretched teachers and TAs to focus more time on the groups and individuals who need it most, while also ensuring that



other children are using their time productively and providing stretch and challenge for the more able.

And we saw a whole new practice emerge in online lessons of using chat, surveys, quizzes, and ‘reactions’ to increase student participation and offer teachers insight into their students’ understanding of a topic. Now faced with classes full of children all at different points in their learning these sorts of tools are particularly useful for ongoing, light-touch diagnostic and formative assessment.

*“We are now asking ourselves how to build on this – what other functionality do we have that we are not using? What other lessons can we learn from other schools and how they have coped? How can we future proof our school?”*

Chris Cook, IT Manager  
Manningtree High School

It’s very difficult to make changes to education delivery when to get it wrong could have such far-reaching consequences. However, if the disruption of the past 18 months has had one upside, it’s that it gave us a chance to experiment with the tools

and technologies that were already within our grasp and evaluate how they can help teachers do their job more efficiently and students learn more effectively.

In short, we saw the shoots of innovation and transformative practice coming through the cracks of lockdown and we must now tend them, develop them and share them. Now is the time for schools and technology partners to capitalise on the learning of the past 18 months and move forward together.

*“We hope that our communities will recognise the need for investment in IT within schools, now that they have seen just how crucial it can be for the continued learning of children.”*

*We hope that blended and hybrid curriculum best practice will be embedded in pedagogical developments for classroom-based learning in the years to come and that technological educational enhancements continue to benefit all of our learners.”*

Paul Kershaw, Deputy Headteacher  
St Albans Girls School



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# Taking greater control of school purchasing: the clock is ticking

Schools thrive on continuity and consistency. Yet for many, outdated legacy systems combined with slow and inefficient technology platforms, are leading to frequent overspend and wastage, not to mention putting a huge drain on valuable time and resource. From catering equipment and ingredients, to staffing resource, IT, heating, stationery, electricity and water, schools need the bricks and mortar basics to operate reliably and efficiently in order to deliver a first-class education to their students. A report by Ollie Brand...



In our fast-paced digital world, the clock is ticking for schools to move to more efficient, cloud-based trading platforms that are adequately equipped to manage the wide and varied purchasing demands of today's education establishments. Schools are busy places at the best of times and in the case of catering departments for example, they are often serving hundreds of students and staff every day. Likewise, the number of office and teaching staff, operating within multiple departments, across multiple buildings means the seemingly simple task of ordering stationery and other school equipment can be haphazard and tricky to control in terms of spend. The impact of the pandemic and subsequent pressures on the supply chain have not helped matters. Many of the simple processes and systems schools had previously taken for granted, are now more difficult to manage with different layers of complexity.

## Bottlenecks for exceeding budget

Taking the catering provision as an example, this itself is a fixed cost budget for a school, so the finance team and the bursar need to be aware of unforeseen problems or cost implications. Communication is key in this case, especially as few independent schools have the luxury today of not worrying about overspend. Schools need to operate as cost-effectively as possible, investing at the right time and within budget. The supply

chain itself can be a bottleneck for exceeding budgets, especially when many schools want to buy locally and support their community even though they may be paying over the odds for items.

Cloud based, eProcurement trading platforms are now evolving to support schools by modernising whole systems or elements of them. As well as providing automated budgeting and financial reporting tools, fit for purpose technology will also provide access to live supplier networks to ensure staff have up to the minute data to negotiate and access to the best prices and quality of goods across multiple items and services. Using a platform that supports traceability and sustainability throughout the entire supply chain is also becoming an expectation today.

Schools will benefit from taking more effective control of their purchasing decisions across multiple departments, by improving visibility across the board as opposed to treating departments as separate entities. Having the ability to compare supplier prices against one another from a number of perspectives, will lead to better, more informed buying behaviours. That way overspend is minimised and purchasing is ultimately managed with greater consistency. Making decisions on exactly what item to purchase and from whom, versus spend, will often rest with the department heads, but the bigger the purchasing list, the more

difficult this can be to manage so transparency on cost is vital.

## Avoiding overspend

Having a complete view of the entire school operation also helps to segregate costs and apportion budgets correctly, which is crucial in avoiding overspend. If you think about it, staffing is often the biggest cost for schools, second is catering and so forth, so controlling spending in departments such as catering could likely be pivotal to forecasting and staying on budget. Food costs go up and down, sometimes erratically, especially when there are seasonal changes, or issues with product demand vs. availability. On the same token, we are seeing rises in the cost of energy, gas, electric etc. Add to that scenarios such as Brexit, delivery driver shortages, Covid-19 and even severe weather conditions which impact harvests, and it is easy to see how unforeseen circumstances can affect the supply chain and have a detrimental effect on the cost of goods.

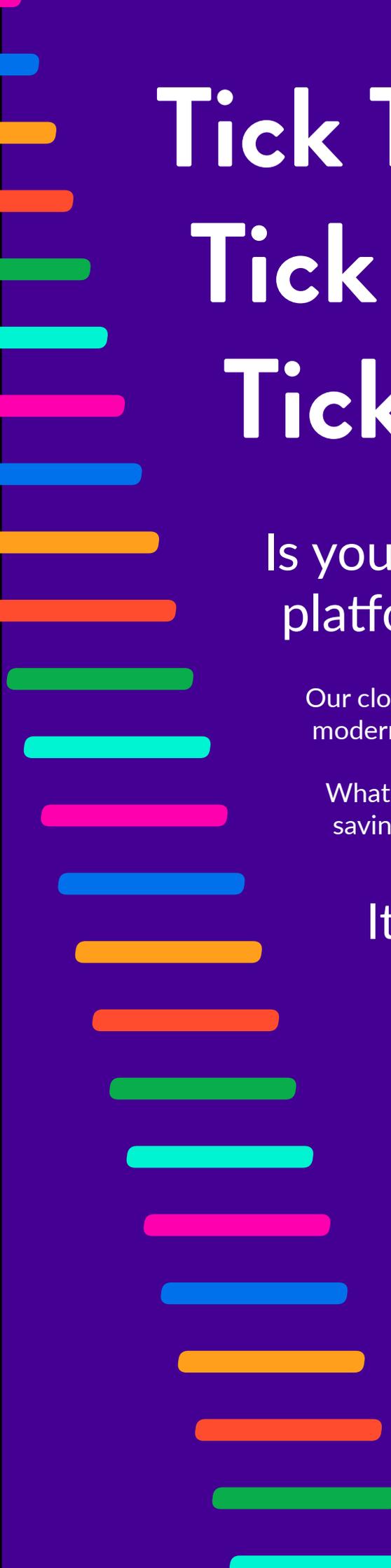
Managing purchasing is never straight forward for schools. It is of course, the responsibility of department heads to manage their own budgets but it is important for staff to have transparency over what items they need rather than what they 'think' they need. This kind of estimation is likely to lead to overordering and hence, overspend or wastage. Using platforms that incorporate inventory and stock

control can help to alleviate this issue. Traditionally every internal function/spend would have to go via the bursar for pre-approval but today, technology is making it much easier to set fixed spending limits for individual staff from the outset and also to raise an alert if a member of the team is about to exceed a budget.

## Operational efficiency

Thankfully we are at a stage where technology can really help with supply chain communications and manage purchasing more efficiently with price comparison, internal team comms, recipe and menu planning and allergens management for catering and also makes the purchasing of many other school items more fluid. eProcurement trading platforms help by ensuring that budget holders are more mindful of spend by delivering greater transparency across multiple departments, the live data of which can be used as a point of reference for discussion in the future. Using technology to take control of inventory management and ensure that any purchases made link directly with the finance system equally removes the labour drain on staff resources and reduces the risk of errors in the future. The clock is undoubtedly ticking on outdated systems and schools have no time to waste in ensuring they operate as effectively as possible now and into the future.

Ollie Brand is COO at eProcurement trading platform, Zupa ([www.zupa.com](http://www.zupa.com))



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# Nurturing responsible digital citizens

Learning experiences are designed to support and encourage independence, inspire critical thinking and support collaboration, and it is important that schools use technology with this in mind, writes Christopher Roche, Director of ICT at Windlesham House School, Sussex.

As digital educators, our vision should aim to provide pupils with the necessary aptitude to develop into skilful users of technology, with the ability to make safe, informed choices online, as part of daily life. It is essential to implement a framework which aims to integrate technology so that it is seen as an integral tool, which supports curriculum learning by enhancing and transforming learning and teaching experiences. These tools support learning beyond the classroom by providing opportunities to learn anytime anywhere.

We are nurturing responsible digital citizens and so our young learners need to be equipped with the skills to make use of technology to create, curate and collaborate. As such, a focus should be placed on developing digital literacy, and information technology through a robust computing curriculum that uses technological integration to allow pupils to collaborate in the learning process, use multiple tools and approaches, provide authentic experiences and enhance and transform what already occurs in the classroom.

## Developing self-regulation

Encouraging positive behaviours around the use of technology has perhaps never been more important for schools. Increased screen time has certainly had an impact on many aspects of our pupil's lives, leading in some cases, to implications on their mental health and wellbeing. Research has shown how increased screen time is associated with lower levels of life satisfaction and optimism, and higher levels of anxiety and depressive symptoms. The way that we teach children to

use the technology from an early age is hugely important as they continue to navigate our digital world.

As well as putting systems in place to develop pupil understanding and self-regulation of their use of technology, schools need to recognise that to do this holistically they need support from parents too. Since pupils are exposed to technology and the online world at school and at home, we must work more closely to bridge that gap. In order to create a truly embedded programme, schools need to work with parents to help educate them about the potential mental health impacts of excessive technology use and offer guidance around the use of such technologies. In essence this is about encouraging greater awareness of children's digital lives.

Parents and educators can then work together to offer joined up support and advice to children and adolescents from an informed perspective. Through a series of online and face to face meetings or workshops, schools can cover topics to help families develop healthy behaviours to support children while helping young people to navigate the many challenges they face in the expanding digital world. This includes the blended online and face to face learning environment that is developing as lockdowns end.

## Healthy decisions

As a key part of promoting more healthy technology use, schools can develop a 'Digital Wellbeing Guide' to support families at home and help students become responsible digital citizens who are able to progress in their educational careers and

make more healthy decisions when it comes to how they use technology.

Educators value the impact that learning technologies can have on educational outcomes especially when integrated effectively into lessons. When using a device in class, it is seen as a learning tool and thus will only be used in a lesson if it adds value to learning. Use of technology in the classroom also ensures that screen time is active and that students are creating rather than consuming technology. For many schools, there are strict guidelines around when and where devices are used, and this is often after students complete their school day. Having restrictions on device use helps to educate the children about maintaining a good balance in their lives and provides opportunities to enjoy being outside or developing skills in other areas without being tied to a screen.

Like many other schools, our daily routines are very clear for pupils, and we aim to help to develop positive habits with the use of technology. Our Technology Rules of the Road are set out to develop a positive use of digital tools. We also find that providing regular sessions on Digital Citizenship via in-house sessions or through visiting speakers is really useful. Schools like ours also appoint Digital Leaders – pupils who are responsible for developing a code of conduct which focuses on positive behaviours. Allowing children to take control of what constitutes positive behaviour can be empowering too.

## Enhancing teaching with digital vision

It is important that all staff fully embrace the school's vision for



technology and enhance their teaching with digital tools. Through a commitment to professional development, our teachers have been able to learn how different applications are used in educational contexts and apply this knowledge in innovative and effective ways in the classroom. Staff see this development as continuous and regularly share internally and externally how they are using tools in their lessons.

Windlesham recently became an Apple Distinguished School. There are currently only 535 Apple Distinguished Schools in 32 countries. They are described as centres of leadership and educational excellence that demonstrate a vision of exemplary learning using Apple technology. Educators in recognised schools cultivate environments that use Apple products to connect students to the world, fuel creativity, deepen collaboration, and make learning personal.

Schools have a responsibility to prepare pupils for a future dominated by technology. It is our responsibility to provide those in our care with a lifelong love for learning and an innovator's mindset. The future will be one where creativity, digital literacy and a varied range of thinking skills will become the norm. Schools must embrace these attributes if they are to allow children to become future leaders who are able to contribute positively and responsibly to the global society.

Discount offer for independent schools

# Taking air-quality seriously

As the government rolls out basic Carbon Dioxide monitors to state schools, some heads have decided to take a more comprehensive approach and installed devices which do not simply rely on someone noticing a red light warning and opening a window, but actively improve air quality in the classroom and log an alert if it breaches acceptable air quality standards.

Among those schools benefiting from high-grade installations is London's Hurlingham Prep & Nursery, where head Simon Gould of the Prep School chose Aura Air units for all its classrooms and work spaces (48 units in total). In doing so Hurlingham Prep became what was believed to be the first UK school to be able to track air quality over a rolling twelve-month basis at the same time as purifying the air that staff and pupils breathe at school.

Key drivers behind the selection of Aura Air were the needs to improve overall air quality in a city location, to reduce viral infections,

to maintain a comprehensive record of air quality (not just CO2) and to provide an alert if standards fell – all requiring little or no ongoing staff input.

Aura Air units are unique in that purification is achieved by its patented RAY filter and by its integrated bipolar ioniser and hidden UV technology. In schools where air conditioning is in use, Aura Air units can be placed near the outlets to help reduce potential issues caused by a closed loop a/c system.

Aura Air director Paul Kasler said: "We received an order earlier this month (November) for 62 units from a school in Sussex after just one site visit & consultation. As winter comes we expect to see a substantial increase in Aura Air purchases, as schools seek to protect themselves further. A key strength of Aura Air is the ability to easily locate the unit close to the teacher, to help maximise their protection, as opposed to deploying a large and much more expensive floor standing unit located in the distant corner of each room.

"We are running a flagship "all in one – air quality campaign" seeking 20 Independent schools to help us prove the capabilities of Aura Air around the UK. They will each receive a special discount of 20% for an initial 10 units to trial. So £440+VAT per unit (£550+VAT RRP) which includes the Dashboard Monitoring & Alert software, allowing them to monitor hundreds of classrooms in real-time and also instantly log alerts if any critical air quality conditions are breached".



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# Latin in support of the wider school curriculum

In 2018, the Education Endowment Foundation published a report which promoted seven key ways to deepen literacy in Secondary Schools. Central to this report is the idea that literacy should not be seen as something which only English teachers do: instead, teachers across all disciplines need to invest in upskilling their students in an accurate understanding and use of the language needed for their subjects.

When it comes to Latin and the teaching of Latin, two really important ideas arise from the EEF's research. The first, is that the report highlights how useful it is for students to understand the root of a word as a way to deepen understanding of its meaning: the EEF highlight, for example, that students will benefit from understanding the link between the words triangle and triple. It's a familiar truth that Latin vocabulary helps with English, and many Classicists have argued that Latin belongs on the school curriculum

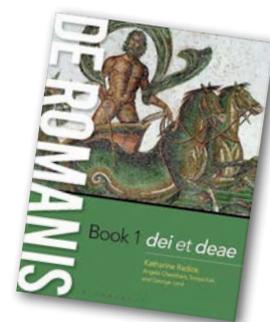
precisely because of this. An interest in the roots of words and the ability to decode complicated English words is no small benefit, but Latin's capacity to unlock other subjects is much wider than this. Classical culture lies at the root of much of our Western world: our political systems, many genres of literature, philosophical concepts, aesthetics in art and architecture, rhetoric, warfare – the list goes on and on.

The second idea is that it is very difficult for students to progress in any subject if they do not have the language to discuss it. Towards the end of the 20th century, Latin teaching was very influenced by the idea that the language of grammar was a barrier to understanding, and the less said about it the better. The EEF's report highlights that the reverse is true: the labels of grammar give students the tools to think about a language and discuss what it does. This builds a much deeper (and more interesting) understanding than students

achieve by translating Latin into English without reflecting on its grammar first. Importantly, this understanding then transfers to a deeper understanding of English and Modern Languages too.

## Introduce Latin to beginners with *de Romanis*

As a course, *de Romanis*, grips both these ideas head on. From the very first page, it aims to give students an understanding of Latin and Roman culture in its role as one of the roots of our language and our culture. Derivation tasks promote an engagement with decoding English words; the culture and context materials help students track how later societies have related to Roman culture. It also aims to help students build an understanding of the structure of



language through a direct grip on grammatical principles.

Does it work? Teachers who use the course are the best judges of this, but in our own experience we have found that lessons based on *de Romanis* materials facilitate lessons which are interesting, vibrant and – most importantly – help students upskill in areas which reach far wider than the Latin classroom alone.

Katharine Radice is co-author of Bloomsbury's new KS3 Latin course, *de Romanis*.

Find out more at [www.bloomsbury.com/deromanis](http://www.bloomsbury.com/deromanis)

Interested in getting started with *de Romanis*? Watch the teacher webinars on the *de Romanis* companion website: [www.bloomsburyonlineresources.com/de-romanis](http://www.bloomsburyonlineresources.com/de-romanis)

## Remembrance Day single

Pupils from Bedford School have featured alongside the world-famous Chelsea Pensioners on a Remembrance Day single.

Bedford School pupil and BBC Young Chorister of the Year, Alexander Olleson (pictured right), features on the track, "White Doves of Peace", alongside fellow school Chapel Choir members and songwriter Jamie Lonsdale.

The choir joined the famous scarlet army of veterans to promote a message of peace and a fairer world in honour of Remembrance Day.

The song and accompanying video provide a poignant juxtaposition of the heroes of yesterday in the

Chelsea Pensioners and the heroes of tomorrow in the Bedford school boys, alongside former serviceman Jamie.

Alexander said: "It was a true privilege to feature on the single alongside the brilliant Chelsea Pensioners, military brass band and orchestra. It is so important we continue to honour the heroes who gave their lives for our freedom, and I hope the White Doves of Peace serves as a fitting tribute to them all."

The song also features a reference to the late Captain Sir Tom Moore, who captured the hearts of the nation after he raised more than £38million for the NHS in 2020.

The school has close ties to the fundraising war hero, whose grandson, Benjie Ingram-Moore currently attends the school's sixth form.

Captain Tom's 100th birthday was marked by the school, which received and displayed thousands of birthday cards which were sent to him from around the world.

Boys from the Chapel Choir recorded their part at the school's Grade-II listed chapel with producer Robert Emery, while a full symphony orchestra and a military brass band were recorded at London's Abbey Road Studios.

Jamie, a former Royal Navy serviceman, has strong family ties with the armed forces, being a descendant of the Duke of Wellington and Lord Raglan.

He said he was "very impressed" by the choir's vocal ability.

Jamie added: "I hope that this global anthem will encourage each of us to reach out for our better selves and a more harmonious world, to live in peace, and to realise the dream of those who



gave their lives for a better world.

"We will not forget."

Mr Keith Roberts, Head of Choral Music at Bedford School, added: "It was a great privilege for our choristers to be involved in this project, to work (albeit remotely) with the Chelsea Pensioners and to have an orchestral backing track. They were a credit to the Chapel Choir and school and should be very proud of their singing and their professional behaviour."

This is not the first time the school's Chapel Choir has been involved in armistice commemorations, having also sung at the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall in 2015.

The single is available to download on all major music platforms.



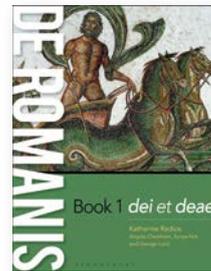
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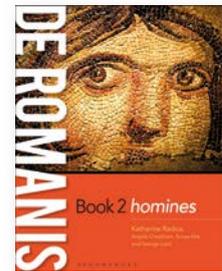
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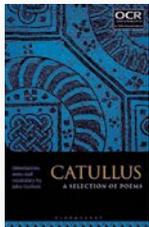


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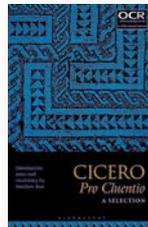


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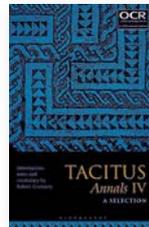
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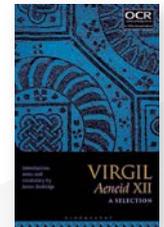
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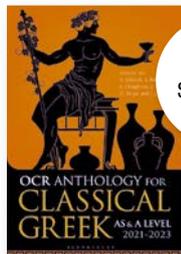


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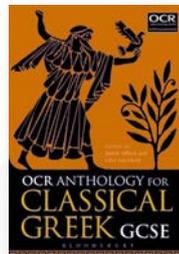
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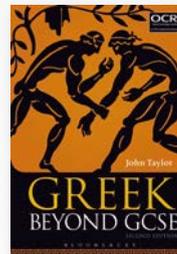


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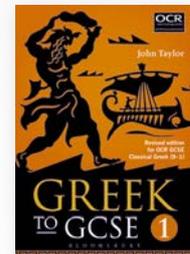
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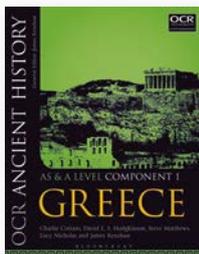


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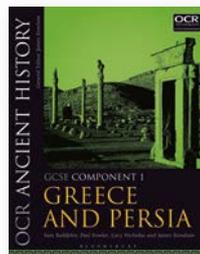


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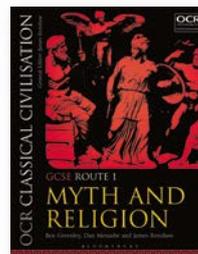
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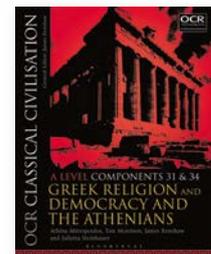
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## Taking drama to the airwaves

Restrictions on performing arts events haven't halted work within St Mary's School, Cambridgeshire, Drama department, where students have adapted their skills and taken to the airwaves as a way of keeping connected and creative.

The team has unveiled a radio play called *Bookcase*, after setting up a new recording studio in order to create a socially distanced audio play. Students embraced the

challenge of moving a production 'on air' – relying solely on their vocal skills to bring characters to life. Together the girls learnt new dramatic techniques – experimenting with developing characters through the use of different accents, pitch, diction, modulation and clarity.

*Bookcase* was written by Rob John, who has scripted more than twenty plays for the stage,

as well as a number of successful plays for BBC Radio 4. He also writes original dramatisations and story adaptations for BBC Schools Education. The play was first performed back in 1996 by The Far East Theatre Company – with Esther Roberts, now St Mary's Head of Drama, starring as Eleanor, the main character.

Commenting, Esther said: "I remember feeling really excited to be originally involved in this production back in 1996. Rob directed the play and was still writing the script as we began rehearsals. As cast members, we were eager to read the next scene and it was thrilling to discover how it would all end. The play immediately sprung to mind for me when we were trying to decide which play to perform as a radio production. The girls all had enormous fun developing the wide range of characters and we are delighted with the outcome."

St Mary's School Speech and Drama teacher, Kate Weber, said: "All of the students brought such energy to this project and hugely enjoyed experiencing a new dramatic and

creative process. It has been a collaborative effort and one which staff and students alike have fully embraced. Changing rules, regulations and guidance have forced us all to think outside of the box and work differently over the past year. This project proves that this can be a good thing – encouraging us to embrace new mediums and push the boundaries of what we are used to. A huge well done to the team. It was such a delight to be able to perform again and we will most certainly be filling the airwaves with more performances this year!"

*Bookcase* tells the story of Eleanor, a teenage girl who is beginning to withdraw from the outside world; things at home with her Stepdad, Dennis, are strained and her own father seems to have disappeared. She stops going to school and instead finds escapism in fiction books. She'll read anything from detective stories to love stories – anything to distract her. But when fiction merges with real life and the characters from the books begin to interact with her in her own room, things get complicated, confusing and most worryingly, dangerous...



The audio play is available to listen to here: <https://www.buzzsprout.com/1856963/9226268>

## First girl choristers return

More than eighty former girl choristers returned to Salisbury Cathedral School, Wiltshire, last month (October) to take part in a special Gala Concert marking the 30th Anniversary of the founding of Salisbury Cathedral's girls' Choir.

They gathered in school, between rehearsals and the concert at the Cathedral, where they enjoyed a 'back to school' lunch as well as high tea and a celebratory supper after the concert.

The impressive group of alumnae included many members of the original choir as well as former choristers from all cohorts between then and now. Former Head Masters and teachers also attended to see familiar faces and enjoy hearing all the girl choristers – former and current – sing together in the beauty of the Cathedral.

The Gala concert took place three decades, almost to the day, after the girls' choir sang their first Evensong. It was an extraordinary moment not just in the history of the Cathedral but also in cathedral music. At the time there were some girls singing in other cathedrals, but Salisbury was the first English Cathedral to admit girls on parity with the boys and to establish an independent foundation to support girl singers. Today, the weekly services are divided equally between the Cathedral's boys' and girls' choirs.

The gala concert featured music by Purcell, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Britten, Vivaldi and Stanford, with solos sung by award-winning former choristers Amy Carson and Camilla Harris. The highlight of the evening was a specially commissioned piece by

the composer Roxanna Panufnik, who created a new choral work based on George Herbert's poem 'The Pearl' which was sung by the whole girls' choir comprised of both former and current choristers.

Speaking about the anniversary and concert, Salisbury Cathedral Director of Music, David Halls said: "The success of our girl chorister tradition has been replicated in cathedrals throughout the country and is something of which we are rightly proud. For thirty years the girls' choir has been an integral part of our worship, and a wonderful training ground for young musicians. This concert celebrates that legacy and reflects the long tradition of music at Salisbury Cathedral, a tradition that stretches back nearly a thousand years."



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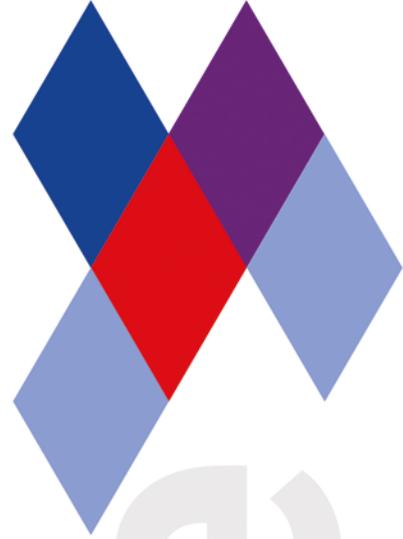
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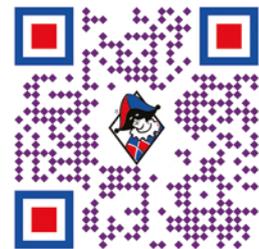
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Pupils, parents and staff benefit from new 24/7 community radio station

# School goes ‘on air’

Bryanston School, Dorset has launched a new internet-based radio station for pupils, staff and parents. BRYRADIO is the culmination of 6 months of work by pupils and staff to develop a dedicated and comprehensive radio station that provides a blend of entertainment, news, chat, podcasts and live music. Sponsored by the Bryanston Parents' Association, the station broadcasts 24/7 from a state-of-the-art and highly automated studio and is not only available on iPads, laptops and phones and in communal areas around the campus but is also readily accessible anywhere in the world.

Chris Mills, Bryanston's Head of Design and Technology, has overseen the development of BRYRADIO. "The national lockdowns have highlighted the value of effective engagement, interaction and communication for any school community and our new radio station has added an exciting new platform for everyone involved with Bryanston," he said. "The enthusiasm of the pupils for the new radio station has been tremendous and is providing them with a host of new skills, experiences and opportunities. It is also giving a new dimension for parental engagement, as all parents wherever they are around the globe can now always stay fully up to date with all activities at the school – from sports fixtures to live performances and all forms of extracurricular activities."

BRYRADIO is run by a team of pupils across all age groups and is available through a downloadable App, through a smart speaker or from its own dedicated website.

The App also enables listeners to send messages and interact with the studio. The station broadcasts a wide range of music selected by pupils and staff, and the programme schedule includes 6 live shows on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays featuring music, news and gossip.

The weekend shows include live commentaries and reports on important sports matches and a round-up of all sports, concerts, plays and events, and a special Sunday Show looks forward to the week ahead. The pupils have created a large selection of BRYRADIO jingles that are played throughout the day. Pupil-led podcasts featuring discussions and interviews are also broadcast every fortnight.

All new pupils at the school are provided with a taster session in the studio. Those who are keen to become more actively involved are then encouraged and trained to enable them to join the BRYRADIO production team.



Pictured: Pupils, Lola Gupta (left) and Nathalia Johnson, 'on air' in the state-of-the-art BRYRADIO studio at Bryanston School

# Massive Messiah

'Warwick – A Singing Town' – the unique, philanthropically-funded project that promotes singing as part of the artistic and cultural post-pandemic renewal of Warwick in partnership with Warwick Independent Schools Foundation, welcomed over 50 enthusiastic

singers to a workshop rehearsal and performance of excerpts from Handel's Messiah in Warwick Hall.

Accompanied by an orchestra made up of professional players and gifted students, the event was conducted by Choral Entrepreneur, Mariana Rosas.



www.warwicksingingtown.co.uk

Mariana, who is from Argentina and recently completed the postgraduate Choral conducting course at the University of Birmingham was thrilled by the response of the singers and musicians and said:

'It just shows how important singing is to a community and how much we have missed being able to sing together for the last 18 months. I felt very proud to conduct this lovely group of musicians and was so pleased to be part of a project that can bring people together in such a warm and positive way.'

The aim of 'Warwick – A Singing Town' is for singing to be better understood, promoted and available to residents through free, high-quality singing and choral opportunities in schools, bespoke partnerships with groups who

may benefit from the therapeutic rewards of singing, and sharing information about local singing and choral opportunities for all Warwick residents.

Singing has been shown to stimulate multiple areas in the brain such as the motor, visual and auditory cortexes, supporting learning, development memory and emotional regulation. Jeremy Dibb, Research & Delivery lead for 'Warwick- a Singing Town' explained, 'Recent neuroscience research shows that music and musical activity help release the 'feel-good' chemicals, serotonin and dopamine. Singing is an activity that enhances both physical and mental health – a very recent and relevant example is the use of singing techniques to support patients suffering with long-term breathing issues from long COVID.'

## Saving Money and reducing carbon emissions

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Please have a look at [www.powerfulallies.com/clients](http://www.powerfulallies.com/clients) and then either call 01380 860196 or email me, [jamesrobson@powerfulallies.com](mailto:jamesrobson@powerfulallies.com).

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

*James Robson*

James Robson, Chairman



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

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

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



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

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

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

### APPROVED BY





# Profile

In conversation with Rhiannon Wilkinson

**Born:** 1962 Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire to a Welsh mother and Lancastrian father

**Married:** to Donald, three children between us. Rachael, 38, William 28 and Edward 23

**Schools and University Attended:** Fairfield High School for Girls, Droylsden; Oxford University, St Hugh's College; Bath University; Manchester University

**First job:** Teacher of History at King Edward VI Community College, Totnes, Devon 1983 to 1987

**First management job:** Co-ordinator of Humanities at Bramhall High School 1987 to 1991

**Appointed to current job:** Appointed as Head of Ashville College September 2021

**Favourite genre of music:** I like all sorts of music but if pushed my favourite is Country music

**Favourite food:** Italian although naturally I like Asian food

**Favourite drink:** Singapore Sling in Raffles!

**Favourite holiday destination:** Favourite holiday destination prior pandemic is the US. Currently Scotland

**Favourite leisure pastime:** Favourite leisure pastime is walking our dogs

**Favourite TV or radio programme/series:** Favourite TV series is Poldark, the original series from the 1970s!

**Suggested epitaph:** I will leave it to my husband and family to decide

**Q** Your career has taken you to many corners of the globe, but now you are back in Yorkshire where you were head of Harrogate Ladies' College between 2009 and 2013. How does it feel to be back in 'God's Own County'?

**A** *I have been privileged to have had such an interesting career with exciting teaching and leadership roles in the UK, Hong Kong, Brunei and China. However, the downside of an itinerant career is the lack of a sense of belonging. Although a Lancastrian by birth, I fell in love with North Yorkshire when I was Head of Harrogate Ladies' College and when I was appointed Headmistress of Wycombe Abbey, we bought property to maintain our links with the Harrogate district. After 30 years living in school accommodation, we are now thoroughly enjoying the pleasure of finally living in our own house in a small village between York and Harrogate. Our area of the world is truly special with wonderful countryside, interesting towns, excellent pubs and plenty of history. Although on the 'other' side of the Pennines, this is finally home.*

**Q** At Ashville, you have taken over the reins from Richard Marshall who died a year or so ago aged 48. It's never easy assuming a headship in any circumstance, but the sadness of his passing, much felt across the school, must have had an impact on how you have handled the job in your first term. What has been your approach?

**A** *I have been conscious of the tragic reason why the Headship of Ashville had arisen, from the first moment I first visited the school. The last two years have been challenging for all schools, but Ashville has suffered a double blow with the death of Richard Marshall in post. There is no doubt that the community has been bruised and it has been important to acknowledge his tenure and legacy. A Memorial Service was held at the end of the summer term and pupils organised a sponsored Basketball event to acknowledge his love and personal success in this sport. I am committed to seeing Basketball continue to flourish at Ashville in Richard's memory. As everyone will know, dealing with untimely death in schools is a particular challenge. My approach has been to openly acknowledge how groups within the community must feel and to give individuals the opportunity to reflect and talk about how*

*they have been affected. At the same time, I am aware that Ashville wants to move on and plan for brighter times.*

**Q** Apart from your recent time in China, you have also worked in Brunei and Hong Kong. What kept drawing you back to those far off shores? Would you recommend time abroad to an ambitious teacher currently in middle management here? And what particular qualities would you advise as essential?

**A** *I have always been fascinated by South-East Asia and Chinese history and culture. As a child my father, who was an Art teacher, used to take me to Chinatown in Manchester and Liverpool. He introduced me to the richness of Chinese art in museums and antique fairs. My favourite book was 'The Good Earth' by Pearl Buck. When as a young History teacher the state school I was teaching in was to lose its sixth form as a county-wide decision to create Sixth Form Colleges, I joined the ESF in Hong Kong in 1991. Although a very different place to live and work, I never questioned that it wasn't the right thing to do. Indeed, I learned more working for the ESF than at any other time in my career. I held the posts of Head of History and Head of Sixth Form at Sha Tin College. Working with pupils and colleagues from all over the world in a vibrant, international city made me appreciate the importance of global understanding and capabilities. Even though I had grown up in Manchester and been to university in Oxford, I realised how limited my outlook and ambitions were. My experience in Hong Kong inspired what I call a sense of 'creative dissatisfaction'; a desire to question 'the way we do things around here' and to consider how things in schools can always be improved to reflect the constantly changing times we live in. Brunei was a very different place to live, but the opportunity to work at such a fabulous school as Jerudong. International School at the beginning of its existence was an equally stimulating and rewarding time. My husband was appointed as CEO of JIS and I was one of the Deputy Heads in the Secondary School. The staff and pupils came from over 40 nationalities and there was a 30% turnover of population each year. Every day was a learning opportunity! My time in Shenzhen was cut short by the impact of Covid-19 but being involved in a start-up venture in China was an equally fascinating experience. When*

Rhiannon Wilkinson has been Head of Ashville College, Yorkshire, since September. She was previously head of Wycombe Abbey School in Buckinghamshire before moving to China as Founding Head of the Whittle School in Shenzhen.



*asked about working overseas during the last 30 years, I have always acknowledged my positive experiences alongside a caveat of using an international posting to develop greater awareness of teaching and learning and the benefits of a holistic educational experience. Although they have transient populations, international schools are tight-knit communities reflecting the fact that the majority of pupils, staff and parents have no wider family or friends around them. All schools can learn from how they accommodate that fact.*

**Q** During your time at Wycombe Abbey you placed considerable emphasis on pastoral care and well-being, alongside the school's well-known academic excellence. Looking back, what initiatives do you feel worked best, and which could usefully transfer to other schools?

**A** *I thoroughly enjoyed my 6 years as Headmistress of Wycombe Abbey and was proud to leave after a highly successful period of culture change and capital improvements to enhance the full boarding experience of the pupils. However, our greatest achievement in my time there was our commitment to fostering a culture of 'oneness and joy' as well as promoting a love of learning for its own sake, not just a myopic focus on attaining excellent academic results. We also set up an initiative "Flourishing@Wycombe" which encouraged the girls to appreciate that life does not always run smoothly and that a certain amount of stress is inevitable. The important thing is to learn how to manage it and put it into perspective. Our aim was to be proactive in managing one's mental health rather than reactive. Now more than ever, I believe that all schools would benefit from such an approach to their pupils' lives. Too much of pastoral care seems to have become an end in itself, a matter of patching things up after problems have taken hold. This often leads to treating lots of people as victims and the realisation of self-fulfilling prophecies. Pupils need support and encouragement to take responsibility for their own lives.*

**Q** Early in your career you taught History, and you now collect antiques as a hobby. What is your favourite period in English history, and why?

**A** *I enjoy all periods of British History but if I have to choose a favourite period then it would be the nineteenth century. When I was at university I specialised in Russian and French History in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and was fortunate to have taught them both at A level and IB. Nowadays I am fascinated with the recent history of China and America as well as their current political situations.*

**Q** Ashville was the first school to be founded by the United Methodist Free Church and has a heritage that dates back to 1875, when the Church Assembly agreed to establish a college that promoted a 'sound and advanced' education. Today, the College seeks to maintain Christian values of openness, respect for others and a sense of social responsibility. How do you achieve this in an era of shouty social media which so often promotes a self-centred culture?

**A** *All academic institutions ought to promote openness, respect for others and a sense of social responsibility. Sadly, it does seem that this does not always happen, particularly within some universities. Schools are rather different places. They are generally much smaller and more intimate in the sense that social interactions amongst the whole community are more frequent. Certainly, in a school like Ashville this is the case. I have always believed that most values are, as it were, caught and not taught. It is essential that teachers live their values and model the behaviour we expect from our pupils. It starts, I suppose, at the top. The Head must epitomise what the school claims to represent. I try hard to ensure that this is the case. More widely, through assemblies, through the interactions senior staff have with colleagues and pupils, through the experience of the lessons we teach in class, schools create their cultures. We also try to educate pupils about both the strengths and weaknesses of social media.*

**Q** Ashville has offered BTec qualifications alongside A-levels in the Sixth Form. There has been a debate about the future of BTecs and the introduction of Tlevels. What is your view?

**A** *Ashville has offered a limited number of BTEC courses for several years. As elsewhere, they have been a valuable expansion of the opportunities we can offer our pupils. Their benefits have been well proven and, although they offer a different style of learning, they are relatively easy to manage alongside a more traditional sixth form curriculum. I cannot see why they should be discontinued. T-levels, with their requirement of extended work placements, do not fit in so well with most schools' post-16 structures. If they were to replace BTECs, they would diminish the strengths of many sixth forms.*

**Q** While you were bringing up a young family you studied part-time for an MEd at Manchester University. What element of your course did you find particularly useful in your subsequent career?

**A** *My MEd at Manchester University was a very valuable experience. The course was taught by a variety of very able teachers whose range of experience was an education in itself. My fellow students, who came from many different parts of the world, provided lots of new ideas and fresh perspectives. The most significant element of it was the way in which it made explicit the importance of culture within a school. Looking back, I had always sensed that schools had distinctive cultures, but I suppose I saw them as something you just accepted was there. However, having completed the course I appreciated that it was an aspect of a school that a leadership team could work to create as we did to great effect in Brunei. It is not always a straightforward process, but provided its aspirations are shared by the Governing Body, culture creation is a vital aspect of regenerating a school.*

**Q** Unemployment amongst the 18-24 age group is spiralling up. The old mantra of 'you can be whatever you want to be' now has a discouragingly hollow, dated ring to it, and careers advice is having to change. How are you helping your sixth formers navigate towards their post-school options?

*Continued >*

# Profile In conversation with Rhiannon Wilkinson (continued)

**A** Life is increasingly complex and challenging for young people. Rates of change are fast and not easily predicted. I am not sure that I have ever accepted the mantra "you can be whatever you want to be". "Wanting" alone has never been enough to achieve anything. Young people need to be made aware of these realities. However, aspects of traditional advice remain pertinent. Intellectual curiosity and learning for its own sake are vitally important when we live in a world where change is inevitable and a need for adaptability is essential. Pupils need to realise that academic success will provide them with access to a wider range of options after school. In other words, your results open doors. But to flourish in "the world out there", you need to be able to offer a range of skills and personal qualities. Careers advice should not be a bolted-on extra. It has to emanate from the school's culture.

**Q** How do you know what really goes on in the classroom? Are you a believer in pupil reviews of staff?

**A** If you are honest, it is difficult to know what goes on in any classroom. I have always believed

that teaching is intensely personal. You establish a relationship with your class(es), and anyone watching that class will alter the dynamic of the relationship. That does not mean that teachers should not be observed. They should, and observations and the discussions they must provoke should improve practice. Schools are collaborative and collegial enterprises. They thrive on exchange of ideas. All teachers should be reflective about their practice and that process of reflection is enhanced by observation and simply talking about the practice of teaching. Scrutinising pupils' books and notes tell you something about what goes on in lessons. Good, old-fashioned work scrutinies have their place. Results have a story to tell too. But I have always found that the best judges of teachers are pupils. You can pick up a lot by tuning into their chat. From my experience too, I have always found pupils' more formal reviews of teachers helpful. Wherever I have used them, they have proved insightful and helpful. They must be couched in terms of enhancing learning and teaching and devised in such a way that they are appropriate for the age-range of the pupils being surveyed. But as the cliché has it, teaching is not about filling empty pots (although some

current "educationists" seem to believe it is). Rather, it is about lighting fires, about inspiring interest and curiosity. Pupils can help teachers know what works for them, but again it is not a one-way process. Learning is about exchange.

**Q** It has been said that one cannot lead until one knows how to serve. Is that your experience?

**A** All teachers are leaders, or ought to be. They lead their classes. However, I am not sure that all teachers are potential leaders of schools or even departments within schools. The range of responsibilities in leading a department is greater than leading a class, and leading a school presents a degree of challenge well beyond that of leading a department. Another cliché presents a point of view: "managers do things right; leaders do right things". As a school leader, it's your head that's on the block – a state of affairs that not everyone desires. Having said that, everyone involved in a school, in whatever capacity, should be there to serve the best interests of the pupils. Leading ought to be the highest form of service.

## Gender In Schools Conference - booking now

Issues of gender, gender expression and sexism have been no doubt at the forefront of the minds of many school leaders and teachers in recent months. King's School, Macclesfield, is to host a conference on March 25th featuring a range of speakers to provide food for thought for you to take back to schools for continuing discussions. Dr Becky Williams, Equality and Diversity Lead at King's introduces the event...

Here at King's School Macclesfield, we are on a journey to try and make our school as welcoming and inclusive as possible for our students, regardless of their sexuality and gender identity. For staff, this has included more training on Equality and Diversity issues, the optional wearing of supportive rainbow lanyards and pins and the creation of an "Equality and Diversity Lead" post (me!).

For students, we have introduced an Equality and Diversity Council and the setting up of a popular LGBT+ group for students. We now have a large selection of LGBT+ books in the library, and we celebrate LGBT+ History Month and School Diversity Week every year, including by flying a rainbow flag above our school entrance.

The recent "Everyone's Invited" website has led to us putting together a programme to survey and educate Sixth Form Students on issues of sexism, including a number of workshops. A group of students from our feminist lunchtime discussion group also held the first annual vigil for women killed as a result of male violence.

We have recently moved into a new school building, bringing the boys' and girls' schools together in a co-educational structure. This has allowed us to make a huge leap forward in terms of providing equality to students, regardless of gender by introducing gender-neutral uniform policies across the Senior and Sixth Form divisions.

We wanted to make the most of our new school facility to put together a conference to discuss these issues with our colleagues in other schools, to share ideas and discuss ways of moving forward. We hope the choice of speakers Catherine Mayer (Co-founder and President of the Women's Equality Party) and Matt Ellison (an inspiring transgender speaker) will provide plenty of discussion and food for thought.

There will also be optional workshops, including Stonewall workshops on Trans-inclusivity and Gender in the Classroom, a workshop on Rethinking Masculinities and a workshop from Brook on delivering an Inclusive Sex Education. There will also be the chance to address questions



to some of the students on our 'Equality and Diversity Council'.

Together, we hope that this will provide a chance for schools and educators to come together and look at ways we can continue to improve the school experience for students of all genders.

To book, please go to: [www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/gender-in-schools-tickets-156220737431](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/gender-in-schools-tickets-156220737431)

# Climate change at the heart of education

The COP26 summit has brought the issue of climate change and the environment into sharp focus. While the challenges are great, action at a school level can make a real difference both environmentally and from an educational perspective.

The work of Surrey-based artist and Cranleigh School art teacher, Mark Weighton, was showcased at the summit. The work, entitled *Burnt Trees*, is a beautiful and stark reminder of climate fragility. It was installed outside the Glasgow Science Centre for the duration of the conference.

The sculpture represents a fire-ravaged forest but also carries a message of hope, both in its pattern and use of colour, and because it is entirely made from recycled materials.

Mark hopes to be able to tour the piece after the conference finishes. For almost 30 years he has been creating artworks that explore the interconnected nature of existence, using his signature intricate patterns on large-scale works.

'Burnt Wood' represents five charred trees rising from a barren block landscape, while integral patches of bright green emerge from the burnt timber indicating all might not yet be completely lost to the climate crisis inferno.

Secretary of State for Education Nadhim Zahawi announced a range of measures designed to 'put climate change at the heart of education' in his speech at COP26.

James Bowen, director of policy for school leaders' union NAHT, said: "Schools are fully committed to playing their part in tackling climate change. There is a huge amount of good work already taking place in schools to reduce their carbon footprint, and we know this generation of pupils are passionate about bringing about meaningful change. Many schools



are already actively teaching pupils about the importance of conserving and protecting our planet through their existing curriculum. It's vital that any work on a new model curriculum is developed in close consultation with the profession and builds on

the excellent work already taking place." This special report focuses on some of the inspirational initiatives taking place at many independent schools, and on the support available to teaching staff...



As part of their continuing commitment to be a more sustainable school, the children at **The Ursuline Preparatory School**, Essex, have recently voted for children from Intermediate (year 1) to Upper 2 (year 6) to become the New Eco Team members.

All the children were delighted to be voted into these roles by their peers and are enthusiastic about their new roles; they are full of good ideas about how we can all work together to look after the planet and ensure that the school is as sustainable as possible.

Each member of the school community was given the opportunity to write a leaf pledge to go on to the Forest of Promises, with such ideas as turning off lights, reducing meat consumption and taking time to go litter picking in a local park.

The Catholic school is accepting the *Laudato Si* invitation set out by Pope Francis and from the Diocese of Brentwood to 'pray and act to cherish God's creation and strive for justice for the world's poorest people'.

Pupils at **Tranby School**, Yorkshire, joined together virtually with thousands of their peers from across United Learning to see themselves in the online premiere of *Green Love! Songs to save the world*.

*Green Love!* is an ambitious music and performing arts project designed to develop pupils' musical talents and encourage them to think more about the environment and how, together, we can protect it. The project culminated in the professional production of a unique thirty-minute film, featuring performances recorded in the 40 schools involved.

Last academic year, pupils at Tranby immersed themselves in the world of music, enjoying in-school rehearsals and virtual, group-wide *Green Love!* assemblies delivered by The Voices Foundation and Beat Goes On. Collectively, they learnt six original songs inspired by sustainability and composed by celebrated musicians Alexander L'Estrange and Joanna Forbes L'Estrange, as well as accompanying body percussion rhythms. Having

The film is available to watch on YouTube here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGXILXxEgSg>

mastered the lyrics and foot-tapping rhythms, pupils recorded their final in-school performance in the Summer Term.

Tranby was one of only four schools to work with one of the composers in person, spending a day with him and a team of professional recording engineers.

Catherine Barker, Head of Music and Performing Arts at United Learning, said: "Congratulations to all our pupils who took part in *Green Love!* Each and every one of them gave a superb performance, which has not only led to the creation of a fantastic film but has, I'm sure, inspired us all to help tackle climate change and lead more sustainable lives".





Revolutionary engineering ideas proposed by secondary school students have been debated in classrooms across the UK as part of Tomorrow's Engineers Week.

Pupils at **Ballard School**, Hampshire, were among those sharing their ideas and their passion for tackling climate change on the national stage.

The pupils heard from inspirational engineers at the forefront of work to address climate change and then joined discussions, hosted by broadcaster Fayon Dixon and former BBC presenter, Susan Bookbinder, that mirrored those being held at COP26.

With each attendee focussing on an area of interest, such as protecting wildlife or motivating young people to be more eco-conscious, they brainstormed ideas and talked about how engineering can reduce the carbon footprint of the UK, and how they themselves can help work towards net zero.

Headmaster Andrew McCleave said: "It has been fantastic to hear about our pupils making their voices heard this week - their passion and commitment to making the world a better place was evident and exciting to witness. For our pupils to have the opportunity to contribute and be heard at important events like this while at school is the first step in becoming the people that will act and shape the future for all of us. It is inspiring to see them stepping up so ably now."

Ballard is very proud of their eco credentials and have launched many eco initiatives, including the introduction of beehives and

chickens, a Terra-Cycle waste recycling system, reusable water bottles to prevent the use of single use plastic.

Proposals discussed during Tomorrow's Engineers Week included ways that engineers can help efforts to improve biodiversity on land and at sea.

The full list of engineering solutions students felt should be urgently developed:

- Continue to invest more in renewable energy sources and expand on them to use in all buildings
- Plant more trees and rewild of areas to increase biodiversity
- Improve insulation, retrofitting to reduce energy consumption in the home
- Ocean fertilisation to improve, for example, use of algae, microorganisms and carbon capture plants such as seaweed.
- Better recycling of plastics and use of biopolymers to create plastics that are less harmful to the environment
- Support the development of smarter building design and construction
- Develop self-sufficient agri-biomes for animal farming to capture methane for it to be converted into energy sources
- Engineering fake meat to encourage veganism and reduce consumption of fast food

TV presenter and campaigner, Chris Packham, headlined the **ACS International School**, Surrey, event 'The world needs...Climate change challengers'.

Taking place in-person and live-streamed globally the occasion highlighted how people can contribute to climate change solutions and, ultimately, help build a more sustainable future.

Mr Packham addressed the audience via live-stream about his experience in conservation and campaigning, providing inspiration to all people who are passionate about conservation issues and injustices.

Chris was followed by a scientist whose day-to-day work is to develop solutions to an area of climate change. They discussed their pathway to their career today, and highlighted the steps young people can take now to become a climate change challenger in their future.



Jeremy Lewis, Head of School, ACS Egham, said: "Every single day climate change poses a new threat to our planet. If we do nothing, it is going to catch up with us much sooner than we think. Today's students are preparing for their lives and careers in this unpredictable future, but what tools do they need to, firstly, be happy and successful and, secondly, contribute to a sustainable future world?"



Rohan Lalli, 17, a student at **Bradford Grammar School (BGS)**, has won a competition with his magazine called Resist, as part of a COP26 event run by Leeds University. The event comprised various webinars about tackling climate change from different perspectives such as legal, business and geographical.

For the competition, Rohan decided to produce a magazine focusing on the indigenous peoples in Indonesia. Articles looked at the workings of a fossil fuel orientated economy, the socio environmental debate surrounding oil palm and the indigenous struggle.

Said Rohan: "I think people are getting the physical components of climate change, like the ice caps melting and CO2 emissions increasing, but there's so much

ambiguity about the human aspect of climate change and how it's going to affect people and how we can protect them.

"Buying sustainable produce, educating ourselves about current climate issues and pressuring TNC's (transnational corporations) to adopt ethical methods of intervention in emerging nations are just some of the ways people can make a difference."

David Alcock, the geography teacher at BGS who encouraged Rohan to enter, said: "Engaging young people in overcoming the climate crisis is crucial and Rohan has not only become passionate about the issue himself, but his magazine will help to raise awareness of the complexity and urgency of this, our planet's greatest challenge."

# New materials help children learn about the impact of climate change on their local area

A new set of free teaching resources has been released by Esri UK in collaboration with the Met Office to help children aged 7-16 learn about climate change and its impact on their local area. By combining the Met Office's climate change expertise and latest projections, with Esri UK's interactive maps and dashboards, the online materials focus on how climate change will impact our daily lives over the next 50 to 100 years.

Esri UK's Education team has created the resources with help from the Met Office Education department to ensure the industry's latest authoritative research and understanding has

been applied. Aimed at geography teachers in key stages 2, 3 and 4, the three different resource packs examine weather, climate and how climate change will affect key areas of everyday life, including transport, agriculture, health and energy. Due to their interactive nature, the resources help make lessons investigative and personalised so students can explore climate change at both national and local levels.

The Met Office's projections from July 2021, UK Climate Projections, have been used in maps and dashboards, which make complex analysis accessible and teachable. Example resources include side-

by-side comparisons of climate now and in the future, making it easier for students to see changes in temperature or rainfall, for example. Other teaching aids examine the chance of future heatwaves, droughts, major floods and wildfires across the UK and help learners explore numerous impacts, including:

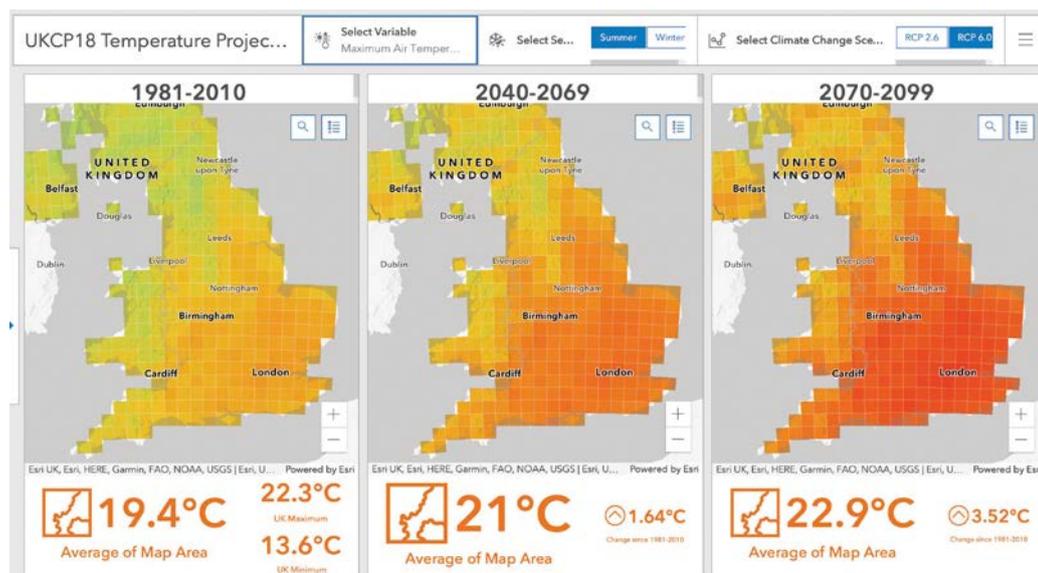
- How many days will trains be disrupted when rail lines are at risk from heat buckling?
- How many days will you need air conditioning in London or even Aberdeen, by the year 2100?
- What is the chance of a significant drought impacting

crops and livestock in the next 50 years?

- How likely are summer flood events that can quickly flood our city streets?

Professor Jason Lowe, head of climate services at the Met Office, commented: "Climate change is happening, and it will increasingly impact the way we live in the UK over the next century. Ensuring teachers have good resources to teach children about the science and impacts of climate change is important as it will help them prepare for, and adapt to, these changes."

Kit Rackley, climate science communicator at the University of East Anglia, former teacher and member of the Geographical Association's community of geography educators, said: "As a science communicator with experience both as a high-school Geography teacher and education officer for climate scientists, I am very impressed with the resources. It's very challenging to communicate rich and robust climate data in a way that is accessible and engaging. The 'story map' approach allows students and teachers to navigate the data and explore it to a degree which allows them to see how climate change is impacting their lives in a multitude of ways."



The new resources are available here as part of Esri UK's free schools programme: <https://teach-with-gis-uk-esriukeducation.hub.arcgis.com/pages/climate>

**Moulsford Prep School** in Oxfordshire has launched a new Sustainability Policy to coincide with COP26.

Moulsford's Sustainability Policy pledges to integrate and address environmental sustainability in eleven key areas: Education, Energy, Water, Waste, Buildings & Grounds, Catering, Sports & Activities, Classroom Equipment, Transport, Events and Community. Each of these areas has been detailed into Aims, Actions and Impact to provide clear focus and measurable targets.

Headmaster Ben Beardmore-Gray commented, "The goal of our Sustainability Policy is to make

living more sustainably an intrinsic part of the school's ethos, so Moulsford becomes an institution where all members of the community are properly educated about this key issue and aware of the part each one of us plays in safeguarding and protecting the future of our planet."

Sustainability also provided the theme for Arts Week. Moulsford pupils have been participating in various events to highlight the importance of the new school policy and the actions that every member of the school – boys, staff, parents and governors – can take to help Moulsford in its aim to become more sustainable.

Kicking off with a whole school

interactive Assembly in which the Sustainability policy details were presented alongside videos and slides to explain the effects of climate change, the boys moved onto workshops run by 'Green Up Your Act', an organisation which takes a creative, hands on approach to environmental education.

In preparation for Arts Week, all boys have contributed to an Art Exhibition with artworks focussing on four ways in which we can live more sustainably: Plant More Trees, Help The Bees, Use the Breeze and Save Our Seas.

Year 5 gave two performances of the play 'One Planet Future', which provided the audience with much food for thought on the subject of

rubbish, landfill, and rewilding.

Two Musical Soirées entertained parents with live music in the school theatre for the first time in nearly two years. The choir's performance of 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle' reinforced the Sustainability message.

Head of DT at Moulsford, Jess Roberts, who is spearheading the Sustainability Project said, "Climate change is a very real threat to our way of life and I would like Moulsford, as a community, to recognise this and do whatever we can do to be part of the solution. Educating ourselves and our boys about such matters is the biggest thing we can do right now."

Pupils, parents and staff from **Ashville College**, Yorkshire, have left the car in the garage as they took part in the Harrogate District Walk to School Day, with pupils and staff collectively exceeding the distance between Harrogate and London.

Walk to School Day is a half-termly event that encourages school communities to combat the effects of climate change by opting for more environmentally-friendly transport habits such as walking or cycling.

Those supporting the event, promoted by Zero Carbon Harrogate, included computing teacher Giles Dumont, who walked all the way from his home in Otley.

He set off at 6.30am and completed his ten-mile journey in two-and-a-quarter-hours, in time to welcome Year 7 pupils to his first lesson; three-quarters of the class had also arrived on foot and covered similar distances from their homes.

To take part in Walk to School Day, participants can walk, cycle, or 'park and stride' (where people drive or take public transport for part of the journey and walk the last part).

Class Teachers and Form Tutors from Acorns to Upper Sixth logged the number of pupils in their form who took part, and the total miles covered per form.

Collectively, 185 pupils, plus several staff, covered 250.9 miles on their walk in on Friday morning – well over the distance between Harrogate and London. (The total figure was correct as of

3pm on Friday, with figures from a few form groups yet to add.)

Brian McHugh, Ashville's Head of Year 10 and the College's Walk to School Day co-ordinator, said: "It has been great to see the positive support from staff and pupils, with individuals walking, cycling and running from nearby towns, in positive and healthy competition with each other.

"All these examples indicate that active transport is possible, when we choose to break our dependency on polluting cars."

Rhiannon Wilkinson, Head of Ashville College, said: "I am delighted that so many pupils, parents and staff have embraced Walk to School Day, and with another five planned during the course of the academic year, there's plenty more opportunities to get involved.

"For some the 'school journey' is simply a habit that can be broken. Days like this show there are alternative ways to get to school, and ones that are healthier and non-polluting.

"As a College, we are very conscious of our impact on the environment, and are always looking at ways of reducing this. Last year for example, we partnered with the Woodland Trust and planted 500 native saplings within our 64-acre campus.

"We are now sourcing 100 per cent of our electricity from renewable sources and we have reduced our water usage by collecting rainfall from the roof of the Sports Centre in a large tank, which is then used to water the cricket pitches."



Whilst global leaders met at COP26, pupils at **Salisbury Cathedral School**, Wiltshire, were planting 2,500 bulbs in a bid to boost biodiversity across the school grounds.

The initiative launched the school's involvement in the Conservation School Award hosted by the environmental charity, Operation Future Hope (OFH). Participation in the Award involves a five-year commitment to boosting biodiversity within the school grounds by creating natural habitats for native wildlife.

Pupils and staff planted a mix of bulbs and plants, which are primarily native to the UK, including bluebells, daffodils, snowdrops, grape hyacinths, primroses, winter aconite, crocus and cyclamen coum. When the flowers bloom, from February to June annually, they will create spring meadows which will be beautiful as well as a plentiful source of nectar for bees and other pollinators.

'Salisbury Cathedral School decided to join the OFH Conservation School Award scheme because it empowers young people with the knowledge, skills and experience to take real action to improve our world,' said Clive Marriott, Head Master 'Teaching children how

to improve biodiversity within their own back yard – or school grounds – not only provides the skills they need to invoke change, it also improves our world right here and now.'

'This spring meadows project will help the children understand the importance of pollination in the cycle of life. It's an essential lesson for the future as the vast majority of plants we need for food rely on pollination to survive,' explains Will Frost, Head of Outdoor Learning at Salisbury Cathedral School. 'Pollinators are vital to creating and maintaining the habitats and ecosystems that many animals rely on for food and shelter. Our new spring meadows will boost biodiversity in our grounds, and the children will be able to watch the changes first hand.'

Operation Future Hope was formed as a not-for-profit organisation in January 2018, with a vision to inform young people about the devastating decline in global wildlife populations and their habitats. The charity's mission is to educate young people about the urgent need for ecological restoration, and to inspire them, and their families, to get involved in the great work of rewilding the Earth by starting in their school grounds.



Pictured: Walk to School Day pic shows pupils plus Head Rhiannon Wilkinson (back left), Teacher Brian McHugh (back centre) and Molly Fetherston from Zero Carbon Harrogate (back right)

# Preparing for expansion

Abercorn School, London, has acquired additional new school premises - its first to accommodate 11-18-year-olds - to meet an oncoming demographic shift in Britain, in which the number of 18 year-olds is expected to grow by 25% over the next decade.

The new building was originally a church, but was most recently the home of Regent's University and formerly the home of the renowned Pineapple Dance Studios. There is ample space for dedicated classrooms with a purpose-built state-of-the-art theatre and access to outdoor space at nearby Paddington Gardens.

Situated in Marylebone the new school building, which is in walking distance of other Abercorn locations, will cater to a new age group beginning at age 11 and growing organically to the age of 18.

Andrea Greystoke, who founded Abercorn in 1987, made history in her earlier career when she became the first ever female teacher at St Paul's Boys School and similarly at King's College School. Born

and raised in New York and San Francisco, she was educated at Harvard University, the University of California, Berkeley and King's College London where she pursued undergraduate and postgraduate studies in Mathematics.

Based on the success of Abercorn, and her knowledge of the US system and the New York market, Andrea Greystoke also opened Abercorn's sister school The British International School of New York in 2006, both of which share common values of a global education.

Commenting on Abercorn's expansion, Andrea Greystoke stated: "This move was originally inspired by the imminent demographic boom in older teenagers over the next decade... which will no doubt impact on availability of school places, and to which parents should be alerted, and advised to register earlier than previously. At the same time, I believe there is merit in giving children a path via which they can progress through the education experience where they can remain most stable, and happy".



## Spy video game part of virtual tour

King Edward's Witley has launched a Spy Academy video game alongside an interactive 360° virtual tour. The game is an innovative way for children to explore the School and earn their Spy Agent status!

Director of Admissions at King Edward's Witley, Justin Benson, said: "Choosing the right secondary school is one of the most important decisions that a family makes and we want to make the process as easy as possible for Mums and Dads, and their sons and daughters, to get to know the School. Our interactive 360° virtual tour provides an

engaging way for the whole family to get a flavour of life at King Edward's from home, in advance of them coming to one of our Open Mornings."

"Our Spy Academy video game allows children to explore the School interactively, solving the puzzles and completing the tasks to become a Spy Agent. It has even proved a hit amongst the parents who came to our recent Year 7 Open Morning."

To access the 360° virtual tour and to play video game, please visit <https://360marketinglab.org.uk/clienttours/kingedwardswitley/>.

# 2022 is coming – but are you ready for a new year?

2020 start of a new decade in a way no one could have imagined.

2021 has not been much fun.

2022 it is time to focus on you.

How has 2021 been for you? Are the resolutions you set yourself a long time ago a distant memory

or have you actioned them? What lessons have you learned?

On 1 January 2022, do you want to start your new year with your old experiences in mind? Every December, it is important to look at a review of your year to reflect on what did and did not happen.

To get you started, you are not going to answer 20 questions, but I want you to take 20 minutes reflection on the year that was, using some of my favourite questions below. Now, it is time to grab a pen and get started...

If you had to describe your 2021 in three words, what would they be?

If someone wrote a book about your life in 2021, what kind of genre would it be? A comedy, love story, drama or something else?

What advice would you give your early 2022 self if you could? How can you use the last month of 2021 to get a great start in 2022?

What was the funniest moment of your year, one that still makes it hard not to burst out laughing when you think about it?



What one thing would you do differently and why?

What do you want to see, discover, explore?

What do you want your everyday life to be like?

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Written by Tracy Shand at Simply Boarding

# Time for a new approach to sports buildings, says Olympian

Former Olympic swimmer Sharron Davies joins with Paragon Structures for a new generation of school sports facilities across the UK.

The Olympian, Sharron Davies, has joined forces with Paragon Structures to bring affordable, accessible and sustainable sports facilities to the UK education sector.

Passionate about health and fitness, the former Olympic swimmer says we need to take a new approach to building sport and activity spaces in schools.

“It’s time to think differently about how we build health and fitness spaces. Great facilities don’t have to take two years to construct and they don’t need to be so expensive. Modern tensioned membrane structures like those from Paragon are both beautiful and fantastic quality. We can significantly reduce the total build programme and they are up to 40 per cent cheaper too. These structures have proved very successful in the US, Canada and Europe, so it’s time we benefited from them here in the UK.”

Using patented technology and following years of extensive research and development, Paragon’s structures meet the needs of all sports, from tennis,

cricket and swimming to netball, basketball and rugby. The buildings meet Sport England standards and feature vast clear-span interiors, generous roof heights and translucent daylight panels that flood the space with natural light to provide a superior playing environment for both training and competitions. The superior insulation ensures a comfortable year-round environment.

Becoming an ambassador and shareholder in Paragon Structures, specialist providers of insulated tensioned membrane buildings, marks a turning point in Sharron’s career. Occupying a unique position in British life, Sharron has been one of the UK’s best known and most popular sportswomen since bursting onto the scene as a 13 year old Olympian in 1976. More than 40 years later she is still a popular television personality, public speaker and sports commentator and has attended 12 Olympic Games. A qualified personal trainer, Sharron is also launching a fitness app in the New Year to help people exercise at home.



Olympian, Sharron Davies



[www.paragonstructures.com](http://www.paragonstructures.com)

“If we’ve learned anything from the pandemic, it’s the importance of being active throughout our lives. Not all children like traditional sports, but by helping them find an activity they enjoy we can develop good habits that will last a lifetime to benefit their mental and physical health. These modern and flexible buildings are the perfect choice for schools looking to upgrade their sports facilities. They can be adapted at any time so schools can provide a range of activities to suit youngsters now and in the future to help them develop a love of physical activity,” she says.

Alan Phillips, Chief Executive Officer of Paragon Structures, says: “We are delighted to be working

with Sharron. You really couldn’t get anyone more passionate and enthusiastic about improving the nation’s health and fitness. Paragon Structures was born out of a desire to have a direct impact on health and physical activity by building affordable, yet state of the art facilities. Sharron shares that vision and with her help we hope to bring the benefits of modern, multi-purpose sport and recreation spaces to more schools across the UK.”



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***“Paragon’s sprung structure solution was unbeatable; we essentially ended up with two new buildings for the price of one.”***

**Neil Chapillon, Head of Estates, Millfield School**

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# Strengthening relationships with school catering supply chains

Changes to buying behaviour can increase a school's catering operation resilience when faced with supply chain challenges.

With the food supply chain facing unprecedented challenges, suppliers have had to change the way they operate, in some cases actively looking to downsize, an unthinkable strategy in normal times, in a sector where scale is often key to survival. Oliver Hall, MD of allmanhall, independent food and catering-related procurement specialist, looks at the key factors driving these changes, and what actions catering operations can take to mitigate the impacts on their own foodservice to ensure their survival.

According to Hall, "In the 15 years since founding allmanhall, liaising with both suppliers and clients on a daily basis, I have never seen a landscape like the one we are currently facing. In fact, it is fair to say that the current pressures on the supply chain in the food sector are unprecedented in a working lifetime. Times have changed in the food and beverage sector. The relationship dynamic between the client and the supplier that we have been used to for years is currently undergoing a significant remoulding."

The turmoil facing suppliers has forced many to do an about-turn on the normal mantra of expansion and growth. Some are not only having to actively decline new customers, but also in some cases trying to reduce their existing customer base. They are being forced to go against one of the universal ambitions of businesses in any sector, growth.

The significant reason for this is the current labour shortages across the whole UK. As well as around 100,000 deficit in HGV

drivers, it is estimated that the food and hospitality sector (including production and the supply chain) is devoid of over 500,000 employees. This ranges from produce pickers and butchers to chefs and waiters, and everything in-between. The result is that each step of the supply chain is impacted by labour shortages, which in-turn translates to food product shortages... and we haven't even mentioned fertiliser, CO2, fuel availability or gas prices yet!

The effects of the driver shortage have already had an impact not only on service levels, but also the availability of product that foodservice suppliers receive from processors and manufacturers. At allmanhall, we are aware that the current in-bound delivery levels to foodservice suppliers is ranging between 70-80%, where they normally sit at 98-100%. This therefore means that up to 30% of stock is not even making it to the wholesalers for delivery out to customers.

This is having a knock-on effect upon all catering and foodservice

operations. But buying behaviour changes can help ensure a catering operation remains a valued customer of foodservice suppliers, at a time when they are looking to reduce in size. It is essential to remain, or become, an attractive customer. Suppliers need customers with buying behaviours that will enable them to operate as efficiently as possible, therefore reducing the costs and time associated with making deliveries. This is known as the 'cost to serve', and by reducing the cost to serve, a school becomes a more attractive customer to suppliers.

There are several ways to do this:

1. Increase average delivery value – where possible consolidate and have higher value orders
2. Reduce average delivery frequency – minimise the number of deliveries received each week
3. Increase the delivery timeframes in which suppliers can make deliveries
4. Order full cases and reduce splits – where possible, order

full cases, as splits increase the picking time and cost of the order to the supplier

5. Place orders day 1 for delivery on day 3, rather than next day – giving suppliers additional lead time aids planning and routing
6. Accept that there will be delivery shortages, try to be as flexible as possible and hold emergency stock to ease pressure points. Being an understanding customer when things do go wrong will help build loyalty.

Perhaps counter intuitively at times like these, the best way of achieving the above is by consolidating orders through fewer suppliers, and not looking for lots of alternative suppliers with the intention of 'spreading the risk' if one is unable to supply. With the root causes of the current supply chain challenges being structural, there is no 'quick-fix'. Unfortunately, things are going to take time to improve. With so much current uncertainty, the only real certainty is a period of higher food inflation and higher supply volatility than we've been used to.

[Read more: allmanhall.co.uk](http://allmanhall.co.uk)

## Helping Feed Families in Crisis

Year Six pupils from The Old School, Suffolk, visited the food distribution warehouse of Soul Foundation in Norwich, to learn about the charity's operation helping to feed families in need in the region. They also spent time, under the direction of Soul Foundation's General Manager, Sam Mooney, packing boxes of food ready for dispatch to the local community. A cheque for £500 was presented to Chantel Norman, joint founder of Soul Foundation, during the visit.

The school had collected food and donations at their Harvest Festival service. Choristers helped pack the food donations into one of the Soul Foundation vans after the service, to take the supplies directly to the charity's warehouse for distribution.

Since the first lockdown Soul Foundation has distributed food providing 2.8 million meals to families in crisis. As well as the referrals they receive from many organisations, Soul Foundation also delivered food parcels to

parents at Clare School (for children with severe disabilities and life-limiting conditions) who were

required to shield during lockdown and therefore unable to get to shops for food.



# Sleep is our superpower

...says Bart Wielenga, head of Blundells' School, Devon.

As a Head, when I interview young pupils who are applying for places at our school, one of my favourite questions is: "If you could have any superpower, what would it be and why?" I have had some wonderful responses, but amongst all the brilliant answers I have yet to have anyone suggest to me that sleep is a superpower. Yet that is exactly how, Matt Walker, neuroscientist and sleep expert, describes sleep.

More research on sleep is emerging and it is enlightening from an educational perspective. Quite a lot of thought has been invested in understanding what time of the day would be optimal for teenagers to learn. Most teenagers will tell you that it is much later than they are currently asked to rise from their slumber. For most of us in the UK, lessons tend to start somewhere between 08:30 and 09:00 and as far as international standards go, that is not that early. For context, in my home country, where the weather is decidedly more agreeable, we had a lesson on a Saturday morning before breakfast, at

06:30am. That was optimistic and I can assure you that no learning happened then!

However, what is absolutely evident is that sleep is fundamental not only to mental and physical health, but also to the efficiency and effectiveness of our ability to learn. Good sleep aids the brain's ability to organise and store information, it promotes problem solving and creativity, and it helps with alertness and our capacity to receive and process new information. Learning does not only happen while we are awake, but an important aspect of the learning process actually happens when we are asleep.

In most independent schools we pride ourselves on the full and broad curriculum on offer and our pupils take full advantage of it. Often the collateral damage of such ambitious programmes is that we are all on our knees by the time the term draws to a close. Often, we wear our exhaustion as a badge of honour, in the same way we would encourage an athlete to leave

nothing on the field by the end of the match. We must change the narrative about tiredness: if sleep is so important to our effectiveness in almost every aspect of our lives, why would we ever want to switch the superpower off?

At school we are introducing several initiatives to improve 'sleep hygiene' and through education we are raising the awareness of pupils about good evening routines. That includes less screen time before bed, calming techniques like breathing



or meditation, amongst other ways in which to send the signals to our brains that we are ready to shutdown for the night and to let the neurological processes of learning, healing and restoration begin.



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# Historic church acquired by college

Bradfield College, Berkshire, has acquired the parish church from the Church Commissioners and will convert the historic grade II listed building into a unique learning centre. A number of important features will remain open to the public and under the responsibility of the local parochial church council.

Neil Burch, Bradfield's Deputy Head (Academic) explains how the College is planning to make this beautiful building, intimately tied to its history, a vibrant space that will once again inspire a new generation of Bradfield pupils.

Sir George Gilbert-Scott's tacit re-design brief for St Andrew's Church, Bradfield, in the late 1840s just prior to the College's existence, will have been to create a space that honoured something that went beyond the material and the physical and that chimed with the institution's beliefs and interpretation of something more existential. Our plans today are premised on a similar responsibility albeit guided by a different mission. So much more than a beautiful, contemporary building design, St Andrew's is a concept.

St Andrew's is squarely a teaching and learning project; a reflection of Bradfield's curriculum and a manifestation of what we see as our responsibility to prepare our pupils to work and study in the 21st century. St Andrew's will have books – over 11,000 books – but will not be a library; it will have spaces that can be booked by teachers but where the teacher will merely be the facilitator not the 'sage on the stage'. It will offer coffee and refreshments but will not be a refectory; it will have a hum of industry and collaboration but also space for silence and independent work. Pen and pad will reign just as much as the ubiquitous, ultra-fast WiFi.

Corporate and commercial practices, in the context of the pandemic of the past two years, have shone the brightest of lights on this project and its importance for the College in terms of the pupils' experience. 'Blended' and 'flexible' are operative words: St Andrew's is not a single environment but a blend of spaces where each supports a different type of individual or group work for over 160 pupils. The 'boardroom' will allow for discussion and debate whilst the 'think tank' offers a tiered seating forum for our pupils to present, whether that be A Level pupils and their work for the Extended Project Qualification or elements of the IB Diploma Programme such as the Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge.

Bradfield's Attitude to Learning curriculum asks its pupils to Think Creatively, Help Yourself, Reflect and Respond, and Review. As is the case in the recent re-designed ground floor of our Blackburn Science Centre and the first floor of our historic Bloods Passage, pupils will use St Andrew's 'Share Space' to work collaboratively, share and iterate ideas, online and offline.

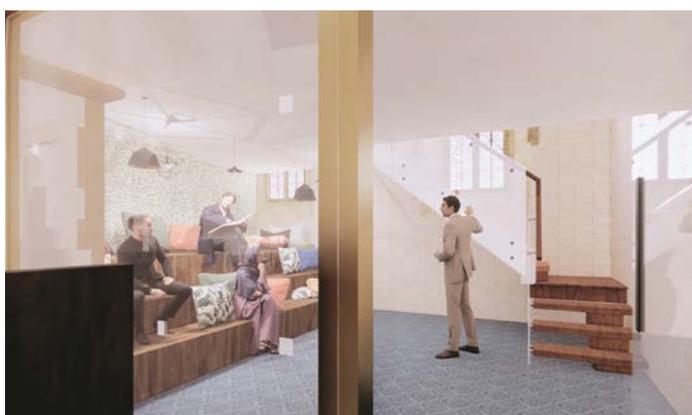
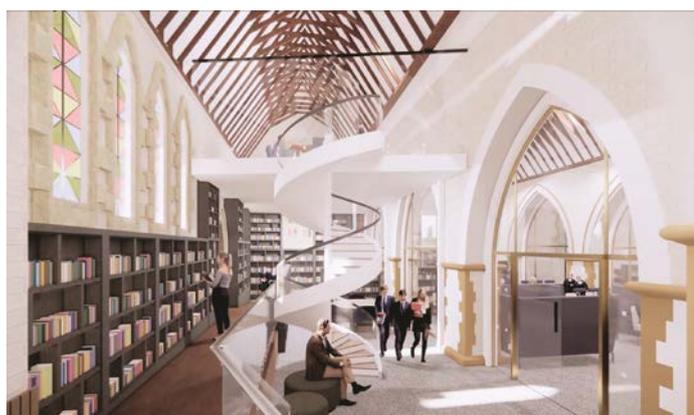
The imposing but sympathetic – aesthetically beautiful – glass walls in the nave mean teaching and learning can be seen all around



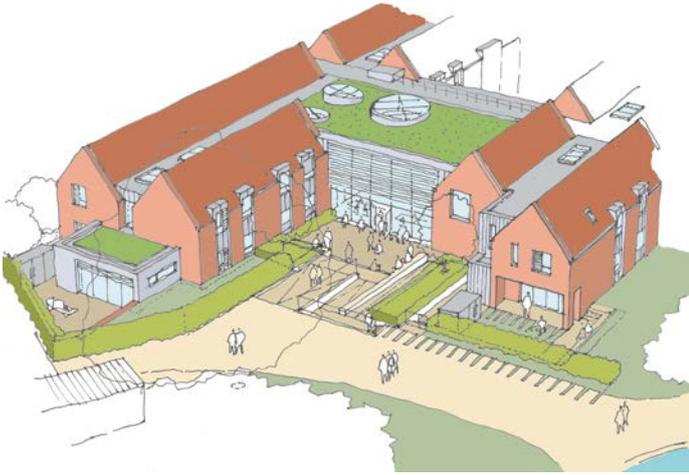
you, the belief being that it is an immersive experience where best practice is role-modelled, particularly between those at the top of the school and younger pupils. Again, this mirrors the design philosophy seen in Bradfield's most recent learning space projects including Science, Geography, English and Religious Studies. Pupils in the quiet reading area will see the busyness of the discussion spaces but also the grind and focus of those working independently in the central space that runs through the core of the building, from nave to sanctuary.

St Andrew's is a concept. The project very intentionally targets

the 'Life of the Mind' strand of Bradfield's Education Strategy. Qualifications as they stand are under intense scrutiny but remain important for all manner of reasons. Bradfield understands, however, that education in its purest goes well beyond A\*s and Grade 9s. Our responsibility is to develop in pupils a love of learning for learning's sake; learning for the sheer enjoyment of the academic pursuit, supported by teachers, inspired by the buildings they study in. St Andrew's is the concept to enhance the way our pupils study and work together, fit for the adult world ahead of them.



# New boarding house



In September 2022, Bede's Senior School, East Sussex, will open a new £8million boys' boarding house. The new building will feature 60 single and double rooms and replaces an existing boarding house which is located separately on the site and which will be re-purposed following the opening of the new facility.

The new building will feature a 170 metre square atrium, with a cinema-style seating area and day boarders' study area as well as breakout spaces and an in-house dining area.

Construction work, which originally began in early 2020 was delayed due to the pandemic but resumed in July 2021. When the new Dorms House opens its doors next September, it will complement the four other boarding houses at Bede's, two of which have been recognised by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors for their Outstanding Design and Innovation.

As a school, Bede's has always drawn inspiration from its location near the South Downs and within the quintessential English village of Upper Dicker. This focus on nature and the environment will inspire

the building's interiors, which will feature wood finishes and floor to ceiling windows providing views of the surrounding lake and woodland.

During the last decade, Bede's has been actively trying to reduce its carbon footprint, having been an early adopter of biomass – a renewable energy source generated from burning wood pellets – and this eco-friendly heat source will also be utilised in the new boarding house.

Headmaster, Peter Goodyer said "We are delighted to see the building work moving forward in leaps and bounds. I know how much the pupils of Dorms House are looking forward to moving into their new house next year and I am sure they will be proud to become the first of many future generations of pupils who will live and study in Dorms House.

It has of course been a challenging period for all schools recently, but demand for boarding, both from British families and those overseas, has never been higher and it is gratifying to see our investment really taking shape now."

# New partnership in Dubai

Blenheim Schools, part of the Chatsworth Schools family, has announced a new partnership to create an educational facility in Dubai.

Working with Education Ventures Company (EVC) a wholly owned subsidiary of Al Zarooni Emirates Investments (ZEI) Blenheim Schools will create a new non-selective and inclusive school, child wellbeing support centre, teacher training and research centre and

facilities for the community. The school will provide a mainstream educational environment for all pupils, including those with an additional educational need.

Anita Gleave, Founder and CEO of Blenheim Schools said: "We are looking forward to working with the ZEI and EVC team to develop a highly successful and resilient education partnership in Dubai that enables outstanding futures".

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# Peer-to-peer support

Involving pupils in providing support for those younger than themselves provides a valuable two-way benefit. Here are two examples of such initiatives in action at Hampshire schools...

## Lending a listening ear

A successful scheme built on kindness, caring and compassion is entering its eighth year at Highfield and Brookham Schools.

The Peer Listeners project has for the best part of a decade offered younger children at the progressive independent school a friendly shoulder to cry on or a kindly listening ear in times of trouble or upset.

The listeners themselves are a dedicated and trained group of pupils from Year 8. The children apply for the scheme at the end of Year 7 and are selected via an interview process involving Zoe Thesiger-Pratt, Head of Personal, Social, Health and Economic, and English teacher Lucy Hendry, with

around ten pupils typically chosen.

Mrs Thesiger-Pratt, who has been involved with the scheme for the past five years, said: "It gives the peer listeners an element of responsibility and they all love helping the younger children. We talk to them about developing their listening skills and how to be an active listener – just be a listening ear when others are feeling overwhelmed. These are great skills to develop."

The peer listeners typically deal with issues such as friendships, homesickness or feeling left out.

"For the younger children, it means they have the comfort of someone to talk to who is more like a big

brother or big sister. It means they can ask for advice without going to a teacher, as sometimes this can seem a bit overwhelming," added Mrs Thesiger-Pratt.

Highfield School Headmaster Phillip Evitt expressed his delight that the peer listeners scheme was still as successful as ever and that the future looked bright.

He said: "We take tremendous pride in our pastoral provision and the care and well-being of every single pupil in our schools, so how wonderful it is to see so many of our oldest children volunteering each year to help younger pupils during what can, for them, be worrying times.



The new cohort of Year 8 peer listeners at Highfield and Brookham Schools

"And it is incredibly heartening and gives me a huge sense of joy and satisfaction to see the continuous stream of kindness, care and compassion which runs through our wonderful school, and I have full confidence that these marvellous young people will continue to make the world a better place."

## Happy Mates Scheme

"An unexpected bonus has been how it has brought staff together"

Stroud School runs a successful 'Mates' scheme which, founded in 2016, provides leadership experience for its Prefects and helps support the Year 3 children with their transition to the prep school. As a school, Stroud tries to bring its community together as much as possible and the introduction of the Mates scheme, now in its sixth year, has provided a structured support network between its youngest and oldest prep school children.

Mrs Suzy Martin, Head of Senior School, describes the scheme:

"One of the challenges the school faces is helping the youngsters feel that the Year 8s are there to help and someone to approach if they're in need, rather than a big, scary ogre to be avoided at all costs! Equally, they want the older children to take time to notice the Middle School children and recognise the huge impact they have on them, often without realising it. Explaining to them that they're setting the example and being noticed, whether they intend to or not, is actually quite eye-opening for a 12 year old. Discussions in year groups before the mates meet is really important

to set the tone: encouraging Year 3s to be open and receptive to their new friends, and helping Year 8 to overcome their own awkwardness and anxieties with 'getting it right', is crucial. Discussions with form tutors about topics of conversation, ways of interacting and how to bring themselves to the other's level (often literally!) is really effective.

"The two groups first meet on transition day and Stroud has found that engaging them in a structured activity really helps to focus the children, and help conversation and interaction to grow organically. The children enjoy a treasure hunt, for which they earn points. Treasures are all in the form of photos, which range from 'get a photo of a Lego person in peril' to 'get a selfie with a teacher' and 'fit your team in the smallest space you can' (pre-Covid obviously!). Points are given for ingenuity, and teams have managed a selfie with the Head, a Lego person suspended above shark-infested custard and the entire team squeezed into a toilet cubicle!

"Having started the programme with Year 8s being paired with two or three children as their mates, Stroud has evolved it into families:



Happy Mates enjoy a trip to Moors Valley Country Park

a small group of Year 3s and 8s. They found this change meant their prefects could provide peer support to each other, and that groups of children could be chosen to bring different skills to the family. These families meet on a regular basis within school to spend time playing together, and the two year groups also have the chance to mix beyond their smaller groups and get to know everyone involved in the programme.

"The mates go on a trip or have a planned event each term, the first of which is a getting-to-know-you opportunity at the local country park. The children spend time in their families enjoying the adventure playgrounds, country walks and obstacle courses. It's always a joy to see the prefects naturally take on a supportive role: holding hands with children as they traverse logs, helping them clamber over banks and enjoying a picnic lunch in the heart of nature. The Spring Term

sees the children go on a trip to a local zoo, and the Summer Term includes a pool and pizza party on-site. By this point, the children happily play games in the pool and it's a real celebration of their year together.

"An unexpected bonus of the scheme has been how it has brought staff together. The scheme unites Middle School and Senior School teachers to plan events, go on trips and work with colleagues they may not usually have the opportunity to spend a lot of time with. Uniting staff across the departments has forged new relationships and encouraged more collaboration.

"The scheme is a real success. The thoughtfulness that develops through caring for others has helped our Year 8s to flourish and grow into leaders who guide by example and consider the needs of others rather than just their own.

# Grand opening of new sixth form centre

The Duke of Westminster opened Francis Holland School, Sloane Square's new Sixth Form Centre, the Old School House, designed as an environment for the transition from school to university.

The Old School House is a 909m<sup>2</sup> neo-gothic building which has undergone a £3.5 million renovation and increased the current school footprint by 15%.

Joining directly to the London school's existing buildings, but with its own dedicated entrance on Ebury Street, it offers the opportunity for 150 Sixth Form girls to collaborate with entrepreneurs in the community and network with those committed to changing the mindset of the next generation.

The Old School House started off as a boys' school back in 1847, but was bombed in World War Two, and so it seems very apt that the building has now reverted to its original purpose of educating young people in their formative years.

Headmistress, Lucy Elphinstone, pictured with the Duke, said: "We are proud of our long-held relationship with Grosvenor and honoured that the Duke of Westminster is following his father who opened two major developments in Francis Holland's recent history. We are also deeply indebted to the generosity of parents and friends who gave freely of their time, talent and treasure to enable this unique project to shine a light in the midst of the pandemic of 2021."

The interior design and atmosphere provided by the Old School House are those of a

creative workspace or modern university building rather than a traditional school. Comfortable seminar rooms replace classrooms; there is a dedicated A Level science laboratory, a well-stocked library with a popular Feminist section, a state-of-the-art fitness suite with the latest Technogym equipment, a spacious beamed common room with an abundance of greenery and discrete study spaces for individual or collaborative working. Sixth Form girls have their own café offering breakfast and delicious snacks throughout the day, including school lunch, and bean to cup coffee is available on every floor.

Sixth Formers enjoy numerous privileges and leadership opportunities as they develop greater independence in preparation for the transition to university or college life. A recently-granted TEDx licence affords girls public speaking



experience while also exploring some of the most ground-breaking and topical ideas in today's world. Alongside this, the flagship Sixth Form Innovation Sprints offers a series of workshops with Link Entrepreneurs where pupils learn to start businesses alongside their studies. A mentoring programme provides real-life business learning with an emphasis on giving back, in keeping with the school's belief in the importance of social responsibility.



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# In Remembrance

The **Royal Hospital School**, Suffolk, commemorated Remembrance Day this year with their biggest art project to date.

Pupils at RHS created 1,548 sails, imprinted with the name of every British naval vessel lost in World War 1 and World War 2, along with the number of lives lost on each ship's last voyage - totalling over 44,000 names.

Each sail has its own red 'wave' with a commemorative poppy forming the symbolic 'hull' of the boat and has been tethered to the ground at the memorial located at the front of the school. Viewed from above, the display forms the shape of a poppy and the lines of white sails are reminiscent of the white rows of headstones in military cemeteries.

The sail installation, entitled 'A Sea

of Souls', is made up of individual sails between 20-60cm in size, and covers an area of approximately one acre, creating an undulating effect.

Harriet Barber, Head of Art at the Royal Hospital School, said: "We are really proud of the finished installation. Every pupil in the school has been involved in this project, creating at least two sails each, researching the last voyage of their chosen ship and finding out about the men and women on board. It has been amazing to see the whole school engaging with the project, particularly those pupils who chose ships with which they had a close connection, through a family member, town or place they know well. The wider community is now also engaging with the project - with many stopping to ask us about it - which is great, as it shows that

The staff and some 500 pupils of **Fairfield Prep School**, Leicestershire, observed a two minute silence during an outdoor service held in the school's quad.

During the ceremony, pupils raised the Union flag and laid a wreath of poppies to commemorate those

who have fought and died in war, with special consideration for the 58 Loughborough Grammar School old boys who fell during the First World War.

The school building was illuminated poppy red as darkness fell.



our commemorative artwork speaks to those who see it, demonstrating respect from our school."

RHS has a rich naval heritage and each year the whole school marks Remembrance Sunday by attending one of two Remembrance services in

the School Chapel and taking part in a whole school Divisions (a term used by the Royal Navy to describe a formal parade). For the last few years the school has also created an artistic installation, allowing the pupils time to thoughtfully reflect.



**Solihull School** pupils, staff, governors and specially invited guests gathered in the school's Great Quadrangle to remember those who died in two World Wars and other conflicts, with pupils not attending in person accessing the poignant occasion via live stream.

This year's ceremony was particularly memorable as, prior to the annual Remembrance Service, Old Silhillian Roy Ward MBE and Acting Headmaster Sean Morgan unveiled the school's new War Memorial, which was commissioned to mark the centenary of The Old Silhillians' Association and to celebrate the bond that exists between Solihull School and former pupils.

In March 2021, Solihull's Director of Development and Alumni Relations, Lucy Lunt, launched a campaign to replace the old war memorial, which was worn and weathered. Over six months, the ambitious target of £30,000 was achieved, with donations from 287 former pupils,

parents and staff and, in September, Weldon Stone commenced work on the new piece accurately listing in full the names of Solihull School's fallen.

Former pupil Roy Ward MBE, who attended Solihull School and was present at the first war memorial unveiling in 1947, said: "74 years ago, I was in my first term at this great school and attended the unveiling of the old war memorial which is now being moved to another part of the campus. I can remember acknowledging at that time, just two years after the war, how important it was to remember and honour all those brave men and women who had made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our tomorrows. But, remembrance has more significance to me now than ever, which is why I have so enthusiastically supported this venture and am greatly honoured to be asked to unveil the new monument."



# Two new boarding houses

Friday marked an important day in the history of Charterhouse, Surrey, as the School welcomed former pupil Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP back to the campus to officially open two new boarding houses.

The new houses Northbrook and Saunderites, have been designed with a nod to the gothic architecture of the Old School and also to blend in with the colour palette of existing materials used around the campus.

Both houses feature 64 bed spaces across 49 bedrooms, 28 of which are ensuite. Keen to operate sustainably, they also feature photo-voltaic panels and LED lighting to keep the

building's energy consumption as efficient as possible. It's what these new houses represent that is most important however – a move to full co-education and welcoming 170 new boys and girls into Year 9 this academic year.

Alongside the completion of these new houses and the marked increase in pupil numbers, this year has also seen several other developments at Charterhouse: a merger with Edgeborough Prep School, the opening of two new international schools, the completion of a new contemporary café in the centre of the Old School and the upgrading of Biology and Physics laboratories.



Pictured (from left): Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP; Mayor for Waverley: John Robini; Mayoress for Waverley: Jacquie Keen; Mayor for Godalming: Michael Steel; Mayoress for Godalming: Jane Steel; Head of Charterhouse: Dr Alex Peterken

## 50th Birthday

Fifty years ago a VIP reception was held at Douglas House in Petersham, South West London. The party, which included the German Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, Karl-Günther von Hase and the British Secretary of State for Education, Margaret Thatcher, was there to officially launch the first German School in the UK. The next day, 84 pupils walked through the doors of Douglas House to start their first day of school.

50 years later and German School London has grown to over 800 pupils, from ages 3 to 18 years and from over 30 different nations.

The whole community gathered to celebrate the 50th birthday. Also in attendance was the school's original secretary in 1971, Roswitha Guest, and a delegation from the German Embassy which included the Head of the Department for Culture and Education, Dr Susanne Frane.

All the pupils and staff were encouraged to dress in seventies attire and the students put on seventies dance and music performances. A selection of pupils also re-enacted the very first day of school at the German School London 50 years ago.



Saunderites is named after Dr Saunders, who was Headmaster from 1832-53




# Springfield



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It was another bumper year for Team GB at the summer Olympic Games of 2020, delayed by Covid until August 2021. The worldwide pandemic did its best to spoil this international festival of sport but the magnificent Japanese hosts in Tokyo ensured that it failed to ruin the show. A muted Games, certainly, but a memorable one, nonetheless. Malcolm Tozer reports on the role played by independent school alumni...



With 22 gold medals, 21 silvers and 22 bronzes, Team GB matched the total of 65 medals won in London in 2012 and fell just short of the 67 won at Rio de Janeiro in 2016. The return of Russian competitors partially explains the reduced medal haul; Russia was absent from all international sport for a period after the government tampered with laboratory data that it had provided to the World Anti-Doping Agency.

The 381-strong team for 2020 was larger than that for Rio. Five sports had been added for Tokyo and Team GB entered competitors for two, skateboarding and sports climbing – making a total of 28 sports. Independent schools contributed 106 competitors to the team, 28% of the total, neatly balanced at 53 women and 53 men. This was by far the highest independent school representation at any summer Olympic Games.

The 106 had attended 74 different independent schools and 27 of these schools gained their first Olympian of this century. No one type of school had significantly more than its fair share – whether co-educational or single-sex, or day or boarding. Schools

with multiple representatives at Tokyo were Millfield School (7); Plymouth College (4); Ellesmere College, George Watson's College, Glasgow Academy, Radley College and Whitgift School (3 each); Abingdon School, Alleyn's School, Claires Court School, Clifton High School, Cranleigh School, Elizabeth College, George Heriot's School, Halliford School, Howell's School, Lomond School, Repton School, The Grange School and Workspop College (2 each). Scotland made a strong showing with 16 competitors from 10 schools: Dollar Academy, Edinburgh Academy, Fettes College, George Heriot's School, George Watson's College, Glasgow Academy, High School of Dundee, Lathallan School, Lomond School and Strathallan School.

Members of Team GB from independent schools were not present in all sports at Tokyo. Eight of the 28 sports had no representatives: boxing, football, judo, skateboarding, sport climbing, table tennis, taekwondo, and weightlifting. Sports with the highest representation were hockey, rowing, athletics, swimming, and rugby sevens. Of the smaller sports, 2 of the 4 modern pentathletes and

both synchronised swimmers came from independent schools.

Independent school competitors performed particularly well once their sports came to the final stages. A total of 85 of the 106 men and women, or 80%, reached the top eight in their event, or best event if they had more than one. This was higher than in all the previous Olympic Games bar Athens in 2000 when the number of competitors was much smaller: 41 compared to 106. The average position for all 106 competitors was slightly better than 5th place in the final. They more than earned their right to be in the team.

The record highs for independent school team representatives and their places in the finals of events were not, however, matched by the number of gold and silver medals won. Rio's total of 44 medallists increased to 45 at Tokyo, but the number of gold and silver medallists slipped from 21 and 20 down to 12 and 8 respectively; bronze medallists consequently increased from 3 to 25. This swing contributed to Team GB's fall from second to fourth place in the medal table, where gold medals count most. Russia's presence, in fifth

place, was partly to blame but the disappointing showing by British rowers, usually so dependable as medallists, was self-inflicted; their winning coach had been replaced.

There were, nonetheless, 12 Olympic champions from independent schools at Tokyo, more than 30% of Team GB's total of 39 – each member of a winning squad or team receives a medal. The fall from Rio's 21 was due mainly to the loss of 8 women's hockey champions but their successors did win 12 bronze medals instead. Most notable among the champions were James Guy (Millfield School; 2 golds and 1 silver), Duncan Scott (Strathallan School; 1 gold and 3 silvers), Katie Archibald (Glasgow Academy; 1 gold and 1 silver) and Tom Daley (Plymouth College: 1 gold and 1 bronze).

The results from Tokyo show that former pupils of independent schools continue to punch above their weight when it comes to gaining places in Team GB for the summer Olympic Games, and that they then make the most of their talents when the finishing line is in sight. They are a credit to their schools.

## Team GB wins 65 medals 22 Gold 21 Silver 22 Bronze

Name	Medal	Fraction of team	Sport	School	Event
Tom Daley	Gold	0.50	Diving	Plymouth	Men's synchronized 10m platform
James Guy	Gold	0.20	Swimming	Millfield	Men's 4 × 200 m freestyle relay
Calum Jarvis	Gold	0.20	Swimming	Plymouth	Men's 4 × 200 m freestyle relay
Duncan Scott	Gold	0.20	Swimming	Strathallan	Men's 4 × 200 m freestyle relay
Jonathan Brownlee	Gold	0.25	Triathlon	Bradford	Mixed relay
Freya Anderson	Gold	0.20	Swimming	Ellesmere	Mixed 4 × 100 m medley relay
James Guy	Gold	0.20	Swimming	Millfield	Mixed 4 × 100 m medley relay
Hannah Mills	Gold	0.50	Sailing	Howell's	Women's 470
Eilidh McIntyre	Gold	0.50	Sailing	Mayville HS, Portsmouth	Women's 470
Katie Archibald	Gold	0.50	Cycling	Glasgow Academy	Women's Madison
Kate French	Gold	1.00	Modern Pentathlon	Cobham Hall	Women's individual
Joe Choong	Gold	1.00	Modern Pentathlon	Whitgift	Men's individual
Total		5.25			

Name	Medal	Fraction of team	Sport	School	Event
Duncan Scott	Silver	1.00	Swimming	Strathallan	Men's 200 m freestyle
Angus Groom	Silver	0.25	Rowing	RGS Guildford	Men's quadruple sculls
Harry Leask	Silver	0.25	Rowing	George Heriot's	Men's quadruple sculls
Duncan Scott	Silver	1.00	Swimming	Strathallan	Men's 200 metre individual medley
James Guy	Silver	0.20	Swimming	Millfield	Men's 4 × 100 m medley relay
Duncan Scott	Silver	0.20	Swimming	Strathallan	Men's 4 × 100 m medley relay
Anna Burnet	Silver	0.50	Sailing	Lomond	Mixed nacra 17
Katie Archibald	Silver	0.20	Cycling	Glasgow Academy	Women's team pursuit
Total		3.60			

Name	Medal	Fraction of team	Sport	School	Event
Amelie Morgan	Bronze	0.25	Gymnastics	Wolsey Hall, Oxford	Women's artistic team all-around
Carl Hester	Bronze	0.33	Equestrian	Elizabeth College	Team dressage
Matthew Coward-Holley	Bronze	1.00	Shooting	Felsted	Men's trap
Charles Elwes	Bronze	0.11	Rowing	Radley	Men's eight
Thomas Ford	Bronze	0.11	Rowing	The Grange, Northwich	Men's eight
Thomas George	Bronze	0.11	Rowing	Radley	Men's eight
James Rudkin	Bronze	0.11	Rowing	Stowe	Men's eight
Oliver Wynne-Griffith	Bronze	0.11	Rowing	Radley	Men's eight
Henry Fieldman	Bronze	0.11	Rowing	Latymer Upper	Men's eight
Emma Wilson	Bronze	1.00	Sailing	Bournemouth Collegiate	Women's RS:X
Maddie Hinch	Bronze	0.06	Hockey	King's, Taunton	Women's tournament
Anna Toman	Bronze	0.06	Hockey	St Gabriel's, Newbury	Women's tournament
Leah Wilkinson	Bronze	0.06	Hockey	Repton	Women's tournament
Grace Balsdon	Bronze	0.06	Hockey	Kent College	Women's tournament
Sarah Jones	Bronze	0.06	Hockey	Howell's	Women's tournament
Susannah Townsend	Bronze	0.06	Hockey	Sutton Vallence	Women's tournament
Shona McCallin	Bronze	0.06	Hockey	Repton	Women's tournament
Hannah Martin	Bronze	0.06	Hockey	Ipswich	Women's tournament
Ellie Rayner	Bronze	0.06	Hockey	Claire's Court	Women's tournament
Izzy Petter	Bronze	0.06	Hockey	Cranleigh	Women's tournament
Lily Owsley	Bronze	0.06	Hockey	Clifton	Women's tournament
Amy Costello	Bronze	0.06	Hockey	Shiplake	Women's tournament
Tom Daley	Bronze	1.00	Diving	Plymouth	Men's 10 metre platform
Josh Kerr	Bronze	1.00	Athletics	George Watson's	Men's 1500 metres
Imani-Lara Lansiquot	Bronze	0.25	Athletics	Trinity, Croydon	Women's 4 x 100 m relay
Total		6.21			

**Independent schools as a country finished 17th** in the medal table; just below South Korea and above Poland, Czech Republic, Kenya, Norway and Jamaica.

# Ground-breaking International Football Academy

Rishworth School, Yorkshire, is to offer boys and girls aged 13 to 16 the opportunity to experience a truly unique programme that combines high quality education and professional football coaching with the formation of the Rishworth International Football Academy (RIFA).

Delivered in partnership with the Street Work Soccer Academy, RIFA pairs the school's 300 years of heritage in education with elite football coaching and world-class facilities, starting September 2022.

RIFA will develop young people's sporting skills while offering a clear pathway into the professional football arena, thanks to its strong partnerships with professional football clubs based globally.

The RIFA programme will be delivered to students by UEFA-

licensed coaches who have served in senior coaching positions at elite clubs in England and around the world. This includes head of football development, Lee Lockley, who has worked as a coach for Everton, Liverpool and Manchester City.

The Academy's director of football, Paz Shan, brings more than 30 years of experience as a player and football coach, most recently working in player recruitment at Manchester City.

Young players aged 13 to 16 from around the world will be eligible to apply to join the Academy.

Students may also opt to extend their spell with RIFA for a further two years, with the Academy offering University pathways.

The RIFA 'total football' philosophy

will emphasise supporting the 'whole person' whilst playing attacking football with freedom and creativity.

Head of Rishworth School Anthony Wilkins (pictured) said: "Creativity and achievement flourishes throughout Rishworth School and we are immensely proud of our standing as one of the best schools in the region for sports, with academies and scholarships in rugby, cricket and badminton.

"The establishment of RIFA will see us build on that pedigree and enable us to offer even more opportunities to young people, locally, nationally and internationally, through a truly unique programme.

"The introduction of RIFA very much strengthens our focus on service, leadership and the



building of character, which helps Rishworthians become well-rounded, productive and successful contributors to modern society."

The application process will involve an interview and references demonstrating suitability.

## Sports facilities available to wider community

King's House School, London, has opened its modernised all-weather pitch and cricket nets to local sports clubs and schools, following extensive refurbishment.

This development is part of the school's ongoing investment in modernising its sports offering, not only for its own pupils, but for the benefit of the wider local community.

While the grounds have always been linked to local sports, having been the home of the Civil Service Football and Rugby Clubs since 1926, King's House School knew there was more they could be doing to support local schools.

Since the refurbishment, local schools Hammersmith Academy and

Chiswick School have been able to enjoy free use of the site for their training and fixtures, in addition to several other local sports clubs. An extended car park, which formed a key part of the refurbishment, has made it even easier for these external visitors to use the facilities.

As part of its modernisation drive, King's House School also wanted to ensure the development provided equal opportunity for all sports, to appeal to as many pupils and members of the community as possible. Historically having been tailored toward male facilities, the grounds now deliver activities such as hockey and netball and are being used much more widely.

The London Wayfarers Hockey Club, the largest hockey club in

the country with numerous senior teams and over 1,000 juniors, will also use King's House School's new facilities as their permanent home, traditionally having been a nomadic club using a variety of pitches across London with no permanent facilities.

Mark Turner, Head, said: "Here at King's House we are keen to keep on improving and modernising our facilities both at the school and our Sports Ground for the benefit of our current and future pupils, and our school community more broadly. The fantastic new all-weather pitch at the grounds, which adds to the 3G pitch we already have and use, will not only enhance our own sporting provision, but also provide a great resource for other local schools and sports clubs



for many years to come. The new facilities will enable us to continue offering first-class sports facilities to the community, such as Grenfell Athletic FC, who have free use of the facilities at King's House School Sports Ground."



## Developing leadership through outdoor education

Leadership is something we talk about all the time in schools. Through this series of articles we are seeking to help schools be more intentional in their approach to developing student leadership. In past articles we've looked at Music, Drama and Sport. Here Dr Andy Kemp, Principal, The National Mathematics and Science College, and Chris Rondel, former teacher and Professional in Outdoor Learning turn their attention to the many school activities that take place outside of the classroom, in the world we now refer to as outdoor learning...

Helping our young people develop their leadership skills may require a reframing of the activities we design for them. As teachers we can easily become focused on the wrong outcomes for outdoor learning activities.

If we think about taking a group of students out in a bell boat (imagine two long, narrow, canoe-like boats that are attached together with a platform in the middle with around six students with oars on either side). A perfectly reasonable objective might be for the students to successfully get the boat from point A to point B and back. But if this is our objective it is likely to change the way we approach the activity. We may feel the need to micromanage the students' actions, telling them when and how to paddle, directing their every action, and ultimately creating an experience more akin to a Roman or Greek galley ship. What if instead we reframed the activity, and made it student led with a simple objective to communicate and organise themselves to enable the boat to travel in a straight line for a period of time? With this objective the teacher is able to shift their focus from what happens

to the boat, to what happens to the young people. The boat may not travel as far, but we can be confident that the students will have travelled further in their own journeys as they are left to grapple with how to get the boat to travel in a straight line, as slowly through experimentation they learn, and then through communication they come together until they are able to keep the boat going straight. This approach sounds more like play than work and perhaps this is why it is so effective. Play is messy, the boat will drift, leaders will put themselves forward, others will think creatively but won't speak up, frustration will set in and inevitably there will be an argument. Then time allowing there will be two-way communication, offers of support, encouragement and if you are very lucky a spontaneous sea-shanty!

Our focus on measurable outcomes can often mean (much like our exam system at times) we focus on what's easy to measure rather than what's important. But it is still possible to construct measurable outcomes for these types of activities which really support the development of students' leadership skills. Ask questions

like "what happened when the left side paddled harder than the right side?", "how did you solve the problem of the boat turning to the right?" and you'll find out far more useful things than whether the boat made it all the way to point B! More importantly the students will learn they can solve problems under pressure, work as a team, and cope with challenges.

Key to all of this is an appreciation that outdoor learning is all about embracing uncertainty and being prepared to take risks. The risks involved might be physical or psychological, and they may be real or only perceived, but risk is fundamental because it provides challenge. If there is no challenge, then it is highly unlikely that there will be anything of long-term merit in the experience.

If we think about the traditional Bronze Duke of Edinburgh expedition, the experience for the student varies depending on many factors, some within their control and some outside it. For the group of students who know the terrain well from prior experiences and have good weather, we need to question what they've really gained from the experience? Whereas the



Andy Kemp



Chris Rondel

group who get lost in a farmer's field confronted by livestock, or are seriously impacted by the weather, are forced to communicate with each other, to problem solve, to make decisions and find a way through. They may on the surface have had a less 'fun' experience, but we can be sure that they will have gained far more from it.

So, when it comes to outdoor learning, we want to challenge schools to focus on the other important outcomes, and take some risks. There must be a meaningful opportunity for things to fail (safely) otherwise there will be no challenge. Students must be allowed the space, and crucially the time, to get it wrong and then get it right. Through this they will be challenged to develop and practice the skills necessary for successful leadership.

## TEDx – funny, thought provoking and powerful talks

Initially scheduled for February 2021, the long delayed day of TEDx talks finally took place at The King Alfred School (KAS) in Hampstead, London recently. The afternoon event featured 14 talks by students,

staff and parents who took to the school's Phoenix Theatre stage to present short talks on what excites, terrifies or motivates them – everything from cold water to hot metal, happiness, hope and humour.

The school showcased the importance of student voice in the KAS philosophy with half the talks by students from Years 11-13. They were joined by 4 members of staff and 3 parents.

School Art Technician and Blacksmith Nichola-Rae Bevers gave a moving talk which echoed the King Alfred guiding principle of 'Freedom, play and the enjoyment of education'. Her talk looked at the power of blacksmithing to teach lessons that the classroom can't and

the impact this kind of teaching can have on students, she said: "Finally doing the talk after so many months was great. It's had a really nice space in my brain and now I can move on to the next thing but it's made me better at what I'm doing next, I feel more capable having done it."

The talks by students were by turns funny, poignant and thought provoking and covered topics including insomnia, failure, representation and gaming.



# Alpine school officially opened

The first British-branded international boarding school in Switzerland has welcomed a group of pupils from the UK to celebrate its official opening as part of the Malvern College family of schools.

The pupils from Malvern College, Worcestershire, travelled to Malvern College Switzerland for a week of events and performances to celebrate the opening of its first European school.

The seventh international campus to open as part of the Malvern family Malvern College Switzerland has welcomed pupils from over a dozen nationalities this term.



As part of its opening celebrations the pupils from Worcestershire were given a taste of the school and its wider community in the picturesque Alpine village of Leysin.

“After many months of planning and hard work, it was wonderful to open Malvern College Switzerland successfully this term with a full and exciting programme getting started straight away,” said Headmaster Dr Tim Jefferis (pictured).

“To be able to welcome pupils from Malvern College in the UK to experience that programme in person at our official opening was a real privilege.

“We are committed to creating a positive and nurturing environment at Malvern College Switzerland where we blend the best traditions of a premium British boarding school education with a cosmopolitan energy that develops resilience, confidence and

collaboration. We are proud to be working so closely with our sister school in the UK in developing independent learners with all of the Malvern qualities we see embedded in the school in the UK.

“It was inspiring to see our collaboration brought to life as pupils from both schools came together as part of the week’s events.”

During their time in Leysin the visiting group, led by Jonathan Brown, Director of Music, took part in collaborative musical activities including a song-writing project and ensemble music-making. They were also able to join other classes to experience the school’s enviable academic provision which includes IGCSE and A-Level courses together with bespoke pathway curriculums and university partnerships.

The opening ceremony showcased performances developed during the



visit, and the group also enjoyed trips to Lausanne and Montreux, along with a traditional Swiss Gala Dinner which proved particularly popular.

Looking ahead, Malvern College Switzerland will commence its signature Winter Programme early next year, which will include speakers and visiting industry leaders in international relations, art and design, innovation and creativity, together with intensive winter sports training and a start-up project with Swiss business entrepreneurs.

## CHANGING FACES... CHANGING PLACES...



The current Head of Prep at a Dubai independent school will be returning to his Yorkshire roots next year after being appointed as the next Head of Ashville Prep School.

Asa Firth, who has spent the last fourteen years at international schools in the United Arab Emirates, including the last six years at JESS (Jumeirah English Speaking School) Dubai, takes up his position in April 2022.

JESS is an independent not-for-

profit school catering to children up to Year 6. Prior to his current appointment, he was the Deputy Head, and before that Deputy Head at Wellington International School, again in Dubai.

Before developing his career in the Middle East, the 46-year-old – who is married with a young son – was a class teacher in East Morton Primary School.

Mr Firth, who is a devoted follower of rugby, played at a semi-professional level for Bradford & Bingley Rugby Club, and is also a rugby coach.

The Governing Body at Bolton School has announced a structural change to the Foundation, which educates girls and boys for the whole of their academic journey, up to the end of the Sixth Form.

There is now a new position of Head of Foundation, which will have oversight of the overall direction of all elements of the Foundation. Philip Britton, MBE, who has led the Boys’ Division since 2008, has been appointed to this role, which will oversee both the Girls’ and Boys’ Divisions as well as a newly created Primary Division.

Lynne Kyle will continue as Head of Girls’ Division, whilst Nic Ford, currently Deputy Head, Academic in the Boys’ Division, has been appointed as its Head.

The restructure will also include another new position – Head of Primary Division, which will comprise the School’s Nursery, Pre-School Class, Infant School, two Junior Schools and wraparound childcare facility, Kidzone. The Governors have appointed Sue Faulkner, currently the Head at Beech House, the Foundation’s Infant School, to this role



Chris Staley has been appointed Principal of Bablake and King Henry VIII School, West Midlands. Chris has been Headmaster at Wisbech Grammar School for the last seven years. Chris will formally take up his role at BKHS in September 2022.

Born in Melbourne, Australia, Chris emigrated to Britain at a young age and attended St Dunstan’s College in London before reading Geography at the University of Portsmouth. After completing his teacher training at the University of London he was subsequently awarded an MBA in 2011 and now is a visiting lecturer to current MBA students and specialises in topics such as communication, marketing, leadership, resource management and strategic thinking.

He started his teaching career working for two years at a maintained day school in Kent. He then moved on to Cranleigh School



Daniel Gibbons is the new Head of Our Lady’s Abingdon, Oxfordshire. He was previously Deputy Headteacher at Downside

(coeducational day and boarding school) in Surrey for 15 years. In his time at Cranleigh, he was Head of Department (Geography), subsequently appointed Housemaster and finally Senior Housemaster.

In 2010 he moved to Dorset having been appointed Deputy Head at Milton Abbey School, with the key responsibility of the operational leadership of the school. After four years, he then moved to Wisbech Grammar School to be Headmaster

A keen musician and sportsman, he has coached 1st XV rugby, netball, hockey and cricket and also sung in and directed plays alongside his teaching career. He is passionate about an all-round education having been an officer in the CCF and an ardent advocate of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

Married to Gilly, he has three adult/late teen children who are studying at locations throughout the UK.

School in Somerset, and taught Geography at Redmaids High School, Bristol and the British International School in Jakarta. He graduated in Geography at Leeds University.

# Heads Hunted

## Among the upcoming head and principal appointments:

Frensham Heights Junior School Surrey

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