

September 2021

# *The Independent Schools Magazine*

Save the Planet!



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# In this issue...



## Teacher leaves the lab to lead by example

Angus Young, a chemistry teacher at Bryanston School, Dorset, has stunned pupils and colleagues at the Dorset school with two remarkable tales of endurance in the space of just a few weeks. Having led the way for most of the race, he won the ultra-endurance 2,000km Pan Celtic Cycling Race in an impressive time of 5 days, 3 hours 56 minutes and 25 seconds. This followed his completion of the 3 Peaks by Bike challenge where he took no less than 5 hours off the previous record.

The 2021 Pan Celtic Cycling Race began at the Rame Peninsula in Cornwall, with 134 cyclists from around the UK and Ireland following a challenging route through the Celtic areas of south west England and Wales before reaching the finish line in Llandudno in north Wales. Experienced riders typically take a week to complete the “brutal” 2,000km route. Angus Young’s time cut the previous best time for the race by nearly one and a half days – almost 8 hours ahead of his nearest competitor.

Just a few weeks before, Young climbed to the summits and cycled between the UK’s three highest mountains, completing the iconic and arduous 3 Peaks by Bike course in an unofficial record time of 32 hours and 11 minutes.

“Angus is certainly leading by example and is an inspiration for everyone,” says Bryanston Headmaster, Mark Mortimer. “Aside from his clear passion for chemistry, his mental strength and ability to excel at even the most arduous physical challenge is quite remarkable, and he is showing all of us what can be achieved through determination, unwavering focus and intensive training.”

Photograph courtesy of Mason Progressing Cycles and Hunt Beyond.

### Cover background

## ‘Save the Planet’

Understanding the plight of the planet can, at times, seem overwhelming. Therefore, to help take one step at a time, a fun, creative and informative lesson was learnt by everyone at Kilgraston School, Perthshire, as they helped create an all-school mural at the heart of the building.

Full story page 8

## 04 Widening Access

the true picture from Lord Lexden

## 05 Biophilic Design

proven benefits from plants

## 06 Careers Advice since the Pandemic

how things have changed for sixth-formers

## 07 Efficacy of School Reports

new analysis shows routes to improvement

## 08 Instilling ‘Attitude’

why it’s so important for students’ life chances

## 11 ‘Let’s Not Scrap GCSEs

but conserve & improve them’

## 24 Profile

in conversation with Jon Gray

### Peer-on-Peer Abuse

42 navigating the challenges from a head’s perspective

45 legal view on how schools can respond to ‘Everyone’s Invited’

## Plus

10 Buzzing about bees

12 Demystifying the US college system

14 New classics centre opened

15 Another school merger

20 Disciplinary procedures & parental contracts ~ legal review

28 Music, Drama & Dance Focus Feature

32 Developing student leadership through Drama

36 Sport Focus Feature

44 Contact Us; Editorial Advisory Board

47 Changing Faces...Changing Places

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### Is Your School Mentioned?

## Schools featured in this issue include:

Airthrie School; Bedford School; Bolton School; Boundary Oak School; Bradford Grammar School; Brentwood School; Bryanston School; Bury Grammar School; Canbury School; Concord College; Croydon High School; Dame Bradbury’s School; Danesfield Manor School; Dauntsey’s School; Denstone College; Dolphin School; Exeter Junior School; Felsted School; Forres Sandle Manor School; Francis Holland School; Gresham’s School; Heathfield School; Highfield & Brookham Schools; Kilgraston School; King’s Ely; Kitebrook Preparatory School; Knighton House School; Marlborough House School; Mill Hill School; Myddelton College; National Mathematics & Science College; New Hall School; Oakfield Prep. School; Oakham School; Putney High School; Queen’s College; RGS Worcester; Sheffield Girls; Solihull School; St. Andrew’s School; St. David’s College; St. Leonard’s School; St. Margaret’s School; St. Mary’s Music School; Stamford School; Tranby School; Ursuline Preparatory School; Wakefield Grammar School; Windlesham House School; York House School

Answering ill-informed prejudice...

# Widening Access - the true picture

Independent schools are constantly looking for ways to enable as many children as possible from families of all kinds to benefit from the education they offer. Too many in the media delight in obscuring this fundamental reality. They spread the pernicious fiction that independent schools exist to serve a narrow elite—and that the schools themselves want to keep it that way.

It is by stressing their commitment to wider access, and vigorously publicising what they are doing to help achieve it, that schools can answer their ill-informed, prejudiced critics. And If the Government backed their commitment to the hilt, so much more could be achieved.

A report by Alistair Lexden, President of the Independent Schools Association.

## What Our Schools Are Doing

Nothing has been more impressive than the steady expansion of bursaries. Schools have put much effort into increasing them. Means-tested bursaries are available across the sector, giving financial assistance to pupils whose parents would not otherwise be able to afford places. 35 per cent of pupils in the 1,300 schools within the ambit of the Independent Schools Council (ISC) currently receive some help with their fees; the total annual value of this assistance is now over £1.1 billion.

Since 2000, the number of pupils receiving fee assistance has been rising steadily. Even during the pandemic, which put many schools under great financial pressure, like all other parts of our communities, there was an increase of 3.4 per cent in the number of pupils receiving help with fees compared with 2019.

Most of the total fee assistance comes from the schools themselves: ISC schools provide 83 per cent of it, amounting to nearly £938 million annually. They deserve the greatest credit.

There has been an important, but little-noticed, shift in recent years from non-means-tested scholarships

to means-tested bursaries and scholarships. Schools are increasingly targeting their help on parents whose need is greatest. In this way, they have contributed significantly to widening access, for which they should be applauded.

They have been widening access to their facilities and resources in other ways too. Throughout the pandemic independent schools have been at the side of their local communities – using school minibuses to assist the elderly and vulnerable in getting to and from their vaccinations, producing PPE for NHS workers, supplying laptops to children without access to a device during lockdown, offering facilities to be used as vaccination hubs and donating to food banks. Our schools rightly take great pride in what they have done in the service of others.

It must also be remembered that almost all independent schools are involved in partnership schemes with both state schools and the wider community. The list is impressive: academic partnerships, music partnerships, sports partnerships, drama partnerships. In practical terms this means sharing lessons, putting on plays and concerts jointly, preparing pupils for higher education and sharing sports facilities. I constantly look for

opportunities to publicise all this in Parliament.

## What the Government Should Do

Independent schools could do more, if the Government redirected some of its existing funding.

Across the UK, state schools receive extra resources to help improve the attainment of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. It is allocated per pupil and is known as the pupil premium grant in England, pupil development grant in Wales and pupil equity funding in Scotland. In Northern Ireland deprivation funding in the core school funding formula is the source of support for disadvantaged pupils.

This funding could be redirected to help disadvantaged children gain access to an independent education. Independent schools participating in the scheme would meet all the costs above this initial funding. This would open up far more bursaries for pupils from low-income families. Such a scheme would be popular with the public. A survey by YouGov in May 2021 showed that 59 per cent would support state funding for private school places for children from low-income backgrounds.

This, in my view, should be the



precursor of something much more ambitious. Some words of Winston Churchill from 1942 provide the inspiration: he said he 'wanted 60 to 70 per cent of the places [at independent schools] to be filled by bursaries.'

Some years ago, when I was its General Secretary, the Independent Schools Council launched a policy document called OASIS (Open Access to Schools in the Independent Sector). It rested on a number of principles which included: no greater government spending per pupil than in state schools, the inclusion of pupils of all abilities and aptitudes, and firm commitment to those with the greatest financial need.

The key element of the scheme would be this: giving parents the right to transfer to the independent sector the money provided by their taxes for the education of their children. As one journalist wrote in praise of OASIS: 'It would offer a good independent sector education to pupils of all abilities.'

The pandemic has led to many calls for fundamental reforms in our society. Could this be the moment to revisit the ISC's OASIS, from which so many would benefit?

Alistair Lexden is a Conservative peer and a Deputy Speaker of the House of Lords. He is a former General Secretary of the Independent Schools Council, and the current President of the Independent Schools Association, one of the Council's constituent bodies.

## Campaign aims to double number of assisted places

A new campaign has been launched aimed at doubling the number of assisted places at Bradford Grammar School (BGS).

The school spends an average of £900,000 annually on assisted places, supporting ten students per year. But with the launch of the 1662 Campaign, it aims to double its assisted places provision over the coming years through proactively fundraising among its former students.

The fund, which is named for the year when the school received its Royal Charter from Charles II, has already raised more than £1m which means five additional students will be starting at BGS this September.

Bradford is the fifth most deprived area in the UK, with almost 50 per cent of all children living in poverty. With disadvantage deepening, access to a BGS education represents a transformational opportunity for the young people on its doorstep to make the most of their potential.

Dr Simon Hinchliffe, headmaster at BGS, said that with the demise of the Direct Grant system and the subsequent abolition of the government funded Assisted Places Scheme, the 1662 Campaign was more important than ever. "BGS has always been a catalyst for talented individuals to do great things. As we look to the future we want to ensure this remains so for the next generation."

"Plants measurably enriched the brain boosting oxygen for staff and students, & had a significant effect on behaviour and psychological wellbeing"

# How Biophilic Design impacts learning and wellbeing

Eco-friendliness and environmental awareness have never been higher in the public consciousness, with young people more invested than ever in the future of their planet. At Putney High School, London, eco-conscience is strong and with sustainable development and the opening of a new Science, Music, Drama & Debating Centre high on the agenda, they had an opportunity to take a close look at the school's green infrastructure, particularly, the positive impact of bringing the outside in.

Headmistress Suzie Longstaff reports...

With the help of a firm of sustainability architects and an environmental consultant, the plan was to examine how environmental factors might impact learning and behaviour within three physically and demographically similar sixth form classrooms over the winter months. When the nine-month project began, few of us would have predicted how a pandemic lockdown would affect the amount of time we would all be spending indoors; our study, the first educational research of its kind, suddenly took on a new significance.

The Putney High classrooms were transformed. The first, a maths classroom was modified with an extensive array of indoor plants, the second an English classroom, with a full-size photographic wall mural of a woodland, and the last, a Psychology classroom, was left unchanged. All three classrooms were monitored for air quality and atmosphere and observed for concentration levels

and feelings of wellbeing of the staff and students that spent time in them.

We used sensors to complement research into NASA's Clean Air Study (1989) and looked at how much the plants in the classroom contributed to improving air quality. We monitored temperature, humidity and carbon dioxide levels, along with indoor air quality, volatile organic compounds and particulate matter. Within a month we saw air quality improve by 10 per cent in the classrooms that had the plants.

The importance of plants in cleaning the air has been known for a long time but we didn't realise just how much until we had completed our research. Not only had the plants measurably enriched the brain boosting oxygen for staff and students, they had also had a significant effect on behaviour and psychological wellbeing. Feedback from students and staff was overwhelmingly positive



Students planting in readiness for Chelsea

with 78 per cent of students reportedly "feeling healthier", and not only did they feel better, they told us how they "loved working in the classrooms" and felt a real impact on their ability to concentrate in lessons.

When the Royal Horticultural Society showed an interest in our work, inviting us to share our findings in the Discovery Zone of the Chelsea Flower Show, we could not have been more delighted. After all, these are relatively simple and inexpensive changes that any school can make, and which can genuinely make an impact on teaching and learning.

Putney's learning journey has been considerable, as we experimented with our choice of plants based on their ability to remove chemical vapours, ease of growth and maintenance, resistance to insect infestation and ability to increase humidity. We found that our top performers included the moth

orchid, spider plant, snake plant, heart-leaf philodendron, anthurium, peace lily, dragon tree and areca palm.

Sixth Form prefects, teaching staff and members of our keen Gardening Club were enthusiastic in caring for the plants (our "misting" timetable has become quite a thing!) and the delay to the original Chelsea date caused by the pandemic has meant the offspring of the original plants have now been "grown for Chelsea" in the Junior School, with the plan to re-house them later this year in our Reception classrooms.

The re-design of the classrooms has created some really bright and energising spaces and more importantly, had a significant impact on both wellbeing and ability to learn throughout the school. It may have come from NASA but it really isn't rocket science. Nature has much to teach us.



Sixth Form Classroom

# How careers advice has changed in sixth forms since the pandemic

The pandemic has caused widespread disruption to careers provision in schools. However, it has given careers leads a chance to review their programmes, provision and advice for the better, suggests Charlotte Harrison, Director of Sixth Form at St Margaret's School in Hertfordshire...



**The traditional model is flawed**  
A traditional careers model is built around the expectation that all will undergo formal examinations such as GCSE and A Levels as milestones. The logical progression from there is to University. The received narrative is that a degree is not just a golden ticket to higher earnings over a person's lifetime, but also a marker of social status and success.

According to large and small employers, and the World Economic Forum's [WEF] 2015 report, routinely bemoaned are a lack of communication skills, leadership initiative, numeracy, literacy, creativity, and empathy: qualities we assume students have but are minimally taught in careers programmes and academic courses.

With rumours rife of scrapping examinations as we know them, this undoubtedly has ramifications for careers provision in schools.

## Alternative Options

Technical alternatives to the more 'traditional' A Level into degree routes, are once more being pushed by the Government as viable options. These qualifications received a PR makeover alongside the July 2021 DFE careers guidance making it statutory that these 'must be presented as equal to' all other routes.

The Gatsby Benchmarking advises that working with technical providers must happen if they are to meet Step 1 of a 'stable careers programme'. Schools will be familiar with its various aspects: commitment to a stable careers programme, encounters with employers, links with industry professionals and embedded taught elements of careers within the curriculum. The Baker Clause [2017] requires all Year 8-11 students to encounter employers from a variety of technical, vocational and 'traditional' backgrounds.

The recently launched T-levels are an alternative to A Levels and offer longer periods of practical

work experience than BTECs. It is part of the Government's ostensible commitment to ensure enough talent fills a national skills deficit, exacerbated by years of underfunding, inattention to shifting jobs landscapes and a Brexit brain drain. Assuming apprenticeships will return to pre-pandemic funding and stability, these pathways present exciting opportunities.

## Beyond the Pandemic

Much has been said about preparing students for jobs which do not yet exist. Careers advisors know this is easier said than done. Like all recovering economies, jobs emerging out of the pandemic will be different to those in 10 years' time. The Government's Future of Work: jobs and skills in 2030 predicts a fading out of low skilled administrative and clerical roles with technology, STEM, scientific research and developments in AI as main areas of projected growth. Similar reports advise how important the arts will be in conjunction with new technologies. The role of the careers lead in this is crucial, tracking trends and keeping well-connected to local and national industry representatives.

## Future careers models in schools

A skills-based programme across the school linked to real-world developments readies students for tomorrow's world.

Open-mindedness, adaptability and setting the expectation of having more than one job in a lifetime are important strands. Earlier exposure to a variety of pathways is beneficial, not only because it fuels aspiration and drives better academic performance, but also because by Year 7, students already have fixed ideas about careers. These can be limited. Many will not yet have the awareness or maturity to appreciate there is more on offer than being a social media influencer, rap star, gamer or becoming the next Jack Grealish.

Schools' co-curricular programmes play a role in developing new skills. Many medicine students lack basic first aid abilities, but a club could address this. How many can impress with theoretical knowledge of motors but not the manual practice of putting a kit car together? Given that apprenticeship and degree courses in aeronautical engineering rely heavily on teamwork and problem solving, a school's role is to put students in these positions regularly. Such clubs offer low-stakes environments and normalise the inevitable pressures, failures and misapplications of theories which go hand in hand with the experimentation on cutting-edge technologies they will encounter in workplaces.

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to funnel all students mindlessly into STEM vocational careers. Emerging industries value those blending technical and artistic skills. Schools are the last stronghold valuing arts in the current climate. Cross-curricular programmes built into the academic offering could explicitly reward skills developed over a period of time instead of an ability to pass a test, achieve that elusive Level 9 or satisfy parental pressure of 'going to Oxbridge'. Whatever the future holds for exams, such an approach encourages students to see careers learning in school as a necessary preparation for life's marathon, not the tiresome bolt-on or golden ticket to an A\* where they collapse at the finishing line, aged 18, wondering who they are and what on earth it was all for.

Work experience and volunteering develops key character skills and confidence, shaping future plans as opposed to current tick-box approaches of completing placements for a UCAS form. During both lockdowns, websites such as Springpod played a leading role offering virtual replacements for face to face work experience, centralising and democratising opportunities.

Greater access to information and competition may lead students to take a stronger role in sourcing placements where schools offered this as a 'service' in the past, leading to more informed conversations with careers staff well beyond what the Morrisby data says.

Alumni and parental support will complement any programme. Featuring unusual careers and hosting alumni who demonstrated resilience in the face of adversity arguably have more to offer than the usual fayre. This may be strengthened by partnerships with businesses, universities or apprenticeship providers. Events may double as local outreach, student volunteering, marketing and recruitment events.

## A new ethos

When schools say that they do not value one route over another, this can be evidenced by the programme, student experience and positive messaging from staff. Thriving programmes will keep pace of changes, ensure content is regularly refreshed and communicates opportunities for work experience and encounters with employers. Ultimately, knowing students and personalised information will enable young people to make informed decisions.

There remain ongoing battles on social, gender, salary, managerial and recruitment opportunity fronts. Rising global populations, economic deficits and passing crisis point with climate change will generate jobs and new opportunities. Programmes exploring these issues more explicitly - how to respond to and challenge them, what success, happiness and job satisfaction is while balancing this with personal goals, is just as important. Focusing on: how can I serve wider society rather than myself? will also become the new ethos as today's young people will be facing a raft of future challenges never seen before.

# Assessing the efficacy of school reports

Stamford School, Lincolnshire, has conducted a small study to see if improvements can be made in the standards of reporting. David Tuck, Head of Politics & Head of Digital Student Voice, reports on its findings and its conclusions...



If one looks at available literature, both formal and anecdotal there appear to be two broad problems in the way that independent schools are reporting:

- A reliance on technical language, jargon and generic description.
- A dependence upon euphemism for fear of upsetting parents and students.

As I shall discuss in this article, it is imperative that reports are written in clear English and differentiate between progress and achievement. Moreover, formalised interviews with a tutor, can help guide students to reflect upon their progress and subsequent parental conversations can significantly improve the efficacy of formal reports.

## The Language of Reports

Management speak and jargon have, to differing degrees, permeated the written language of school reporting. Don Watson (author of *Death Sentence: The Decay of Public Language*) has argued that many school reports are filled with technical language, stock phrases and generic descriptions of activities that can leave parents confused over the actual progress of their child. Ofsted Inspector and experienced teacher John Dabell argues that too many reports are the product of cut and paste and that such practices 'depersonalises the child and cheapens the academic year'. A good report must convey the character of the student and both their progress and achievement in clear unambiguous language.

## Reports that pull punches

There is also a dependence upon euphemism for downplaying students' shortcomings. The student who never hands their

homework in on time 'has begun to understand the importance of meeting deadlines', the student who is always off task and chatty, 'is a lively member of the class who contributes well'.

If a student has not done well on a test or end of term examination, staff can be too quick to reassure the parents and reluctant to hold the student to account for under-performance. Effort grades (rebranded in many schools as 'attitude towards learning') can be overly optimistic to either incentivise students and/or to deter parental complaint, rather than being honest. In 2018, Dr Julian Murphy, Headmaster of Loughborough Amherst School, argued that the explanation for such timidity is fear, "When I went to school you would get reports that say 'so and so is extremely lazy or arrogant'. But now no one says that – it would upset parents." Whilst the bluntness of reporting from yesteryear is not going to make a comeback, reports must be an accurate and clear representation of what is happening in the classroom.

## How to improve reporting?

Our study came to four broad conclusions:

### 1. Senior Leadership must articulate and reinforce the purpose of reports

Professor Christopher Day of the University of Nottingham has often spoken about closing the gap between "espoused theories and theories in use" within schools. All independent schools will have a section in their staff handbook about how to write a clear and meaningful report, but if this is not happening in your school, then the senior leadership must police it. It is vital that

the reporting culture is clear and understandable and that generic statements, waffly jargon, a preference for euphemism over clarity, are all absent from reporting and that such bad practice is not tolerated.

### 2. Evidence based reporting to convey progress and achievement

Reports need to be written in clear English that avoid overly specialist and professional terminology, moreover they need to be based on quality evidence so that we can accurately measure how students have performed against curriculum standards. It is particularly essential that staff differentiate between progress and achievement as they are often used interchangeably when they are quite different.

When discussing progress, we are conveying an increase (or in some cases a decrease) in levels of proficiency, whilst achievement describes summative performance. Reports should be a synthesis of the two and if a student's progress is faltering, the report must offer an explanation as to why this is happening and what the likely outcome for overall achievement will be if there is not a change. Reports have to reflect what is happening in the classroom: from the excellent to the disappointing.

In our pilot study the tutor played a more enhanced role than normal and there were several examples where staff were asked to reconsider comments and/or effort and achievement grades. Broadly speaking, for reports that needed amending there needed to be more emphasis on when a student was not progressing and a blunter assessment of what this would mean for overall achievement if there was not a change.

### 3. Guided Reflection

The purpose of a report is to assist student reflection upon their learning behaviours. Metacognition and high-quality self-reflection are high order learning skills, so we used a tutor to help guide students via an interview to reflect upon their learning habits. We asked students to rank their effort levels as a percentage and discussed issues such as how they approached homework, tests and learning concepts they found difficult. A number of 'coasting' students confessed to working at 70-80% of their capacity and the tutor modelled with them how they imagined their performance might alter if they put in the maximum effort. We then discussed what kind of behavioural changes this would mean in their application to learning. These reflective conversations enabled the tutor to write a very candid and personalised report for each tutee and to offer feedback for subject teachers. Further cycles of research will enable us to measure if this added layer of student guided reflection is having a meaningful effect on progress and achievement.

### 4. Helping parents understand

Teachers should welcome and not fear conversations with parents. In our small study the tutor had several follow up phone calls with parents to discuss the findings of the report. Parental feedback to this process was positive and we were able to put in meaningful and personalised interventions. However, such a process is time consuming, so school leadership needs to build in time to the school day to allow tutors the space to follow up on reports.

# What is 'attitude' and why is it important?

Sarah Wilson, Headmistress at Heathfield School, Berkshire, discusses 'attitude' and its impact on achievement and life chances.



It is attitude that determines how students react to adversity, overcome challenges, create bonds with others and how they learn. It has an important role to play in defining a student's destiny – how well they perform on a personal level, in school and in the working world. They therefore need to be aware of the importance of building a positive attitude and how responding and viewing things in the right way can positively impact their future and success – not just in exams, but in all areas of their lives.

Carl Gustav Jung, the Swiss psychoanalyst described 'attitude' as an individual's predisposed state of mind...a responsive expression towards something, which in turn influences the individual's thoughts and actions, and is therefore an important consideration in every student's education.

Some students arrive at school with incredible baseline measures but unless they develop the right attitude their predicted grades

cannot be guaranteed, and we see so many students with lower predictions that achieve well beyond expectations. Students are so much more than data. Promoting an understanding that effort and application are far more accurate indicators of success than IQ scores, will better prepare them for the real world.

It's important to value each individual, identify their aptitudes and support them in areas in which they need help, which includes building positive traits. Young people need to experience enthusiasm and inspiration at school and have access to positive role models. If they feel valued in this way, they will in turn value others. Celebrating high scores on a test will make a student feel good but it's typically momentary. Celebrating effort is more enduring – recognising they worked hard, faced challenges, tried new strategies and learnt something about themselves that they can take forward.

In a school with students from a diverse range of backgrounds, there is a big mix of attitudes that can influence pupils and can be confusing. Staff need to provide support for students to build self-belief and confidence, raise their aspirations and guide them as they determine where in life they wish to go.

We must build determination and tenacity by providing planned opportunities to try new things and understand that failure is often part of the process towards success. Team building challenges are perfect for developing resilience and strength of will as well as collaboration, consideration for others, empathy and better communication skills.

We also need to encourage students to reflect on their own values, identify their positive traits, consider how they fit with those of their friends and their community and how these sit with their future plans.

Empowering students with a sense of independence and giving

them control and responsibility for their own choices and actions demonstrates that their success is not determined by others; success lies in their own hands. Students with the right attitudes go far.

I always remember a quiet Year 8 pupil who was, on paper, academically middle of the road. But she had an amazing attitude. Half-way through the first term she decided she wanted to become a vet and she went for it! Her positive attitude shone through, she quietly and determinedly got stuck into everything, even if it didn't come naturally. Debating, drama, sport, academic enrichment...she just kept going. As time went on, she started to rise above her peers. She is now studying Veterinary Medicine at University having secured a place with 3 A\*s, far exceeding what the data suggested. More importantly, she is still friends with her school peers and has made the most of all of her opportunities. She will go far, she has the right attitude.

## Biodiversity bonanza – drawing attention to earth's fragility

Scottish environmentalist, John Muir, famously stated that, "When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world."

As the world prepares for the upcoming climate-change conference\*, pupils at Kilgraston School, Perthshire, have created a 40m long frieze to demonstrate nature's on-going interdependence.

Understanding the plight of the planet can, at times, seem overwhelming. Therefore, to help take one step at a time, a fun, creative and informative lesson was learnt by everyone at Kilgraston as they helped create an all-school mural at the heart of the building.

The School's Glass Square lies right at the centre of the main building, a corridor 'roundabout', guiding pupils and staff in several directions. What better place to host a vast mural, depicting personal interpretations of images from nature, designed to highlight the inter-dependency of the planet's life forms?

Every pupil and staff member was invited to add their bit for the installation, hoping to create something that would make David Attenborough proud, urging: "Let us fill the space by painting paradise with a biodiversity bonanza."

The mural will be continually updated.



\*The UK will host the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) at the Scottish Event Campus (SEC) in Glasgow on 31 October – 12 November. The climate talks will bring together heads of state, climate experts and campaigners to agree coordinated action to tackle climate change.



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NATIONWIDE SUPPLIERS OF PEUGEOT (RECOMMENDED),  
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# Buzzing about bees

Schools are doing their bit to help bees thrive and explain their importance to life on earth to pupils through hands-on opportunities, as initiatives from these two schools illustrate...

Dauntsey's School, Wiltshire, has revived its Bee Club, which ran originally in the early 1970s, and has received planning consent to build an ambitious new ecologically designed Apiary which will be the heart of the Club.

The timber Apiary, to be powered by solar panels, will provide a covered observation area for pupils to view the beehives. The hives will be in an undercover area, allowing the Club to run, regardless of the weather.

The building, due to be completed this month (September), will include a classroom, workshop and storage facilities. The Apiary is part of a larger initiative from the School which will also see the expansion of wildflower meadows.

Barry Roberts, member of staff at Dauntsey's who has spearheaded

the Bee Club, said: "Bees perform a vital role in agriculture through pollination and, living in rural Wiltshire, we felt it was important for the School to learn more about them.

"We plan to start our colony with two hives to house honeybees. There has been a lot of interest from the pupils in the Club and we are busy investigating what to expect when the hives arrive and getting to know the equipment.

"It will be amazing to get up close, safely, to the hives from the viewing area, see the bees at work and understand how they operate within the colony."

Over in Dorset, Bryanston School has reintroduced honeybee colonies at the School to provide pupils with a fascinating insight into the world



of beekeeping. The move has been overseen by Ben Pullan, Resident Teacher of Classics at the School and an experienced apiarist, and has benefitted from a special grant provided by the Bryanston Parents' Association.

"When I joined the School last year, I quickly discovered that Bryanston had a long history of beekeeping," says Pullan. "However, established colonies that were lost a few years ago weren't replaced and our hives fell into disuse. As this has been a personal passion of mine since I was a youngster, there was an opportunity for me to use my skills to reintroduce beekeeping into our co-curricular programme. I am delighted the move has prompted a

very enthusiastic response from so many pupils who are keen to see for themselves the fascinating and extraordinary lives of honeybees. Indeed, they know from their studies that these amazing insects play such an important role in local ecosystems but are under immense threat from pesticides, loss of habitat, parasites and fungal diseases."

Two new and locally sourced bee colonies are now in hives positioned on a peaceful site in the School's grounds near the river. Fifteen pupils are already taking part in the beekeeping activity on Friday afternoons as part of the Pioneering section of Bryanston's broad co-curricular programme.

## Parts of the world are in crisis, be part of the solution!

How many of us had the opportunity, as a child, to have our long term expectations challenged in Primary school, by an individual who has also addressed the UN, US Congress, the Carter Centre and the very highest level of several governments?

Emmanuel Jal promotes a strong message of reconciliation and peace, and during National Refugee Week he was invited by Education Development Trust's Head of UK Schools, Deborah Leek Bailey, to create a live event for their year 5 & 6 pupils.

Little could the pupils of Danesfield Manor, Oakfield Prep, St. Andrew's School and Ashley C of E Primary School know what to expect when the energetic peace envoy and musician joined them live for an afternoon of reflection, dancing and learning about the plight of refugees. They were in



the company of a former Child Soldier and humanitarian.

The pupils engaged on every level and enquired as to how Emmanuel felt when losing his home, what the living conditions were like as a child soldier and whether the eclectic eating rituals of his youth, such as consuming tree bark, was still something he participated in today!

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# “Let’s not scrap GCSEs but conserve and improve them”

...suggest Croydon High School GDST headmistress Emma Pattison and Deputy Head Academic Dr Philip Purvis.

Crises are often catalysts for change. It is perhaps unsurprising, therefore, that the global pandemic—which has seen public examinations cancelled for two years in a row—has amplified the volume of those voices calling for the ‘end of exams’ more broadly. In April, the National Education Union called for the end of ‘toxic testing’, citing the disruption caused by the pandemic as a ‘golden opportunity’ to do so. The desire to scrap GCSEs has been especially full-throated from the Rethinking Assessment group—whose genesis was undoubtedly hastened by COVID—calling for lower stake alternatives. The EDSK think tank also joined calls for GCSEs to be scrapped, citing their cost as one of its justifications.

It is unsurprising that the pandemic has dealt something of a blow to the trust in established assessment systems. 79% of respondents to an Ofqual survey trusted GCSEs before COVID, but after the Centre Assessed Grade debacle, this had nosedived, somewhat predictably, to 27%. The change in opinion was similarly stark for A levels. Nevertheless, the voices in this debate are far from united.

A recent survey by the Pearson group, for example, found ‘no evidence’ amongst teachers, politicians, and policy specialists of an appetite for scrapping GCSEs. A survey conducted by Teacher Tapp, the ‘voice’ from the frontline of the teaching profession, revealed that only 26% of teachers even slightly agreed that GCSEs should be abandoned. In another survey conducted by TES, 59% of teachers polled said they disagreed that GCSEs should be scrapped following the pandemic, while just over one in five—22%—said GCSEs should be abolished.

Advocates of examination reform sometimes say this is because teachers are inherently cautious regarding change. It might be fairer, in this instance, to say that teachers are simply craving normality after a year which has seen one change after another. Nevertheless, the views from teachers quoted above reveal a profession wary and weary

of reactionary change. Undoubtedly, the events of the last couple of years have shown that our education system is not set up for assessment without public exams. However, at the same time, the CAGs and TAGs processes have revealed that while we can award grades that command confidence in the absence of public examinations, it does not mean that this should become a permanent new way of working.

The pandemic has shone a light on the different educational experiences of our young people. One of the many criticisms levied at GCSEs and A levels is that they perpetuate unfairness. Although no system is genuinely fair, none of the alternatives to public terminal assessments has been proved to be fairer. What is more, scrapping GCSEs risks losing the commonality of task, monitoring marking, and standardisation which goes some way towards levelling the playing field. Through public exams, individuals can succeed through the merit of their performance in the examination alone; this deserves our protection.

Well-meaning debates on getting rid of GCSEs underplay the many triumphs of these qualifications, which has seen them exported worldwide. Indeed, IGCSEs which are popular in the independent sector are modelled on our GCSEs and sold the world over. Furthermore, they often overlook the fact that GCSEs—and A levels for that matter—do so much more than assess what pupils know. They form a basis for learning schemes, they make clear the expectations required of pupils and their teachers at each stage, they offer motivating goals, and they provide a quality-assured passport to further study and employment.

According to the Education Secretary, education finds its purpose as preparation for employment. This viewpoint feels myopic. Yes, schools should ensure that their pupils are ‘real-world ready’, but they should educate the head and the heart in equal measure. They should instil a lifelong love of learning for its own

sake and not just for success in public examinations. That schools are frequently caricatured as ‘exam factories’ is not the result of the assessments themselves but how they are used as an accountability measure.

The way to change this is not to scrap GCSEs but to stabilise education by taking it out of a political cycle in which short-termism too often eclipses long term strategic gains. Continuous political intervention has attempted to make GCSEs and A levels something they should never be, that is the ‘be all and end all’ of schools. Furthermore, curriculum reform in the 2010s made exams even more crucial, narrowing rather than broadening pupil’s exposure to subjects such as the arts and all the other things we know they should be doing.

While teachers are wary of further change for change’s sake, there is a fragile consensus emerging around the view that GCSEs could be improved upon. GCSEs are far from perfect; they are—misquote Winston Churchill’s famous aphorism about democracy and government—the worst form of assessment apart from all the others. As part of any reform agenda, GCSEs could, for example, adopt some of the tried and tested features of other assessment systems, such as those used successfully in the International Baccalaureate. GCSEs and A levels have been long-lived and deserving of their international status precisely because they have adapted to the theoretical, evidence-informed nature of the educational landscape that exists beyond the political maelstrom. Presented in these terms, there is a ‘third way’ that breaks the debate’s oppositional binarism. Let us keep GCSEs but reform them, guided by long term, evidence-based thinking.

Within any reform and in a blow to the oppositionality that has characterised the debate, teacher assessment and exam-based approaches need not be mutually exclusive. As the experience of CAGs and TAGs has shown anyone who has been part of the process,



Emma Pattison (Headmistress, Croydon High School GDST @EmmaPattison1)



Dr Philip Purvis (Deputy Head, Academic, Croydon High School GDST @CroydonHighDHA)

any increase in the role of teacher assessment must be implemented carefully, with proper funding and rich continuing professional development opportunities and must be cognisant of any increases in workload. Nevertheless, perhaps most importantly, any reform must safeguard the critical distance between teachers and pupil outcomes which has been broken thanks to Centre and Teacher-Assessed Grades.

The most radical action is, then, to conserve and improve. When everything has changed, the stability of our public examination system is an asset that allows teachers to consolidate, evaluate and ultimately, enhance. Let us take our time to do this, though, and resist the urge to call for yet more untested upheaval: it is in pupils’ best interest that we do. In tandem, we need to allow schools the freedom to widen their remit beyond examinations, freeing them from the shackles of a panoply of accountability measures that they are currently associated with. Yes, exams should be important in every sense, but they should only be one single output by which a school, a pupil and the education sector in general is judged.

# Demystifying the US college system

Students get to explore the prospect of studying across the pond through the Explore American Universities Programme, a new initiative from the Girls' Day School Trust. Amy Icke, Online Learning and Innovation Manager, GDST, explains...

There are around 11,500 UK students currently studying in the US (Fulbright Commission) with the opportunity to study as an undergraduate at over 4,500 institutions, compared to just 120 in the UK. Taking a largely decentralised approach to admissions, unlike in the UK, and with high tuition fees and a different degree structure, navigating this landscape can initially feel overwhelming and very unfamiliar to UK students.

With the pandemic opening up new opportunities for online collaboration, the GDST, in partnership with GenHERation®, ran 3 online workshops for our Year 11 and 12 students in summer 2021, which aimed to democratise and demystify the College System. The virtual format enabled students from across our family of schools to join us. As we have a relatively small number of students applying to American universities each year, this ensured that the expert provision could be accessed across the country, making it both a time and cost-effective way of delivering the programme.

Run by Katlyn Grasso, an all girls' school alumna and founder of GenHERation®, we knew we were working with not only an expert

in the American Higher Education sector but also an ally in women's empowerment. Speaking about the partnership Katlyn reflected that their mission is to close the gender leadership gap and this begins with creating opportunities for young women to envision a future with unlimited possibilities. So it was great for her to see how passionate and curious the students were about exploring academic opportunities that would prepare them to become future leaders.

Hearing directly from alumnae also helped to humanise the whole application process and provided students with real models who had recently been through the same decisions they were now contemplating. Nicole Svonavec, Director of Student and Young Alumni Engagement at Cornell University reminded them about the lifelong connection students feel to their alma mater and the value of this relationship, especially with the opportunity to meet students from a global community.

One of the key messages imparted through the workshops was the importance of 'Fit', a two-way concept covering not only the student's fit for the institution but also the institution's fit for the student, which goes far beyond

academic selection criteria. The American admissions process is a holistic one which values experiences outside the classroom just as much as inside, with admissions tutors looking at far more than simply academic grades. This is aligned with our own commitment to a holistic view of education; the Trust has over 145 years' experience in tailoring its provision, not only to how girls learn, but also to how they develop and thrive.

Another important takeaway for participants was advice on the breadth of the application process which varies significantly to that in the UK. Applying to College has a long lead time and many stages from writing resumés and attending alumnae interviews, to engagement with admissions officers and submitting financial aid applications. Students were also offered insights into the range of courses on offer and an introduction to what a liberal arts education looks like. This was particularly valuable to students with a less clear pathway, such as one from Northwood College for Girls' who noted that "For students, such as myself, who are not entirely sure what the future holds for them, a liberal arts education allows you to explore all different academic pathways, before settling down on something more specific. If the UK



system of selecting a course at 17 seems too definitive, a Liberal Arts university in the US could be a great alternative."

The workshops imparted a lot of content and shared others' experiences of the US College system but, more importantly, they also sought to encourage students to think creatively about their higher education options and to explore every opportunity available. Students left the workshops feeling empowered and informed as they contemplate their next steps and, with new insights into the American College system. Organisationally, the programme enabled us to democratise and demystify higher education in the US, by working with a range of experts and allies committed to female empowerment.

The next step in developing this provision, is to explore delivering a parallel set of parent workshops to further support our students interested in pursuing Higher Education across the pond.

## Mighty Oaks from Little Acorns grow

Two Solihull School pupils have planted an oak tree sapling on the Saint Martin's campus to mark the opening of Solihull Preparatory School.

In the Christmas term, Gurleen Ubee in J2 and Diya Chumber in 12 won a 'Snap Scuffle and Twitch' photography competition and, as part of their prize, the girls were invited to assist Head Groundsman, Andy Johnson, in a commemorative planting ceremony. Solihull School Headmaster David EJJ Lloyd and Head of the Prep School Mark Penney were also present for the occasion.

Mr Penney said: "Soon after the Prep School opened in September 2020, we launched a competition

for pupils to spot and photograph squirrels, a fun outdoors activity set around our Solihull Prep mascots, sibling squirrels, Scuffle and Twitch. Gurleen and Diya shared two fantastic images and were chosen as the winners by our Head Boy and Head Girl.

"Taking horticulture advice from our grounds team, we waited for the warmer weather before proceeding with the planting. We now look forward to watching the tree, as well as our Prep School pupils, develop and grow over the coming years."

The oak tree sapling has been planted near the playground and is marked with one of Solihull Prep School's mottos 'Mighty oaks from little acorns grow'.



Pictured: David EJJ Lloyd, Headmaster, Solihull School; Mark Penney Head of Solihull Preparatory School and competition winners Gurleen and Diya

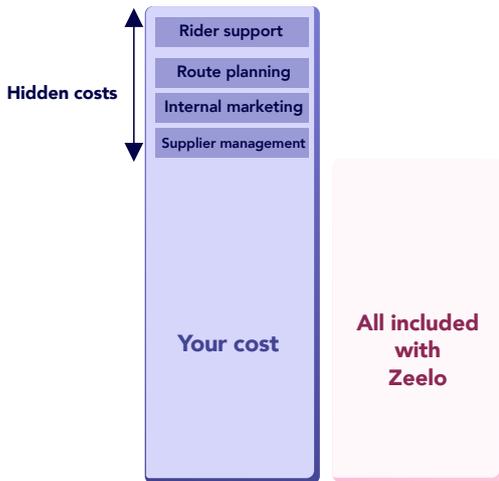
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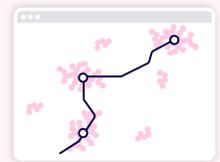
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# New Classics Centre embraces school vision

The Francis Holland School, Regent's Park, London, Classics Centre has been opened by Dr Peter Jones MBE and Nickie Aiken MP. Located adjacent to the school in Ivor Place, this is the first Classics Centre to be opened this century!

Headmaster Charles Fillingham commented on the fundamental importance of the study of Classics today: "Both the agonies and the ecstasies of our modern society have already been played out for us in the Classical World. There are easy parallels between the struggles of the Roman Empire and the consumer society of today and there is considerable wisdom to be picked up from the philosophy of Aristotle, Socrates and Plato. Believe it or not, the Classics have almost never been so popular and relevant as they are now, in the twenty-first century."

In order to broaden the reach of the School's vision, Francis Holland has established close ties with St Marylebone Church of England School for Girls, a local school, where the FHS Classics teachers offer Latin classes, free of charge,

to pupils in Years 8 to 11. St Marylebone had a proud tradition of teaching Latin and Classical Civilisation but were forced to cut their provision due to budget constraints three years ago and that's when FHS extended their Latin teaching to Years 8 through to GCSE so that girls didn't miss out.

Kat Pugh, Head of St Marylebone, commented on how valuable this offering from Francis Holland has been, saying: "Francis Holland's provision of subject specialist Latin lessons to our students in Key Stages 3 and 4 has been a tremendous success. Our GCSE students have been inspired and enriched by the subject and, in response to their enthusiasm, they'll now also be offered A-Level Latin from Francis Holland too. The teaching is excellent, including the adaptability of the teachers to another school's ways and means. Not only has this terrific curriculum offer kept alive an otherwise fading subject in state education, it has developed our students' scholarship, commitment and academic confidence. Our

Classics team and students are really grateful for this meaningful collaboration."

Classics has significantly grown in popularity at St Marylebone; with 11 girls in Year 10 currently taking Latin GCSE and all of them showing the highest level of commitment, while 20 Year 8 girls have chosen to study Latin as one of their optional subjects. During lockdown, Francis Holland continued to teach the girls at St Marylebone, offering live remote teaching every week to all classes.

This is just one of 34 FHS outreach programmes with 20 state school partners held by Francis Holland, Regent's Park, which, alongside the generous offering of six 100% bursaries to candidates joining the

Sixth Form this month (September) indicates the importance of social responsibility and community outreach within the FHS ethos.

Additionally, last Spring, despite still being in lockdown, Francis Holland ran a Classics Week, with online quizzes and competitions for pupils and a fascinating live talk from the late Helen McCrory, the star of *Peaky Blinders*, about her experience playing the title role in the Greek tragedy *Medea*.

A Classics Festival is to take place in the Classics Centre in the current academic year, consisting of lectures from academics to around 90 students taking Classical subjects at GCSE and A Level from schools all over London and the South-East.



Ms Eleanor Simons, Head of Classics; Dr Peter Jones MBE, classicist, writer, author, journalist and Cambridge graduate with a doctorate on Homer, former senior lecturer on Classics at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne and co-founder of the Friends of Classics charity; Mr Charles Fillingham MA MSc (Oxon), Headmaster

## Acquisition

Airthrie School, Cheltenham has joined the Dean Close Foundation, which now consists of five schools and a family of Little Trees Nurseries.

Emma Taylor, Warden and CEO of the Dean Close Foundation, said: 'We are delighted to welcome Airthrie School into our diverse family of schools and nurseries. The Dean Close Foundation has one simple aim; to see every member of its community flourish. The Foundation is a growing, vibrant and diverse family of schools and nurseries, uniting around a shared vision and values.'

The growth of the DC Foundation is designed to provide financial strength and contribute educational best practice for all its schools and nurseries. Despite the impact of the global pandemic, this acquisition aims to provide financial strength and contribute

educational best practice for the Foundation. Airthrie is a Prep school for children aged 3-11.

The Foundation structure is designed to ensure that the Head of each school is able to focus on provision of the highest quality education and that he or she knows each child and family personally. This brings the benefits of being both small and large at the same time with schools and nurseries that are small enough for every individual to count and every contribution to be valued, whilst the Foundation itself is large enough to provide financial stability, professional expertise and strategic planning.

Previous owner and Principal, Beth Sullivan says that it will be 'beneficial to one and all in the Airthrie family, both now and in the years to come'.

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# School merger

Bryanston and Knighton House pre-prep and prep school have confirmed arrangements to complete a formal merger of the two Dorset schools with effect from this month (September).

The move follows Bryanston's acquisition of the land and buildings of the neighbouring Knighton House campus last year.

The merger will help to ensure both schools are well placed to rise to the new challenges and constantly evolving priorities within the world of education with confidence. In advance of the new academic year, a new headmaster has been appointed at Knighton House and arrangements are being made for an experienced figure from the prep school sector to join the governing body of Bryanston.

"This is an exciting and significant development for both schools," says Julian Greenhill, Chair of Bryanston Governors. "As next

door neighbours, Bryanston and Knighton House have enjoyed a close and productive relationship over many decades. The decision to proceed with a merger is a logical and forward-looking step that will enrich the experience and deliver significant benefits for all pupils. It will also enable both schools to build on their respective strengths and to capitalise fully on shared resources, facilities and expertise to provide a complete, distinctive and compelling educational offering for children from 3 to 18 years old."

From September, Knighton House will be renamed Bryanston Knighton House, and all existing teaching and support staff at the school will be TUPE-transferred to Bryanston. Will Lockett, a former housemaster at Bryanston, has returned to Dorset and been appointed as the new Headmaster of Bryanston Knighton House. For the past six years he was



Headmaster of Abberley Hall co-educational prep school in Worcestershire where he played an instrumental role in forging a new strategic relationship with Malvern College.

Knighton House has recently celebrated its 70th anniversary and its 30-acre site in Durweston lies directly adjacent to Bryanston's 400-acre campus. The school's unique 'Knowledge, Enlightenment and Discovery'

curriculum has been developed to prepare pupils for learning at all stages of their lives with a clear focus on personal fulfilment and key qualities such as optimism, curiosity, creativity, independence and self-awareness. Such an approach closely reflects the key values embodied within Bryanston's education model and the merger between the two schools will extend the opportunities available to pupils.

Pictured (left to right): Mark Mortimer, Headmaster of Bryanston, with Will Lockett, the new Headmaster of Bryanston Knighton House

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# Diana Award for staffer and student

The entrepreneur in residence at Bedford School has been recognised with the highest accolade a young person can achieve for social action or humanitarian efforts.

Zubair Junjuna has received The Diana Award which was established in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales, from the charity of the same name and has the support of her sons, The Duke of Cambridge and The Duke of Sussex.

Zubair's role at Bedford is part of the school's strategic focus on ensuring that all boys are equipped with the skills they need to succeed in the working world. Entrepreneurial thinking is a key area, alongside digital technology and community partnerships, where emphasis is placed on developing boys to meet the demands of a technological world, but also, importantly, a world where it has never been more important to accentuate the wonders of being human.

His work to date has included an Entrepreneurial Day, which involved a series of tasks and presentations where boys worked towards a UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target and a Prep School workshop on the art of

storytelling. Importantly, his role at Bedford School extends beyond the traditional definition of entrepreneurship – it's not simply about making money or starting a business. Boys learn how to generate and develop ideas, often working towards a social goal, aiming to make a positive change in society as a whole.

Zubair was honoured with The Diana Award for going 'above and beyond to tackle inequalities in education', with his revolutionary revision platform, ZNotes. Founded in 2014, he created ZNotes as a way to share revision notes after recognising that there was a disparity in the access students from around the world had to resources, advice and support when studying for their exams.

ZNotes' mission is to end educational inequality by providing free access to the highest quality education and empowering young people in becoming global changemakers.

James Hodgson, Head Master at Bedford School, said he was delighted to have welcomed Zubair to the school. "Zubair is an incredibly talented individual and is a great addition to the Bedford

School team. He has already made a huge impact on the boys and we look forward to seeing him continue to share his entrepreneurial expertise and inspire them in their future careers."

Bolton School Y12 student Victoria Wong received a Diana Award in recognition of her outstanding contribution to society through her work with St John's Ambulance, BiteBack2030, as a Youth MP, as a Chair of the AQA student Advisory Group and for her support with the mass vaccination programme.

A delighted Victoria commented: "I feel immensely proud of myself knowing the hard work I've put into my community is being recognised. I also definitely feel a lot more inspired to continue my voluntary work, seeing the other recipients and what an incredible job they've all done too.

"I think I won the award due to the commitment and passion I've demonstrated in my community work. In addition, I have insight into many different voluntary sectors, as I carry my work out in all aspects of the community. This includes working in the pandemic response, my local town, youth groups and health charities."



Victoria has helped thousands of members of the public during a mentally exhausting time as part of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. A crucial part of her role has been checking up on people after they have had their vaccines, answering questions and having conversations with people who have not left their homes since last March; one older lady told her she was the highlight of her day.

Advertorial Feature

# Technology isn't replacing teachers, but it is supercharging them

By Priya Lakhani OBE, CEO of CENTURY

It has become almost cliché to suggest robots will soon take over our jobs – Bill Gates has even suggested that robots should be taxed in order to stop their rapid march. Aside from the scare stories that owe more to science fiction than rational analysis, there is good reason to believe that the coming decades will see a reduction in the role played by humans in many sectors, including transport, healthcare and manufacturing. The ONS predicts that 1.5 million people in England are at 'high risk' of losing their jobs to automation.

But just as the telephone and the internet have brought humans closer together than ever before, technology itself does not intrinsically result in a reduced role for humans. It can often mean the opposite by allowing us to perform human-dependent tasks better and

more frequently. Automating tasks that do not require human input allows us to maximise our time on those that do. Technology can magnify the human aspects of our jobs by diminishing the mechanical.

Technology can also amplify the economic role of humans by increasing demand for goods and services produced by human-led industries. Even the industrial revolution, during which machines were literally destroyed by vigilante packs of anxious workers, resulted in a greater economic role for humans. When technology automates that which is better done by technology, it paradoxically opens even more doors for us humans.

However, the most important factor in whether technology replaces or augments humans is our own will. With teaching, the will of all stakeholders involved is crystal

clear – politicians, educationalists, headteachers, parents and students alike treasure human teachers. There is no movement to replace teachers because no one would gain from robotising one of the most important human-centric aspects of our lives.

While technology is important to education, nobody's life was ever changed by an overhead projector, and no robot teacher would ever be able to turn around a child having a bad day. The ONS data back this up: school teachers face the lowest probability of automation out of all sectors.

The pandemic saw artificial intelligence become mainstream in education. From leading independent schools like Eton College to inner-city state schools like Michaela Community School to groups of Syrian refugees in the

Middle East, AI is now being used to give children from all walks of life a better education. Perhaps paradoxically, AI is being used in a way that gives teachers an even more important role. Tom Rogerson, Headmaster of Cottesmore School, believes AI helps "teachers to be even more pupil-facing by automating their marking and planning, giving them more time to focus on teaching and being with the pupils."

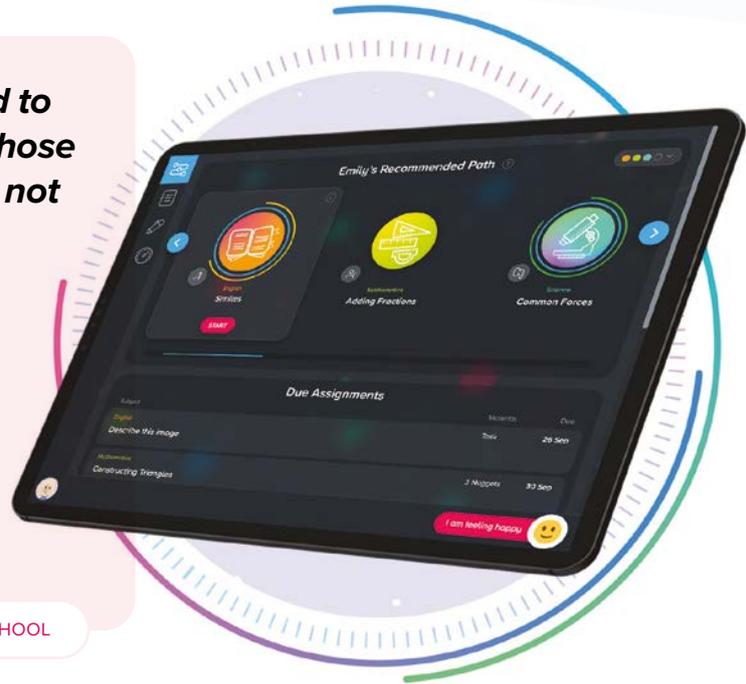
The brilliance and love of humans will never be replicated by technology. But when used appropriately, it can augment teaching, acting as the sidekick to the superhero. AI has the power to improve our lives in the same way that technology has for centuries, while at the same time enriching the vital human interaction in schools.

***Our ethos is to be kind, to work hard, and to have fun, and if you're not doing any of those three things at any one time, then you're not doing the right thing at Cottesmore.***

Obviously, the need for us to prepare the children very thoroughly for their next schools is always there. One of our main aims is to get the children into the correct school for them next and that requires a lot of preparation.

My vision for technology is for it to serve us. Secondly, it has to increase the time that we spend together and CENTURY helps us to do that. **It is increasingly helping our teachers to be even more pupil-facing by automating their marking and planning and giving them more time to actually focus on teaching.**

**TOM ROGERSON, HEADTEACHER, COTTESMORE SCHOOL**



**CENTURY is brilliant and we use it the right amount to help pupils to learn but also to allow our teachers to be freed up to help those pupils even more.** When we're in the classroom, we use it to free ourselves up because of those AI recommended pathways, which extend and are adaptive – these give us more time to be face-to-face with the pupils.

The automated marking is a huge boost to our teachers. **CENTURY gives you insights into pupils' levels of understanding that would not otherwise be possible.** Ahead of time you can assign pupils micro-lessons on CENTURY, which allows you to see instantly who has got it, who is able to apply that knowledge and who is really struggling straight away. Within a very short amount of time you can get instant feedback, which is more accurate than asking pupils how well they understand a topic in class.

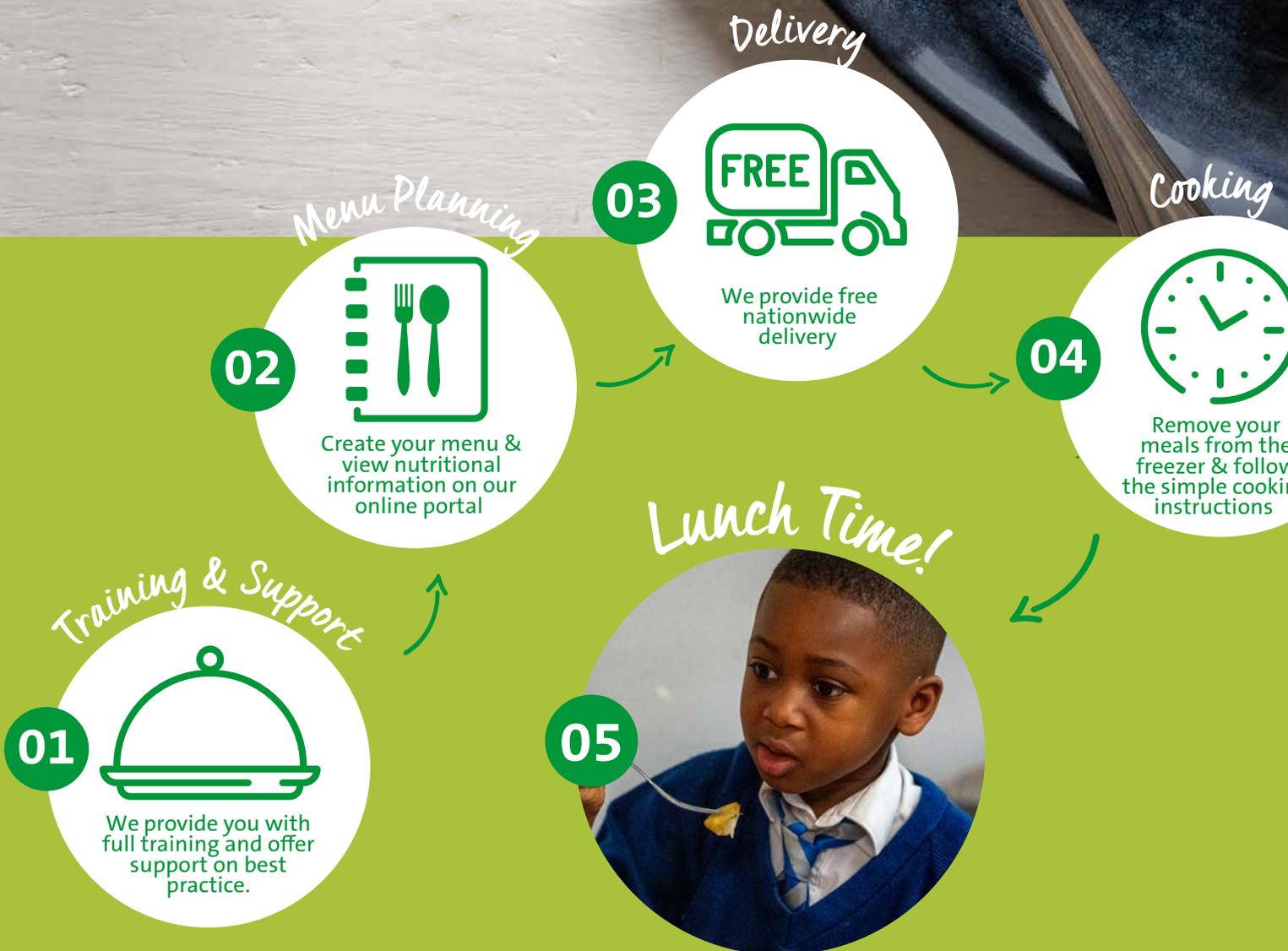
Often if a child has found a lesson difficult, they'll tell you that they're feeling on the fence, whereas actually if you look at the data, often they're doing very well and they're just being stretched. **CENTURY allows you to see what's actually happening in terms of understanding, which saves you time because it's marked and analysed for you, with instant personalised feedback.**

I use CENTURY heavily in my teaching and I have found it to be a phenomenal resource. **The impact is brilliant and it is driving the children on.** There's no finishing activities, there's no running out of resources, there's no being caught on the wrong foot because pupil x has actually nailed that topic and is smashing the examples. Using a resource like CENTURY to bolster your activities is a very, very good thing. I'm glad that we have it, I think it's helped us out a lot through this last year and will continue to be an important part of our teaching.

**MIKE WALLER, DIRECTOR OF STUDIES, COTTESMORE SCHOOL**



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# Behaviour policies, disciplinary procedures, & parental contracts

Good behaviour, integrity and respect for others are cornerstones for any school's disciplinary regime. Mindful of balancing the needs and welfare of each pupil and the school community as a whole, a well drafted and robustly applied behaviour policy will go a long way in ensuring clarity and fairness for all concerned. Lawyer Ane Vernon offers some tips...

Independent schools owe various statutory and common law duties to their pupils, but the relationship between an independent school and its pupils is primarily regulated by the contract between the parents and the school. This will generally provide that a pupil may be suspended or excluded for serious misconduct or breach of the school's policies. Also, increasingly, terms include obligations as to the parents' conduct: aggressive or unreasonable behaviour towards school staff may give the school a contractual right to exclude a pupil, irrespective of the child's own behaviour.

Punishment of poor behaviour must not breach any applicable legislation and it must be reasonable in all the circumstances. The power to exclude is generally expressed to be a discretionary one that rests with the head teacher and discretionary powers must be exercised reasonably. The parent contract is a contract for services (i.e. the provision of education) and as such it is subject to consumer rights legislation. This affords protection to parents as consumers and means that the school's terms should be demonstrably fair, transparent and easy to understand. In addition, the contract will contain an implied

term that in providing the services the school acts with reasonable care and skill.

As a private organisation independent schools are not subject to human rights law, although complaints founded in human rights (e.g. misuse of private information) could be brought. Sometimes the parent contract enshrines human rights principles as a matter of contract. In any case, compliance with such fundamental principles will be prudent and assists in maintaining good relations with parents, as well as minimising challenges.

Independent schools must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and in the application of a disciplinary regime consideration must be given to pupils with protected characteristics. Their rights and needs must be carefully balanced against the needs and welfare of the wider school community. When sanctions are imposed account must be taken of the individual pupil's circumstances such as age, special educational needs or religious requirements. An exclusion successfully challenged under the Equality Act may give rise to a range of remedies such as a direction that the pupil be reinstated, that

the school provide an apology or undergo training.

As a matter of good governance there should be a detailed record of any steps or decisions taken under the school's disciplinary regime (including investigations). Such records will not only be relevant in the event of a dispute but may also assist when updating policies and procedures.

A pupil in a state school facing exclusion has clear routes of appeal, from the governing body to the Independent Review Panel and the possibility of a court challenge by way of a judicial review. The independent sector is outside that regime and a decision to exclude a pupil cannot be challenged by a judicial review. The school's policies will often confer a right of appeal of a decision to exclude a pupil or, if no specific appeal mechanism is set out, the school's complaints procedure may be followed. Not least bearing in mind the fairness requirement a clear written appeal policy is important. In the case of a serious sanction such as exclusion the pupil and their parents should have the right to make representations and be aware of the procedure to do so.

One would expect a well drafted parent contract to refer to the



code of conduct and other policies. To aid transparency schools may consider drawing attention to these documents in the acceptance form confirming an offer of a place. Policies can and should be updated from time to time, to conform with changes in law and statutory guidance, and to reflect trends and developments in society. It is good practice to remind both pupils and parents of what is expected, and significant updates are worth highlighting.

Objections to necessary or reasonable policy updates are unlikely – above all parents should recognise the overarching objective of maintaining a safe and happy school environment. To encourage dialogue the school may choose to consult with parents and invite questions. Consequences of disagreement or non-compliance with school policies can be addressed in the parent contract, subject always to fairness and other relevant contractual principles.

Pictured: Ane Vernon is a Partner at law firm Payne Hicks Beach | [avernon@phb.co.uk](mailto:avernon@phb.co.uk) | 020 7465 4345

## Armed forces say thanks

A North Wales school has received a prestigious Ministry of Defence award – and a picture commemorating Wales's great poet Hedd Wyn – for its support for the Armed Services.

Myddelton College, in Denbigh, offers the most generous reduction in fees in the UK, 25 per cent, to families with serving members of the Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force.



Presentation to Myddelton College Headmaster Andrew Allman, centre, for the school's support of the CCF (Combined Cadet Force), with Sergeant-Major Graham Evans, left, in command of the school CCF and RWF Lieut-Colonel John Hurst

They also have their own Combined Cadet Force (CCF) squadron overseen by former Royal Welch Fusiliers Sergeant Major Graham Evans who

painted a squad of First World War RWF soldiers including Hedd Wyn.

Sergeant Major Evans, who has been exhibiting his paintings since he was

13, imagines a scene in the trenches on the eve of the bloody Battle of Passchendaele in 1917 with Hedd Wyn among the Royal Welch Fusiliers waiting to go over the top.

He had already entered a poem in the National Eisteddfod that year and it won the Chair but by then the Trawsfynydd shepherd poet, real name Ellis Humphrey Evans, aged 30 was dead, killed on the first morning.

The presentation at Myddelton College was made by Lieutenant-Colonel John Hurst who handed the certificates over to Headmaster Andrew Allman, along with the framed print of the painting.

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# Diners tuck in on meat-free Monday

Young eco-warriors from a school in Hampshire have realised a green dream – by taking meat off the menu for a day.

Meat-free Monday at Highfield and Brookham Schools towards the end of last term was the brainchild of the Year 7 eco committee, who are always looking at ways to lessen the school's environmental impact.

Despite the school always having two vegetarian choices on offer to pupils and staff at meal times every day as a matter of course, never before has the menu been completely devoid of a meaty option.

But that was exactly how it was one Monday as the children were presented with a series of alternative mouth-watering dishes that the catering team rustled up.

Out went firm favourites such as cottage pie, spare ribs, lasagne

and chicken curry to be replaced by Quorn spaghetti bolognese in a puttanesca sauce, halloumi fries with chipotle mayo in a sourdough pita, nachos with a vegetarian bean chilli, and hummus and falafel flatbreads.

And did the vegetarian and vegan offerings get the seal of approval from the youngsters at Brookham School and the older pupils at Highfield? Contented faces, big smiles and clean plates would certainly suggest so.

Plant-based diets are widely-regarded as being a significantly healthier option than their meat alternatives, helping cut incidences of heart disease, easing arthritic conditions and reducing calorific intake. Studies have also shown that there are big environmental benefits, with the whole food production process of farm to plate currently accounting for a

whopping 30 per cent of all global greenhouse emissions.

Phillip Evitt, the headmaster at Highfield School, said: "Meat-free Monday was a delightful initiative from our Year 7 eco committee, who are very much committed to making the world a better place for future generations in any way they can.

"The issue of climate change and global warming is rarely out of the headlines these days and it's very heartening for us to think that we are living and working with a group of selfless young people who really care passionately about their immediate environment and the world we all live in."

Highfield and Brookham Schools have long prided themselves on their approach to the environment and sustainability, with a carbon-neutral biomass boiler being introduced in 2013. The boiler uses wood



from the school's 500-acre estate in Liphook to produce energy to heat both schools, which have now incorporated sustainable energy into the curriculum with pupils visiting the renewable-energy installations as part of their studies.

And the pupils themselves continue to be busy with a range of ongoing green themes, such as building bug hotels, clearing ponds on the school grounds to encourage new growth and new life, and growing lettuce in their own kitchen garden.

Advertorial Feature

## Pondering plastic – perplexing problem or potential plan?

By Laura Taylor, buyer at allmanhall - food procurement experts, specialising in independent education.

As an increased awareness on health emerged as a predominant trend for 2021, we cannot ignore the importance of both our own well-being but also the health of our planet. Part 2 of the National Food Strategy released earlier this year centred on these intertwined, underlying themes.

With the global pandemic spring-boarding grab and go services, including in schools, there has been an increased demand for food packaging and disposables. However, there is an expectation from consumers for manufacturers and retailers to lead the way in reducing single-use plastic within the food industry. Already we have seen a ban on single-use plastic stirrers and straws, and it is likely that plastic

cutlery and plates will follow.

The development of more sustainable packaging solutions alongside strategies to reduce single-use plastics is a high priority.

As a certified carbon-negative manufacturer, one of allmanhall's sandwich provider partners, Real Wrap Company use sandwich and wrap boxes that are all plastic free. Replacing the usual plastic film with cellulose sourced from trees, this means that the whole box is easily recycled and can be put in the mixed or card recycling points.

With paper and cardboard being the most recycled products across the UK and Europe, many brands are developing paper-based solutions. One such example is an alternative

to the well-known Pringles can. Made from a combination of foil, cardboard, metal and plastic, the original packaging can be difficult to recycle through regular household recycling. However, it has been reported that, whilst the paper cans are easier to recycle than their current can, it can compromise on shelf-life with a reduced span of 15 months. With different properties to plastic, the manufacture of paper packaging means that machines usually meant for plastic must be adapted to suit a more fragile material. We may question, therefore whether paper is as good at keeping products fresh and how strong it is, especially when exposed to moisture.

Reducing single-use plastic whilst ensuring that food packaging still meets the standards required comes with numerous challenges. Concerns have been raised that the pressure to increase the recycled content in packaging to more than 30% could result in alternative materials being used that reduce food shelf life and consequently cause higher food wastage.

As a food contact material, packaging is highly regulated, and any new developments need approval – a process that takes time. It seems there is much more to come



in food packaging innovation, and this is likely to be sooner rather than later. Time is not on our side.

Following the Budget in 2017, the UK Government called for an exploration into using the tax system as a means of challenging single-use plastic waste. This new tax is set to be introduced in April 2022 and allmanhall will soon be providing more details about this – follow us on Twitter @allmanhall or visit our blog page <https://allmanhall.co.uk/blog> for updates.



# What would an 11% food cost saving mean for your school?



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- Chris Ingram, Head of Catering, ACS International Schools



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# Profile

In conversation with Jon Gray

**Born:** 1972

**Married:**

Yes, to Emma Gray (Head of the Junior School at St. Margaret's, in Bushey). We have 4 children – Harper (12), Ivo (10), Willow (6) and Ludo (2)

**Schools and University**

**Attended:**

Bedford Modern School, Christ Church College, Canterbury & Institute of Education (University of London)

**First job:**

1996 – Teacher – Vinehall School, East Sussex

**First management job:**

2001 – Head of Middle School – Arnold House School, London

**Appointed to current job:**

2012

**Favourite piece of music:**

Everybody's Changing, Keane

**Favourite food:**

Potted Shrimps

**Favourite drink:**

Claret

**Favourite holiday destination:**

Far North Highlands of Scotland

**Favourite leisure pastime:**

Cricket

**Favourite TV or radio programme/series:**

Yes Minister

**Suggested epitaph:**

He left people and places better than he found them

**Q** Your father was a police officer, who had reached the position of Deputy Chief Constable of Bedfordshire by the time he retired. Looking back on your childhood years at Bedford Modern School, do you feel your father's job influenced what was expected of you and how you behaved? Did you feel any pressure to meet higher standards than your peers?

**A** *Growing up, I certainly felt fairly obliged to behave in a certain way, not to break the law and to have high standards in terms of how I conducted myself. I have always tried to stick to that way of life ever since. I suppose there was an underlying expectation (mainly from myself) that I would choose a professionally-driven career and stick to it. I also had aspirations from a young age that I would reach the top of whichever organisation I worked for in the future, or at least excel in the path I had followed.*

**Q** You have four children of your own. Does your job as a headmaster influence how you bring them up and how you expect them to behave?

**A** *Truthfully, in my years as a teacher, I have found that the most challenging children to educate or discipline are always your own. As a result, I probably do end up being a fairly formal father at times, despite my best efforts. I do try to encourage my children to have a sense of purpose in how they live their lives, whilst trying hard myself to remember that they are young children rather than mini adults. I am a big believer in children having a genuine childhood too; for me it is important that they live their lives with a sense of adventure and wonder, while trying to make a positive difference to the world around them.*

**Q** You read History with Education for your degree, and taught history when you started out on your career. When historians look back in fifty years on how schools in general handled education during the pandemic, what aspect do you think will receive the most positive verdict, and which the least favourable? Would you expect the verdicts to be similar for York House School under your leadership?

**A** *I am sure I speak for most schools when I say that the progress in the use of technology and learning platforms would certainly be the most positive effect to come out of the pandemic. On the flip-side, a lack of understanding of the mental health aspects of lockdowns and school closures might be the least favourable. Certain age groups of children clearly benefitted during the lockdowns in terms of increased independence, but the effects were varied. For example, in general, very young children scored highly for extra parental attachment but scored poorly in risk taking. In terms of York House's reaction I think we got most things right by prioritising mental health and wellbeing over exam fever, but certainly our remote provision of education improved significantly and rapidly from the first weeks of uncertainty.*

**Q** York House serves pupils from nursery age to 13. Have you and your team noticed any increase in mental health difficulties amongst pupils during the pandemic, and if so, at what age have they started to chip in and what actions have you felt able to take? What systems have you adopted to pick up on mental health strains amongst staff and provide support to those affected?

**A** *Yes we have. Any child who had aspects of anxiety / depression etc. has seen those exacerbated whilst the demand on pupils has also pushed some children into those areas not experienced before – such as elements of OCD for instance. We have recently been accredited by Leeds Carnegie University as a centre of excellence for pupil mental health and wellbeing – the really thorough audit of that process has been key, as opposed to the badge. We have also made great use of our onsite smallholding and resident rescued animals, to bring 'no judgement' comfort to children during the pandemic. We have pigs, ponies, horses, pigmy goats, donkeys, sheep, lambs and more. Our animals have become listening companions to many children to help them express their emotions and anxieties outside of the classroom. Alongside a regular smallholding club at break times and two after school clubs, the school has also adapted its timetable to*

# Jon Gray has been head of York House School, Hertfordshire, since 2012. He was previously head at Hornsby House School, London.

*offer extra form time sessions to allow more classes to escape the bustle of the busy classroom environment and to have time to engage with the animals one to one, on a daily basis. Pupils who need to share their feelings and emotions further, are given extra sessions named 'Donkey Downtime'. This is a structured forum in which pupils can share, reflect and discuss matters during their day at school.*

**Q** You were the youngest Prep School head in the country when you were appointed to lead Hornsby House at the age of 34. You stayed in that job for six years. Would you say there is an optimum age to assume headship for the first time, an optimum point of balance between the enthusiasm of youth and the benefit of experience?

**A** *I think I was 32 years old when first appointed in the role and 33 when I actually took the job up. I would encourage people that are considering moving into headship to be ready for a genuine career change. It simply isn't "much like it was before, but with a couple of extra responsibilities." I suspect many of us are more certain of things when we start out and those doubts creep in over time! I do believe that if you're good enough then you're old enough. Someone once said to me that they'd rather be too young for their duties than too old for them. At the end of the prep school drive, the world is changing so rapidly, and it's all too easy for school leaders to decide that the easiest way to avoid getting anything wrong is to avoid changing anything. This falls down over time as the world evolves and the school doesn't; eventually families will see nothing more than a charming anachronism rather than vibrant relevance to the world of today and tomorrow. You have to continually embrace change as a head, education never stands still and neither should we.*

**Q** In your first decade at York House, pupil numbers have increased by more than 50% and you have invested seriously in both facilities and staff training. You say on your website: "My

responsibility is to make sure that every year we get better at what we do". This is a statement of intent to which all heads might usefully aspire. If a new head asked for your three top tips on how to make it happen, what would you reply?

**A** *Firstly, I do think that a one line job description or goal is a useful one for focus, i.e. "The school needs to be better at the end of the year than it was at the start" because maintenance is not really leadership. A second thought would be that heads need to free up more time for their staff to focus on the stuff they're individually really good at. As heads we should be looking at their specific skill set and then planning accordingly, rather than carving out a rigid timetable and then trying to mould someone to fit into it. Thirdly, the person who inspired me to go into teaching was a head teacher called Chris Nicholson and I remember him saying that "as a head you will see an issue where staff, governors, parents and children all see things differently and they will look to you to bring down the sword of Solomon". His advice was to simply do what is in the children's best interests because that is the only path. "Nicholson's razor" has been a useful touchstone when issues are not as simple as social media would have them be.*

**Q** On your same website message you state: "York House School is not an exam factory - those are available in the area - but we think there should be room in a child's experience for joy, wonder, pleasure and adventure". Tell us more about your outdoor learning initiatives which are a central element of that experience.

**A** *That sense of adventure is hugely important at York House - finding out something new and becoming a detective, appeals to a child whereas 'learn this to pass a test' simply bores them. Outdoor activity calls to the thousands of years of our ancestry and how we are wired, rather than the recent moments where screens have surpassed reality for many. Think of the difference in experience between standing on top of a mountain versus watching a video clip of someone else doing*

*just that. We have an exciting smallholding as mentioned which helps connect our pupils to nature - such as when we lambed for the first time this spring and welcomed 14 newborn lambs into our school community. We found that caring for the lambs gave children an increased level of maturity as they learned how much the animals relied on them for their food, bottle-feeding and general care. The newborn lambs give them a glimpse of how life starts out for the animals and how we must give them time and space to adapt to their new surroundings. Fishing is also going from strength to strength in the list of school activities which is such a mindful and beneficial activity. Don't they say that a person "has a number of years allotted to them, but those hours spent fishing don't count?!" We also have a purpose built mountain biking track, a traversing wall and obstacle courses in 47 acres of meadows. We are firm believers in letting children experience risk which is another beneficial experience of spending time in the outdoors.*

**Q** How can heads ensure they stay fresh and connected? By continuing to teach perhaps?

**A** *I wouldn't claim to be either fresh nor connected, but I am passionate about knowing and understanding our pupil community really well. I always say to our parents that the reasons I teach a particular year group are (i) to ensure I know all of the pupils individually from that year upwards really well (ii) it enables me to advise parents and families on suitable senior school destinations by knowing the person not just their "numbers", (iii) to talk to the senior schools about the boy or girl with a similarly informed opinion and with a little bit of history occasionally.*

**Q** How do you keep track of what really goes on in the classroom without setting parental alarm bells ringing - in other words how do you find out where standards are lower than you would like before it becomes a results-issue?

*Continued >*

# Profile In conversation with Jon Gray (continued)

**A** One of the many wonders of the private education sector is that our customers (families and pupils) keep us fully informed on their opinions. Plus as a head I'm showing people around the school at least three to four times per week. It's also pretty clear when a classroom is performing well and when it isn't. Assessment data is also there to back up those opinions. Am I a fan of pupil-assessment of teachers? No I'm really not. Instead, I want to hear our children's opinions and ideas and to understand what they think about different scenarios. This is very different to handing them responsibility beyond their age and maturity.

**Q** You are known to be a wilderness fan, an outdoorsy type who once walked from John o' Groats to Land's End and who loves roaming the Scottish hills. In a media-saturated era where natural-world doomsday scenarios are peddled 24/7, how do you educate children on urgent environmental matters without adding to a sense of alarm?

**A** Generally I think children are far better informed and more sensible on the environmental agenda than most of us ageing adults. When it comes to protecting our planet, they are keen to challenge the status quo and to bring new ideas to the table – they aren't afraid to roll up their sleeves and get involved in new initiatives either. We certainly aim to provide pupils with strong environmental experiences to learn from in the outdoors and in the classroom. We recently hosted a TedXTalk on the theme of "think globally and act locally" which produced an amazing breadth and quality of responses from our pupils. These kinds of events are particularly successful when embedded into the curriculum and the overall school ethos. We have also appointed a really strong Head of Corporate Social Responsibility which is an exciting role and will become more central in importance over the next few years.

**Q** You are a Governor at a local state primary school. What's the biggest frustration the head of that school

has to face compared to an independent sector head?

**A** At the type of school I am a Governor of, the biggest challenge is always funding, without a doubt. It is an issue that many state primary school leaders face on a daily basis. Certainly an independent school head has far greater autonomy which appeals to some more than others.

**Q** Who, or what, inspired you to get into teaching as a career?

**A** As mentioned above, Chris Nicholson who taught me at Bedford Modern, and before that was a renowned master at Christ's Hospital, gave me a vision of the life of a good teacher. In terms of a career, I think most of us are motivated by a blend between affiliation, influence and achievement and understanding the true balance of those three for yourself, is a useful step in the right direction.

## Bull Products' lockdown alarm solution for schools and colleges

Bull Products, a manufacturer of life-saving fire protection equipment, has launched its Cygnus Lockdown Alarm remote device, specifically designed for lockdown procedures in schools and colleges.

Unwelcome intruders pose a real threat to students and staff and whilst the risk in the UK is low, schools and colleges must have a procedure in place should a

dangerous individual access their grounds.

The National Counter Terrorism Office (NaCTSO) recommends that every school and college should have a method to warn students and staff that a lockdown event has occurred. This could be through a tannoy announcement, text messages, word of mouth or pop-up messages on computer screens. However, the most effective way to trigger a lockdown event is to have a dedicated alarm system with a distinctive tone.

The Cygnus Lockdown Alarm's remote devices can be fitted in each classroom or in convenient locations across the school. Each remote device has a trigger to sound the alarm and an alarm unit. Once a lockdown alarm is triggered, all units then sound the distinct warning. A school or college can have up to 480 units



installed, whilst the system can be linked to an auto-dialler to notify up to 50 mobile phones for emergency contacts.

Whilst having a dedicated lockdown alarm is not currently mandatory, Government advice is favouring dedicated alarms and critical incident preparation and planning is taken very seriously.

Matthew Trigwell, Sales Director at Bull Products says: "Some schools may be deterred from

fitting a dedicated lockdown alarm due to the disruption caused and the installation costs. However, wireless systems like the Bull Cygnus Lockdown Alarm, can be fitted quickly without requiring the expensive installation of unsightly trucking. This solution provides peace of mind for teachers, students and parents alike, ensuring everyone on site is protected should an incident occur."

For more information, contact Bull on 01432 806806, visit [www.bullproducts.co.uk](http://www.bullproducts.co.uk) or email [enquiries@bullproducts.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@bullproducts.co.uk)



# Trips are back, but are they better?

The last year and a half for educational visits has been difficult, for schools, the industry and in particular the missed opportunities for students. So it

is with great fanfare that students are starting to travel again, but the world has moved on a long way since March 2020, but has trip planning?

The technology revolution has long been supporting education, and now it is time for your trip planning process to be better than the paper-based systems of yesteryear!

I have spoken to so many teachers who dread planning a trip, too many forms, too much chasing and a lot of confusion. But they still do it because of the benefit it gives students! You can hear the collective sigh of relief when a trip returns safely!

To bounce back better with your trip management process, make sure you have automated systems in place to support your trip leaders and reduce at least some of that anxiety they may feel.

Having a digital trip authorisation process alone will save you hundreds of hours each year, bonus points if you can track the progress and keep audits of authorisations like you can in eduTrips.



Look at your trip consent requests and payments with parents, make sure this has the same level of automation and auditing to ensure your group leaders feel in control.

At eduTrips we aim to smooth out the whole trip planning process, but whether you use us or someone else. Please stop printing your authorisation forms!

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## Debuts Black Swan Dance

Dauntsey's School, Wiltshire has staged a dance performance of the psychological thriller *Black Swan*, for pupils, staff and a small number of parents. Based on the 2010 film of the same name, Nina is a young dancer who struggles to maintain her sanity after winning the opportunity to play White Swan in *Swan Lake*. The ballet requires a dancer who can play both the White Swan with innocence and grace, and the Black Swan, who represents guile and sensuality. While Nina is perfect for the role of the White Swan, a newcomer, Lily, is the personification of the Black Swan. As rivalry between the two dancers transforms into a twisted friendship, Nina's dark side begins to emerge.

Emily Wilkins, Head of Dance at Dauntsey's said;

"This production is very different to anything we have done before. It has much more serious themes which most can relate to. It was a very collaborative process and lots of the choreography came from the pupils.

"Due to the short timeframe and Covid restrictions, I decided to work with a much smaller cast of only nine Sixth Form dancers and we managed to put the piece together in just one term, rehearsing during break and prep times. This process brought the dancers together as they had to rely on each other so much. Each having such an important role has given them the experience of working together as a company, as they may experience in the future if they pursue a career in dance."



## Seven hills cultural project

The 50th birthday celebrations of Scotland's national music school began with the official launch of the Seven Hills Project.

St Mary's Music School has brought together the literary genius of Alexander McCall Smith with the talents of a range of composers in a major two-year cultural project, which began with the first of seven premiere performances in July, and

culminates with a birthday concert at the Usher Hall in June 2023.

Alexander McCall Smith has written a collection of seven poems to reflect the character of the seven hills of Edinburgh and seven composers (all with links to the School) have been commissioned to each write a musical response to one of the hills and the corresponding poem.

The first commissioned work, inspired by Arthur's Seat and Alexander McCall Smith's accompanying poem, is entitled *Theory of the Earth* and is by the young Scottish composer Jay Capperault (pictured with staff and students). It was premiered by senior pupils alongside professional percussionist Tom Hunter and was broadcast as part of the school's Summer Concert 2021 ([webinarjam.com](http://webinarjam.com)).

The remaining six commissioned hill works will be premiered across Edinburgh as part of the school's end-of-term concerts, over the next two years. Recordings of these performances will be available to watch online. The composers and hills are:

Tom David Wilson: Blackford Hill  
Neil Tõmas Smith: Calton Hill  
Helen Grime: Braid Hills  
Ailie Robertson: Craiglockhart Hill  
Simon Smith: Corstorphine Hill  
David Horne: Castle Rock

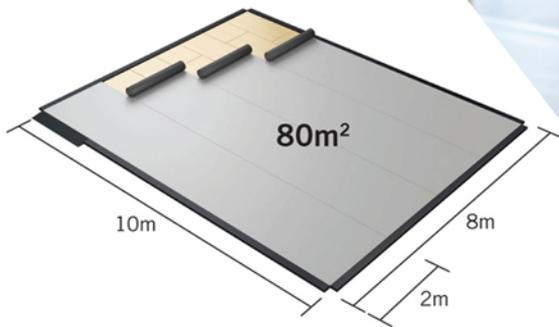
As part of the project, St Mary's Music School will take its celebration of new music composition and performance to primary and secondary schools across Scotland. Regional senior

pupils will engage in composition workshops led by Jay Capperault, who will help these pupils develop their ideas into musical compositions that take their inspiration from a local landmark and will be performed and recorded by the young musicians of St Mary's Music School.

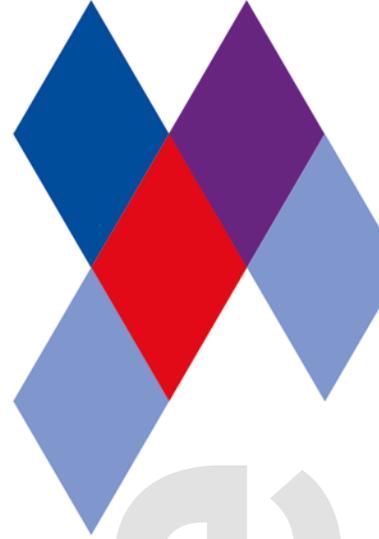
Dr Valerie Pearson, Head of Strings at St Mary's Music School, is leading the project: "Seven Hills is a unique project to promote new music in Scotland, to celebrate music and creativity and, ultimately, to use creativity as a way of engaging young people with new music. It was inspired by the School's desire to celebrate Edinburgh as the wonderful home of our music-making through the topography of its seven hills and the way they connect culture, community and heritage. Importantly, the project is also an opportunity to commission new music, something that the School hasn't done in a while, and for our own students to perform these new pieces".



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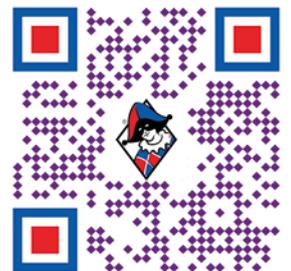
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## Film producer to renovate school theatre

West Sussex prep school, Windlesham House, has received an extremely generous, personal donation offer from LA film producer, Arnon Milchan, to provide the funds to renovate its onsite school theatre and creative arts facilities. Milchan lives locally in Sussex and as a passionate supporter of the creative arts, Milchan is keen to support the school in the renovation of its "Malden Family Theatre", which was originally built with funds raised by parents of children at Windlesham. The funds will go directly towards new flooring, state-of-the-art LED stage lighting, new, retractable seating to accommodate 300 people and interior redecoration.

Ben Evans, Headmaster at Windlesham House School spoke about the donation, "We are extremely grateful for Arnon's generous donation to our school. Our theatre was built back in 1986 and is in real need of renovation and refurbishment, so these funds will make a huge difference to the lives of our children and the whole school community. We plan to recognise his generosity and the legacy it will leave at Windlesham House with a special commemorative plaque and a grand opening, once the works are complete."

Milchan will make regular, personal donations monthly to the school for a period of three years to cover the refurbishment of the

performing arts facility at the school. He commented: "It is an absolute pleasure to be able to support the school in restoring its beloved theatre and to help to bring it firmly into the 21st Century with new state-of-the-art facilities. Children really do benefit from increased exposure to the performing arts and I am confident that Windlesham will make great use of the new equipment and renovations. I am looking forward to the work commencing and to future school productions."

Windlesham House is renowned for its creative arts with many children going on to senior schools with drama and music scholarships and this will further enhance the children's opportunities. Famous actors that attended Windlesham House School include Tom Hiddleston, Adam Buxton, Guy Ritchie, Michael Hordern, John Michie, Noah Huntley and Tamsin Merchant.

Milchan is best known for producing a long line of award-winning films from *Pretty Woman* to *L.A. Confidential*, *Free Willy*, *Mr & Mrs Smith*, *Man on Fire*, *12 Years a Slave*, *The Revenant*, *Little Women*, *Gone Girl*, *Bohemian Rhapsody*, and many, many more. He has worked with some top movie stars including Robert de Niro, Julia Roberts, Brad Pitt, Christian Bale, Denzel Washington, Leonardo di Caprio, Al Pacino, and Margot Robbie to name a few.

Pictured: Arnon Milchan (left) with Ben Evans

## Dance World Cup success

This summer, New Hall School, Essex, celebrated the success of their students at the 2021 Dance World Cup (DWC), the biggest dance competition in the world with over 6000 dancers from 54 countries. In this year's competition, held in Telford, New Hall dancers placed 3rd in two solo categories and 4th in a duet and group category.

2020 alumnus Bosco Chiu won the bronze medal in the Senior Solo Lyrical category with a piece choreographed by teacher Laura Bouckley, while New Hall alumna and Dance Teacher Darcie Playle won the bronze medal in the Senior Solo Show Dance category with her own choreography.

"The Dance World Cup was an incredible opportunity, and it was exciting to watch the top dancers from all over the world while representing and supporting the New Hall team. Since this was



my first competition in five years, I am overjoyed to have won 3rd place with my solo" said Darcie, (pictured above), who has worked at New Hall as a Dance Teacher since the start of the academic year 2020-21, after having graduated from Bird College Conservatoire for Dance and Musical Theatre.

Year 8 student Lois Dennison and Darcie Playle achieved 4th place in the Senior Duet/Trio Tap category just 0.2 marks away from a bronze medal with their tap duet called 'Stepping Out' choreographed by Sarah Molina, Head of Dance at New Hall School. In the Children Small Group Tap category, dancers Darcie Meechan, Lois Dennison, Sienna Sando and Nancy Warn placed 4th with their quartet Palladio.

## It's In The News!

Student Indie band 'The News' are making headlines with the release of their debut EP - a collection of original beach summer tunes which include a hot sax solo!

The four-piece band of Brentwood School Upper Sixth students, Neo Merrell, Eshan Chopra, Will Johnson and Charles Tomlinson, recorded their EP 'Headlines' at the school.

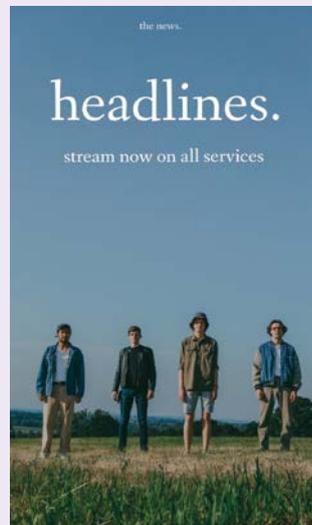
Formed 18 months ago, 'The News', who have established a veritable fan base on the campus, turned to the recording studio during lockdown. As Will explained: "The News was primarily a way for us to jam and have fun as a group of mates. We began by performing covers, exploring our interests in an eclectic mix of genres from jazz to rock. For us, performing live is our passion.

"With venues closed over lockdown, we shifted our focus to the recording studio with great help from the immensely talented Mr Matt Charlesworth, the School's very own Digital

You can stream The News' four-track EP on all platforms here: <https://ditto.fm/headlines-the-news>

Production Engineer. This has let us continue to create whilst exploring a new avenue.

"Headlines, our debut EP, is a refined collection of our favourite original material: "proper beach indie summer vibes". A special thanks to James Maltby for his help along the way and insane photography. We hope you enjoy listening to it as much as we did making it."



# Charity song

Stars from Capital FM and Classic FM have backed a new song, out now, inspired and created by Wakefield Grammar School Foundation in collaboration with the media and entertainment group, Global, on behalf of children's charity, Variety.

Available now to download for free from Spotify, Amazon Music and Apple Music, the song, 'I Am Me' was written and performed by boys and girls aged four to 17 from the Foundation's three schools: Pre-Prep, Wakefield Girls' and QEGS. The single was produced at Wakefield Girls' recording studio facilities together with Global.

The project was spearheaded by the students of the three Wakefield Grammar Schools for the local community, with its royalties going directly to Variety to raise much-needed funds for equipment for

local vulnerable children. Lyrics including 'I am the future, I am the stars' and 'We are the voice that fights for the dream' were inspired by students' commitment to help all children reach their goals.

The Foundation's Arts and Music department has supported its talented students in their six-week venture involving songwriting and production sessions with tutors.

Stars from Global's radio stations including Capital FM and Classic FM sent good luck messages and videos to the pupils.

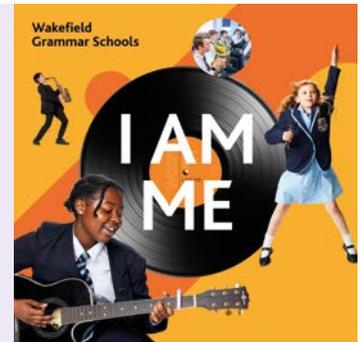
Marvin Humes who presents evenings on Capital FM said; "It's so cool that you're involved in writing, singing and performing your own song."

Aled Jones from Classic FM also sent messages of congratulations to the pupils; "How exciting you

can write and perform your very own song. You're heroes."

Head of Wakefield Girls' and QEGS, Heidi-Jayne Boyes and Dr Brookes, shared their thoughts on the song's production. "We are incredibly proud of our students, they have shown such commitment and enthusiasm in creating 'I Am Me'. It is clear to see the talent and sheer joy felt throughout the process, which has generated such a professional commercial song for everyone to download and enjoy. We hope families of our schools as well as the region and beyond can share and download, knowing it will help improve the quality of life for vulnerable children living very close to us right now."

Whilst the single is free to download, all royalties will go directly to Variety, and a Just Giving Page (I Am Me, by



Wakefield Grammar Schools Foundation) has been set up for additional voluntary donations: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/wakefield-grammar-schools>

Behind the scenes footage and information about the making of the song, 'I Am Me', will be featured at the schools' Open Days, being held next month (October) at all three schools: Wakefield Grammar Pre-Preparatory School, Wakefield Girls' High School and Queen Elizabeth Grammar School for boys.



# Multi school collaboration

Over 100 children from 4 different schools across the region performed in a multi-school virtual music collaboration of Ben E King's 'Stand by Me', organised by Felsted School.

Talented young musicians aged 9-18 from Felsted Prep School, Woodlands Hutton Manor, Woodford Green and St Michael's Prep (Leigh-on-Sea), showcased their voices and instrumental skills in a wonderful rendition of this well known song.

Director of Music at Felsted Prep Mr Owen Rees comments; "It was great to get other schools involved and wonderful to see the effort everyone put in."

Since children have been unable to perform together in the past year,

this project provided the perfect opportunity for young musicians to collaborate. The full performance can be viewed at [www.felsted.org/standbyme](http://www.felsted.org/standbyme).

Music is a strong discipline at Felsted, with opportunities for musicians at all levels, starting with every pupil playing an instrument from the youngest years. Pupils performed exceptionally well in their latest music exams with many achieving distinctions up to Grade 8 and two pupils gaining an ARSM Diploma. Felsted currently holds a unique partnership with Junior Guildhall, allowing talented musicians an integrated programme with the Felsted Music Department as well as the opportunity to study at a top conservatoire in London on Saturdays.

# Free music lessons for Year 3 pupils

A new scheme to offer free instrumental lessons is being offered to all Exeter Junior School pupils entering Year 3.

Starting this month (September), this pilot scheme will enable pupils to start a string instrument through weekly lessons.

Director of Music Peter Tamblyn and the junior school staff are supporting the Exeter School String Instrument Scheme (ESSIS), as it will both support the children's academic growth and pave the way for growing participation in orchestras and bands in future years.

"It is scientifically proven that learning a musical instrument helps children improve the learning in

other subjects, and also to improve the skills of learning how to learn, especially at this age," he said.

"Music lessons help children achieve more, academically, so we are delighted to trial this new scheme in the junior school."

This scheme is open to all Year 3 pupils. They will have a 35-minute instrumental lesson with one other pupil every week.

New starters' lessons will be on string instruments, complementing the whole class string tuition delivered to Year 3 children. Children will also be provided with instruments to practise on at home, free of charge.



Teacher Rebecca Wilson with young pupils

# Developing leadership through drama

The third in our series exploring how schools can be more deliberate in their approach to developing the leadership skills of their students. This time, Dr Andy Kemp, Principal of the National Mathematics and Science College and Arthur Mayhew, Senior Deputy Head at Oakham School, consider the role of drama in developing leadership techniques...

Leadership development in schools is too often accidental rather than intentional, yet the average independent school is full of fantastic opportunities for young people to develop their leadership. In this article, we want to challenge you to think proactively about how schools can be more purposeful about how dramatic opportunities are used in school life to help students develop and hone those essential leadership skills they will need in later life.

All leadership involves being part of a team; and drama is the epitome of team work. A successful production, whether large or small, relies on every person playing their part, whether that part is seen on-stage or goes on in the background. Understanding the impact that your actions have on everyone else is crucial, and that success relies upon the concerted efforts of everyone involved working towards the same goal.

Another essential leadership aspect is understanding the concept of accountability. Understanding how your behaviour impacts upon those around you is crucial, and in preparing for a production this applies to various aspects of the work involved. As an actor in a production, you are accountable to the rest of the cast to learn

your lines, to show up on time to rehearsals, to listen for your cues.

Leadership is also about influencing others, and drama provides an excellent opportunity to practise this skill. A drama production is about influencing the audience, to make them think or feel something in particular. This provides a chance for students to experience the power of story-telling and narrative to influence others.

Leadership is also about service, and serving others, and a drama production provides many opportunities to serve others. A successful production is a culmination of the acts of many people both on-stage and behind the scenes. It's easy to overlook the crucial role those off-stage provide, they serve the cast, they serve the production. But there are also lots of other opportunities for everyone to serve, whether by getting things ready before and after rehearsals, helping with refreshments, or clearing up! Leadership is about making sure things get done, and that means being willing to step in and do it yourself sometimes.

One of the things about drama productions is the feedback mechanism that is built into the process. During rehearsal stages you get the opportunity to develop ideas and refine them based on feedback,

leading towards the performances. The performances themselves provide another level to the feedback process, with direct feedback from the audience, and in most cases the opportunity to further refine things for the next performance!

Our colleagues in Drama departments have a crucial role to play in modelling these skills, and by being explicit about these intentions in terms of putting together the production, and also signposting the ways in which students can and do develop broader skills. They also have a crucial role to play in reinforcing the development of good disciplines through the process.

Whilst it is perhaps easier to expound the development of leadership skills in larger planned drama productions, there is definitely the potential to develop leadership skills in the drama classroom as well. This is particularly true where students are working in groups on devised performances, as here the skills of active listening and influencing others have to come to the fore.

There are also more free forms of inclusive drama beyond the classroom, like the house play competitions which are common in many schools. Done well, these can be brilliant opportunities for senior students to step up and pull together all they've learned so far



Arthur Mayhew

in their own journeys and inspire the younger students. However, this relies on making sure we've built the right framework, and developed the skills in our students so that the experience is a positive one for everyone involved. To ensure this quality of experience, it is important that we are ready to intervene, to provide support and guidance, but not to interfere!

These are just a few of the ways in which we all recognise how drama, both in and outside of the classroom, can be used to enhance our students' leadership development and equip them with the skills to thrive. It is easy, in a busy working week, to have our focus drawn to the main performance outcome of any activity. We hope this article will serve to remind us that the journey, and the how, is as important as the end result and to keep the intentional development of student leadership in the forefront of our minds as we continue to deliver the very best education for our students. Look out for more ideas in upcoming articles in this series.

## Colourful floral competition

Royal Grammar School Worcester, Gardening Club - missing their usual Royal Horticultural Society Gardening Competition - set up their own Hanging Baskets competition outside the Headmaster's Office

Members of the RGS Gardening Club would have normally been designing and building a garden for the RHS Malvern Show last term. But, with the event sadly not going ahead this year, the young horticulturists have been challenged to channel their gardening skills but on a much smaller scale... to enter a competition to design and create

a hanging basket to be displayed outside the Headmaster's office in Whiteladies.

Taking the theme of 'Celebration' and representing the easing of Covid-19 restrictions, each basket was required to be fully researched, with consideration given to the choice of plants best suited for a hanging basket, planted up and brought to school ready to be put on display.

Head of Lower School Co-curricular Activities, Miss Joanna Marsh said: "I was absolutely delighted with the response to the hanging basket competition.



Headmaster John Pitt is pictured with Charlotte and her winning basket

Whilst everyone was disappointed that the RHS Malvern Festival was cancelled once again this year, the gardeners threw their enthusiasm

and creativity into creating the amazingly colourful baskets which liven up the wall by the Headmaster's office."

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# Gruelling running challenge raises thousands

A teacher at King's Ely has raised more than £3,500 for a charity close to his heart by completing a 250-kilometre running challenge.

Nick Williams, who is Head of Economics and a Business Studies Teacher at King's Ely Senior, set himself the challenge of running 5 kilometres for fifty consecutive



days to not only increase his fitness levels, but to also raise as much money as he could for the Alzheimer's Society.

Nick's father, Tudor, was diagnosed with Dementia five years ago, something which Nick says has had a heart-breaking impact on his family. Father-of-two Nick, who lives near Bury St Edmunds, finished his fiftieth 5 kilometre run on May 16th and says he is overwhelmed to have raised £3,536 in donations.

He said: "When I started my challenge, I had no idea how physically and emotionally challenging it would be. The huge positives have been the tremendous support I have received from people. Support ranging from 'well done, keep going' to people talking intimately about their family and their experience of Dementia/ Alzheimer's.

"On a personal front, I have become far fitter and have lost 10 kilograms in weight. The runs have also given me that rare thing of 1-time, which has been great to help me recalibrate my thoughts and feelings of the past year! Covid-19 has been tough on everyone. We have all lost valuable time with friends and family. I will freely admit that during my time running I have had happy thoughts being outside appreciating the beautiful countryside to thoughts of anger, sadness and loss of the last good year with my father. This experience has been incredibly meditative and one which I am incredibly thankful for.

"The hardest part physically was day 40 when my hamstring tore! The level 3 tear prevented me from running for four days. I walked/hobbled 5 kilometres determined not to give up. The last six days I

could only run at a very moderate pace. As the sponsorship built up, I felt more determined than ever to complete the challenge. I ran the last 500 metres with my five-year-old daughter, Ellie. This was a very special moment for me and my family! I had a lovely socially distanced party with my neighbours and felt proud of what I had achieved.

"Thank you for all your very generous sponsorship and support for the Alzheimer's Society. My original target was £1,000 so to have raised this incredible sum of money is very humbling. People keep asking me will I keep running – answer definitely. People ask would I do it again – answer definitely. Who knows, maybe next year I will do seventy-five 5-kilometre runs consecutively!"

To support Nick's fundraising, visit: [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/nick-williams41](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/nick-williams41)

## Staff Health and Wellbeing

Report by Mark Rose of Hayes Parsons...

The World Health Organisation defined wellbeing in the WHO constitution in 1946 as "a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

In essence, health and wellbeing are a combination of a person's physical fitness, mental and emotional state and how they feel about the way in which they interact in society. Are they happy with what they have and what they are doing? The wellbeing of a person can be damaged by many factors, such as a breakdown in a relationship, the loss of a loved one or simply feeling stressed as that person is unable to manage a situation they find themselves in such as increasing workloads or financial concerns.

The last 18 months has been a rollercoaster ride for everyone and there has throughout the pandemic been a great deal of discussion around health and wellbeing.

The Office for National Statistics issues a dataset weekly relating

to Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain. This is from an opinions and lifestyle survey that has been carried out weekly through the pandemic. Sampling at random around 5,000 households, the data shows there are still some high percentages reporting anxiety:

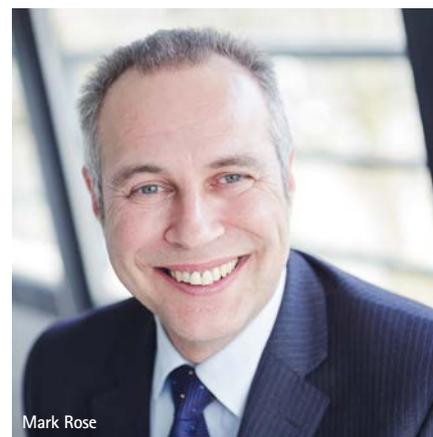
- Percentage of adults with high levels of anxiety – 32% (Down from a high of 42% in Jan 2021)
- Percentage of adults that say their well-being is being affected by COVID-19 – 39% (Down from a high of 57% in Feb 2021).

The new Education Staff Wellbeing Charter for state funded schools and colleges sets out actions that schools can take to prioritise staff mental health. The charter has been collaboratively created by the Department for Education, Ofsted, teaching unions, a number of schools and colleges and the mental health charity Mind. It was launched earlier this year in May and state schools will have the opportunity to sign up to

the charter from this Autumn. Signing up to the charter will be voluntary, but will show a declaration of support for, and set of commitments to, the wellbeing and mental health of everyone working in education.

Whilst there is no mention of independent schools being able to sign up to the charter it is certainly worth a read to help you formulate your own plans to ensure the future health and wellbeing of your school workforce. The schools' commitments under the charter are:

1. Prioritise staff mental health
2. Give staff the support they need to take responsibility for their own and other people's wellbeing
3. Give managers access to the tools and resources they need to support the wellbeing of those they line manage
4. Establish a clear communications policy
5. Give staff a voice in decision-making
6. Drive down unnecessary workload



Mark Rose

7. Champion flexible working and diversity
8. Create a good behaviour culture
9. Support staff to progress in their careers
10. Include a sub-strategy for protecting leader wellbeing and mental health
11. Hold ourselves accountable, including by measuring staff wellbeing

A copy of the charter can be found on the Department for Education website. You can also see the details of Hayes Parsons Insurance Broker's health and wellbeing product, Equipme, at [www.hayesparsons.co.uk/health-insurance](http://www.hayesparsons.co.uk/health-insurance).

# Visit St George's Park with Game Changer Performance

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*“On behalf of the pupils and the school, I'd like to thank Jack and GCP for a wonderful experience at St George's Park. The booking process and communication prior to the day was brilliant and the high standards continued all the way through our time with GCP. Our A-Level PE pupils thoroughly enjoyed their time making use of the world class facilities and experiencing high-class sport science support including performance profiling*

*and advanced recovery protocols. We are grateful to Jack and GCP and look forward to returning in the future and strengthening our relationship with GCP”*

Luke Gardiner, Teacher of Physical Education at King Edward VI School, Stratford-upon-Avon

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“ It was a pleasure to work with Game Changer Performance. We involved 40 of our year 5 to year 8 boys in learning about Sport Psychology and Goal Setting, both of which the boys really enjoyed. The session was perfectly adapted to our boys and was wonderfully interactive. This will help evolve our 'More Able Sportsman' program ”

**Mike Schmidt**  
Director of Sport, Rokerby School

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## Rugby partnership

St David's College, Llandudno and RGC (Rygbi Gogledd Cymru) have announced a new Rugby Performance Pathway Partnership designed to develop home grown rugby talent in North Wales.

This new arrangement will create another pathway for aspiring young players in North Wales, giving them the further opportunity to gain access to top-level coaching and award-winning education, as well as access to the WRU and their Welsh Exiles programme.

St David's College is establishing a reputation as one of the best holistic sports schools in the country. Working closely with RGC and other academic partners, the newly formed partnership will provide academic support and a clear pathway that gives students the tools needed to achieve at the highest level.

RGC will provide coaching support as well as access to their facilities at Parc Eirias. St David's College will not only provide academic rigour and support but also have on site strength and conditioning coaching that is accessible to boarders 7 days a week.

Mr Dan Lycett, Head of Sport and PE at St David's College said: "This is the first partnership of its kind in North Wales for the Independent School sector. We're incredibly proud to be working

with RGC on this Performance Pathway. We will be working closely with the RGC coaches to create individual training plans for the pupils on the pathway, allowing each of them to reach their full potential. We have our own on-site Strength and Conditioning Coach who will work with the pupils as part of their development"

St David's College has a strong pedigree for developing young players in line with the RGC Rugby Pathway. Three of the current Sixth Form have recently been selected to play for the under 18's regional development side with more St David's pupils narrowly missing out.

Mr Andrew Russell, Headmaster, said "I'm so pleased that we're establishing this Performance Pathway with RGC – "Pursuit of prowess at games" is part of our ethos, set by our founders, and this feeds directly into that."

"It's not just about preparing the pupils for what happens on the pitch." He added "We've got a keen eye on what happens off the pitch and outside of sport too. Elite Sport is a tough world full of massive highs as well as setbacks and disappointments. At St David's we pride ourselves on our excellent pastoral support and we are perfectly placed to ensure our pupils are ready for anything the world can throw at them"

Pictured: (L-R) Scott Lawson (RGC Communications Manager), Josh Leach (RGC Performance Manager), Mr Andrew Russell (Headmaster, St David's College), Mr Dan Lycett (Head of Sport & PE, St David's College)

## Bowled over

The long awaited return to competitive fixtures this summer has seen great success for Cotswold-based school, Kitebrook Preparatory.

The children have also smashed their way to success on the tennis court this term. Year 4 pupil, Willoughby Orchard, recently sealed wins against Shropshire, Staffordshire and Herefordshire Et Worcestershire while representing Warwickshire County's U9 team in the LTA's County Cup. He then brought his winning form to his Kitebrook doubles teammates with 3 enthusiastic doubles performances, and triumphs, against Magdalen College School. His brother, Barnabas, also played for Warwickshire in the county cup under 11's, and fellow Year 4 pupil, Marko, participated in the 9 and under County Cup for Oxfordshire.

There has also been great footballing news for a 5-year-old Year 1 pupil, who following a successful trial,

has been offered a place at West Midlands Foxes, playing for their Elite Team. West Midlands Foxes is an academy set up and their Elite Teams play against Pro Club Academies as well as being coached by Leicester City FC coaches.

Furthermore, earlier this month, 11-year-old Rosie Campbell and her pony Toorboy Tommy won at Keysoe International Pony Premier, making her a 128cm Horse of the Year Show qualifier in October. She has also just been selected for the English team at the Welsh Home Pony Show, scheduled for later this summer.

Head of PE, Anna Edgerton, said: "After a turbulent year for competitive sport, we are not only delighted to be back on the pitches and courts, but it is fantastic for the children to be excelling in both our fixtures and extracurricular pursuits".

## Netball winners

ISA Eastern Regional Netball Tournament saw the Ursuline Preparatory School, Brentwood team play with great determination and remain unbeaten all day.

In the final match, they were up against Finborough School who had also been unbeaten throughout the tournament. After a tightly fought first half, the score was 5-2 to Ursuline. In the second half, the girls held their composure and played some of their best netball, making plenty of interceptions and not



missing a shooting opportunity. This hard work paid off as the final score was 11-3 to Ursuline, making them the regional ISA champions for the second year in a row.

## Cricket successes

Gresham's School, Norfolk, U16 boys team won the Midland National Inspire Cup Final; the U15 girls won the semi-final of the County Cup; and the U13A boys team were crowned Norfolk champions and won the Calder Cup.

The boys U16 cricket team won the Midland National Inspire Cup Final against Shrewsbury School by 12 runs. Earlier in the same week, 11 girls travelled to Wyomondham for the semi-final of the U15 County Cup. The girls played their best cricket of the season and came out very worthy winners, scoring 106 for 4 in 20 overs and skittling Wyomondham for just 45

runs in 12 overs. The team will progress to the final of the County Cup, most likely to be played in September.

Furthermore, the Prep School's U13A boys cricket team were crowned Norfolk champions after overcoming a tough Langley Prep side. The team were led by their captain, Year 8 pupil Will, to win the Calder Cup. The boys are under the guidance of Gresham's Director of Cricket, Chris Brown. Chris is a former first-class cricketer who started his career with Lancashire County Cricket Club and is the current Captain/Coach for Norfolk County Cricket Club.

# Staff duo at heart of Olympic action

Two members of staff at Mill Hill School, London, headed to Tokyo for the Olympics and Paralympics. They were Physiotherapist Maria Goriup, who travelled with a Team GB Fencing athlete for the Olympics and a Japanese Fencing athlete for the Paralympics, and Head of Hockey Kwan Browne who is the Assistant Coach to the GB Men's Hockey Team.

Both Maria and Kwan joined The Mill Hill Foundation in September 2020, Maria juggling her school commitments alongside caring for GB Fencing and Badminton athletes, and Kwan, who works across Mill Hill School and the prep



school, Mill Hill Belmont, whilst also coaching the Hampstead and Westminster Hockey Club and the England and GB men's team. Kwan is globally renowned in the hockey world, having represented Trinidad and Tobago at the Commonwealth Games, Pan American Games and Pan American Cup. Maria also travelled to the last Commonwealth Games in Australia to support the English badminton team and has previously supported elite athletes during the Rio 2016 Olympics cycle.

Maria and Kwan had an action-packed time in Tokyo, sending back updates and pictures during the games to share with the school community. Maria travelled with Marcus Mepstead, the sole fencer to represent Team GB in Tokyo this year, and who was also selected as one of only 16 athletes to represent the wider team at the Opening Ceremony. Kwan also had

a busy time with the GB men's Hockey team, who reached the quarter finals. During matches he sat pitch-side with the analyst and Head Coach to get a tactical view of the game.

Maria also travelled with a Japanese Wheelchair Fencing athlete, Anri Sakurai for the Paralympics. Anri trains in London, where Maria is her Physiotherapist.

Maria commented about her time at the Paralympics: 'It's amazing to be part of the host nation's team and learn about their culture and approach to high performance sports. It's also awesome to be supporting a different sport and developing my skills in how to work with para athletes to get the most out of their performance.'

Mill Hill School, Director of Sport, Aaron Liffchak, said: 'Everyone at Mill Hill is absolutely delighted for



Maria and Kwan, we are immensely proud of all their achievements and have thoroughly enjoyed watching the Hockey and Fencing throughout the summer. They are both fantastic ambassadors and role models for our school community, inspiring us all with their determination, perseverance, and resilience. The recruitment of Maria and Kwan are part of our continued commitment to delivering an outstanding coaching provision and drive for pupil progression. The experience they are both able to offer our pupils is truly unique.'

## Former teaching assistant wins Olympic gold medal

The Stephen Perse Foundation is incredibly proud of former part-time teaching assistant Beth Shriever on her gold winning BMX performance at the 2020 Olympics. Bethany started work at the Stephen Perse Junior School, Dame Bradbury's in Saffron Walden, in 2017 and worked for two years in the Early Years setting until leaving to train full time.

Stephen Perse supported Bethany in gaining her Level 3 qualification



to work with Early Years children as a teaching assistant after she completed her A Levels. A career that she later wants to develop and pursue. Beth was dedicated to her role and the young people in her care – see picture – but was able to find the balance needed to continue to train with the exceptional level of commitment needed to be successful in the international arena.

Richard Girvan, Principal of the Stephen Perse Foundation said: "All of us at the Stephen Perse Foundation are incredibly proud of Beth's amazing achievement. She really is a fantastic role model and an inspiration to all young people, particularly those who she spent time with and spoke to at our Stephen Perse schools during her time with us. We are so pleased to have been able to support her in pursuing her Olympic ambition and absolutely delighted for her and her family that she has been able to realise it so emphatically."

## Boys design Olympic boots

Two Bedford School boys were commissioned to custom-design Team GB Rugby 7s star Dan Bibby's rugby boots which he then wore in the final against Argentina.

When two Bedford School boys Henry Cudjoe and Alex Edun set up their custom design business 'YBK' (Your Best Kicks) as part of a school Business Studies project, little did they know that their designs would decorate the boots of Team GB rugby sevens star Dan Bibbi, at this year's Olympic Games in Tokyo.

The 17 year-old boys, who have been running their business at a profit for almost a year now, have been working hard to create unique designs on trainers and learning how to expand their business through networking and building recognition.

A milestone moment for the boys came when they sought the help of local entrepreneur and Old Bedfordian Harry Beard, who introduced them to individuals in the industry who could help them. One of these introductions



was Luke Treharne (Welsh Rugby International), who commissioned the boys to design a pair of boots. From there, they connected with Dan Bibby (England 7s player), who also sent a pair of boots to be customised.

The boys were, therefore, delighted to see Dan wearing the 'Maui' adorned boots that they had designed when they watched him play for Team GB in the Olympics. During the final against Argentina, the boots were shown in close-ups twice. During the first close-up, Rob Vickerman (one of the commentators) remarked, "How about those boots – the Moana!" The boots were also pictured on social media feeds from England Rugby, GB Rugby 7s, World Rugby 7s and Work Rugby ES.

## Starring in The Hundred final

Jake Lintott has had a remarkable few months - propelled from being Queen's College, Somerset, Head of Cricket to making headlines among some of the game's top stars.

Jake's rise to stardom began last summer as some eye-catching displays for Birmingham Bears in the T20 Vitality Blast saw him sign a three-year contract with Warwickshire CCC in February.

Since signing the contract, it has been a real 'Boy's Own' story as a brilliant 2021 campaign for the Bears led to Jake becoming a wildcard pick for Southern Brave in cricket's new competition, The Hundred.

He could not have got off to a better start, bowling Somerset and England star Tom Banton with his very first ball.

Jake went on to be Brave's leading wicket taker in the group stages and took a brilliant catch in the Eliminator to help them into the final the following night.

That led him to the home of cricket, Lord's, and he was again at the centre of the action, taking the vital wicket of opposition captain, England's Moeen Ali, as the Brave beat Birmingham Phoenix by 32 runs to lift the inaugural trophy.

"It was the stuff of dreams really - playing in front of 25,000 people at Lord's - and to win it just capped it off.

"I spent most of my time in the field just trying to soak it up - looking around and enjoying it. I think it's going to take a while to top that feeling."

Jake said there were a number of students from Queen's in the crowd, who he managed to meet after the game, and he enjoyed celebrating with family who had been there throughout "which made it even more special."

He said The Hundred was a huge learning experience and he had tried to make as much from it as he could.

"I felt I developed nicely along the way and finished the tournament in a much better place as opposed to the start."

Jake said it was great to see so many children watching the matches and he had also heard from people who didn't really watch or follow cricket. "It's obviously appealed to a new audience."

He also liked some of the tournament's quirks - such as the five-ball, ten-ball overs and the time limits.

"It's only going to get bigger and better and I can see it growing more and more. It's an exciting time to be involved in The Hundred and I know it's going to keep going from strength to strength."



## Equestrians crowned Double National Champions

Brentwood School's eager equestrians made the trip down to the All England Jumping Course, Hickstead, keen for action but a little lacking 'match outings'. They returned victorious, taking two National Schools Equestrian Association (NSEA) national titles.

The Brentwood team won the Eventer Challenge 95 nationals at last year's event but, following another Covid lockdown, they travelled to Hickstead, Sussex, with limited competition practice.

However, being slightly rusty did not deter the young riders, and Ben Hogarth, Emma Philpot, Imogen Pohl and Lily Tappin produced not only a zero jumping score but also scored a remarkable 15 style marks ahead of their nearest rivals St John's Marlborough with Cranleigh School one mark behind that.

Following a good night's sleep in their lorries, Emma and Sophie Philpot were joined by new recruit Elizabeth Lewis to contest the 95cm show jumping qualifier and, with only three in the team, there was no luxury of a discard score. They all jumped brilliantly to be narrowly pipped into 3rd spot and secure a qualification for October's Plate Championship event.

After the previous day's excitement, the Jumping with Style 95 team were keen to replicate the success of their teammates and, following some beautifully jumped rounds, Charlotte Cooke, Emma and Sophie Philpot and Imogen Pohl (pictured) did just that to triumph again and land the National Champions title in the 95cm category.



## Cricketing milestone

History has been made at Denstone College with Lower Sixth pupil, Sophie becoming the first female cricketer to play for the 1st XI team against Checkley U19s.

Director of Cricket and former Yorkshire player, Mr Simon Guy, who also coaches Sophie for Warwickshire ladies said 'I have coached Sophie since her arrival at Denstone, she is a very hardworking pupil and benefits from our one on one coaching sessions. I certainly look forward to seeing her play in more matches.'

Sophie is an all-round sportsperson and also plays top league hockey. She is the daughter of Old

Pictured: Sophie with England cricketer Joe Root



Denstonian and former Denstone College 1st XI cricket captain, Mr Jan Hughes (82-87) and niece of OD, Emma Hughes (83-90) who played for the 1st XI women's team.



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# Deliver your building on time and on budget

Materials shortages are hamstringing UK building projects, but you can control costs and deliver your project on time, says Matt Sanders, director of Paragon Structures.

Delivering construction projects on time and within budget is challenging at the best of times, but is currently being made all the more difficult by material shortages and sharp rises in costs. As a result, building projects across the UK – including new sports facilities – are facing costly delays.

Key building materials, including timber and steel, continue to be in short supply and product prices are expected to more than double during the course of the year.

All of this makes for depressing reading if you are planning a new sports facility for your school. It's likely that not only will your project be delayed while your builders wait for critical

materials to arrive, but the cost of the build may also increase significantly during the course of the project as demand for scarce resources soars.

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And because all the materials are already in stock, there are no nasty surprises when it comes to costs. In fact, the price you are quoted when you place your order and pay your deposit won't change at all. So, you can be assured of a high performance sports building with a lifespan of 30-35 years at the original price you were quoted, regardless of all the disruption and delay being experienced elsewhere in the UK construction industry.

These unprecedented times for the construction sector come at a time when sports facilities are needed more than ever. If the Covid pandemic has taught us anything, it is the vital role that sport and physical activity facilities play in the mental and



physical health of pupils, staff and the local community. Keeping control of sports building projects, so they can be delivered on time and on budget, has never been more critical.



# School re-named

Hull Collegiate School has changed its name from the beginning of this Autumn term and is now known as “Tranby”. New branding reflects the styling and colours of the Old House in Tranby Croft where it is located.

The School, which was formed through the merger of Hull High School and Hull Grammar School in 2005, is located on the historic Tranby Croft estate at Anlaby – the former home of the Wilson family who were ambitious, outward-looking adventurers famous for their shipping line.

Announcing the new name, Headmistress Mrs Alex Wilson said: “We are an ambitious school which believes there is no limit to what our pupils can achieve. It is therefore only right that we have a name that reflects this. Evoking the pioneering and outward-looking nature of the Wilson family who lived here, ‘Tranby’ is a



more fitting portrayal of our school and signals our ambition and continuous drive for improvement. Whilst I am very excited about our new name, I am even more excited about the plans which are beginning to take shape. Over the past few years, our school has undergone a period of significant change – most notably in the quality of our educational provision

and in the growth of our pupil numbers. This means we are now in a position to invest in our school to raise our academic standards further, offer a wider range of enrichment opportunities and enhance our school site and facilities so that we can offer our pupils an inspiring, challenging and enjoyable school experience. Our new name is just the first step in this development and I look forward to working with the entire school community as we embark on our ambitious development programme which will benefit children and young people in this part of East Ridings for generations to come.”



# PSB first in county

Sheffield Girls is the first school in Yorkshire to become a member of the Pre-Senior Baccalaureate (PSB).

The school has chosen to deliver the programme of study to students in Year 7 and 8 from this month (September).

PSB provides a framework that celebrates the development of values, skills, attitudes and behaviours required for children to succeed and flourish.

The PSB programme and award will follow on from Sheffield Girls' Junior School's existing Fusion curriculum which will also reward students for their achievements with a new Girl of Steel Award presented at the end of year 6 for competencies in and out of school.

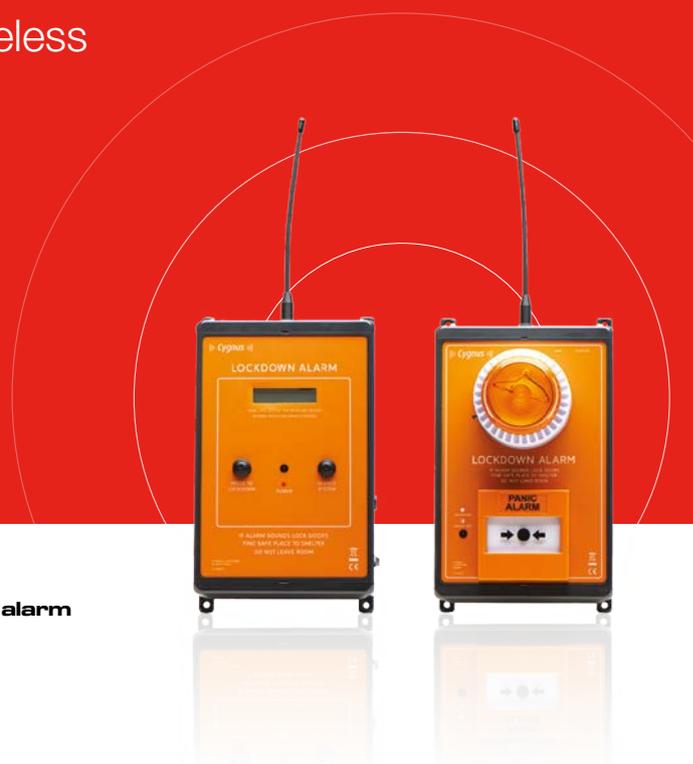
Liz Rodgers, Sheffield Girls' Assistant Head Co-Curricular, said: “Both these awards recognise real world skills and attributes and are focussed on building rounded, competent young women ready to face the challenges of the global world”.

# Keep schools safe

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# Navigating the challenges

Reflections from Devin Cassidy, Headmaster, Bury Grammar School, Lancashire

The past eighteen months have been extremely testing for all school leaders and the purpose of this article is not to rehearse the challenges presented by the pandemic; the hope is that we are emerging and much will get back to as it was before as we begin the new academic year. However, an additional challenge which society and educationalists are facing is dealing with the worrying revelations from Ofsted's recent review of sexual abuse which highlights the importance of schools taking proactive steps to prevent peer-on-peer abuse.

Since the tragic death of Sarah Everard, the protests which followed and the disturbing testimonies published on the Everyone's Invited site, society has had to face up to an issue which it seems is endemic. To begin with schools and especially independent schools appeared to be vilified, but then it extended to university campuses and eventually the workplace with high profile public figures revealing the extent of sexual abuse and harassment they had endured in their professional lives.

I am pleased that at last society has woken up to the extent to which children can be abused by children and that strategies beyond anti-bullying policies are needed to deal with what are clearly extremely complex issues often requiring a multi-agency approach. For years I have felt that a disproportionate emphasis has been on dealing with abuse from adults and specifically familial abuse, important as this is, there was as we now know, nowhere near the recognition of the abuse that children can inflict on each other. For Ofsted to report that sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are so commonplace that young people see no point in reporting incidents as these behaviours have become normalised, is disturbing for any educationalist to read. Despite what we may feel is happening in our schools, organizations such as Everyone's

Invited have given us accounts from children and young people which we need to hear; it has been a wake-up call to society. For Girls aged 12 and 13 to tell inspectors that they felt uncomfortable walking through the town in their school uniform would have a reasonable person question what has gone wrong with society. But for some teachers and governors to not believe that sexual abuse by students in their schools took place or that it was just a part of growing up revealed a broken safeguarding culture in some schools.

As a chemistry graduate, I am certainly far from being qualified to comment on the complexities which result in the behaviours incorporated under the term 'peer on peer abuse'. However, I do recognise the associations between environment and individual choice. Indeed, it comes as no surprise that the influence of peers grows as pupils get older to the point where the influence of peers at school and within the neighbourhood far outweigh the influences exerted in the family environment. With over ten years of senior leadership experience, much of which has focused on safeguarding and changing culture and climate, I simply share with readers my team's approach to addressing these challenging issues.

## Accept that peer on peer abuse is happening

Primarily, my team accept that peer on peer abuse is an issue for all agencies that work with children and we assume that our pupils experience it even when we have no specific information to confirm it is happening. Bury Grammar School is a North Manchester, town centre school with a 45-acre campus which provides safeguarding challenges in itself. Like most independent schools, our pupil body has become more ethnically, socially, and economically diverse which very much adds to the richness

of the school; our ambition is simply for pupils to leave us as grounded, decent, respectful individuals who will go on to make a significant positive contribution to society owing to the quality of the whole educational experience which they have been exposed to. But like all schools, we have our own contexts: whilst some of our pupils come from wealthy backgrounds, some of the neighborhoods from which our pupils come are plagued with crime, poverty, and exploitation and this may naturally increase their vulnerability.

## Take a holistic view

Schools naturally have a duty to safeguard individuals, but they must also safeguard the entire school community. Let us not forget the tragic murder of headmaster Philip Lawrence in 1995 who was stabbed outside his school in north-west London as he tried to protect one of his pupils who was being attacked by a gang. Safeguarding the whole school community may necessitate tough decisions in the face of pressure exerted by safeguarding partners who may have differing interests, caseloads and pressures. This is where knowing who you are as a leader, what you stand for and the sort of place you want your school to be despite challenge from others will see you through as long as you never lose sight of the child. Also, when reviewing a reported case of peer-on-peer abuse consider the whole context of the incident(s) so that proactive steps can be taken to prevent reoccurrence insofar as it is possible to do so.

## Assess the risks

Accept and act as if it is happening in school right now. Be informed and conduct a risk assessment to determine the risks to which pupils are or may be exposed and assess and monitor those risks. More information on drawing up such a risk assessment is available in



the excellent peer on peer abuse tool kit produced by Farrer & Co. Clearly incorporate the latest version of KCSIE into policy and procedures but also be aware of the challenges and contexts of your catchment areas. Be aware of the emerging themes at national and local level. For example, police arrests may upset the delicate local criminal ecosystem resulting in turf wars and unrest which affect a particular town or neighbourhood, increasing vulnerabilities of those living there. Police, social care and the pupils themselves will be useful sources of information here and this is where having a member of staff (usually the DSL) represent the school on the local safeguarding board, or equivalent, can be invaluable for making useful contacts and gaining useful local intelligence not least as inspectors will discuss with school leaders how the school engages with local safeguarding partners.

## Update policy and procedure

Review policies and procedures regularly to ensure they are sensible, pragmatic, up to date and address all forms of peer-on-peer abuse. Ensure that all staff are regularly trained and receive the updates as they are released: if safeguarding is of paramount importance, then mean what you say and make time for it. Test your staff: how do you know that they have understood what they have been trained in? Ensure that these policies are aligned

# of peer-on-peer abuse

with the Local Safeguarding Partnership and incorporate their thresholds. When updating policy and procedure remember the importance of culture and climate: it is not enough to have policies and procedures in place, they should be tested by what the school feels like and one must act if there is a disconnect.

## Audit and Quality Assurance

Engage in regular internal and external audit using tools such as the S175 safeguarding audit, which is carried out under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, along with DfE Guidance on Safeguarding Children, Safer Recruitment and Keeping Children Safe in Education (these are available upon request from your local authority). We have a particularly good relationship with our LADO who we invited to audit our safer recruitment processes in the past. Safeguarding records should clearly be kept up to date and regularly reviewed to spot trends and any emerging trends; inspectors will specifically request records and analysis of sexual harassment and abuse on notification of inspection.

## Review Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Develop a Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) strategy that incorporates evidence-based social emotional skills and prevention education, which is age appropriate to teach pupils about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online. It is important that your RSE curriculum tackles issues such as healthy and respectful relationships, what respectful behaviour looks like, consent, gender roles, stereotyping and equality, body confidence, self-esteem, prejudiced behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment. Staff who deliver such education must be committed and appreciate the subtleties of what they are delivering; Ofsted found that pupils thought RSE wasn't taken seriously. The focus, for example in the case of sending

nudes, should refrain from condemning the act that made the victim vulnerable, rather it should focus on the abusive, exploitive, or harmful behaviour of the abuser and try to develop an understanding of the point at which the behaviour becomes concerning.

## Commit to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Be deeply committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) both overtly and through the way in which people are treated and treat one another. Let nothing go, a casual remark or comment should be challenged and reported: zero tolerance should mean just that. Dismissing inappropriate behaviours risks normalising them. Ofsted reported that sexualised language around schools, particularly aimed at girls, happened often. Young people reported that this was ignored by staff, either because they were not prepared to tackle it, or because they saw it as 'banter'. To address these clear sanctions should be set out within behaviour policies to respond effectively to incidents as outlined in the DfE guidance: Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges. In addition, behaviour policies should make clear that:

- sexual violence and sexual harassment is not accepted, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up, and
- sexual violence or sexual harassment will not be tolerated or dismissed as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys".

## Improve the culture around reporting

Provide multiple ways for pupils to report concerns and use a curriculum-based approach to tackle a culture where reporting is perceived as 'snitching.' We introduced a 'Talk to Us' app which is available on the student intranet or through an icon on their school Microsoft device.

Pupils can use this if they are worried about themselves or others in school. The app allows pupils to disclose a concern confidentially and discretely by logging onto the app which alerts the DSLs and DDSs. In addition, we display posters around campus which can help to provide pupils with the language to use and encourage reporting. Worry boxes are placed in the Medical Rooms where pupils can drop messages or disclosure into the boxes, which are checked regularly by our Health Support Workers who are also Deputy DSLs.

## Hear what the pupils tell you and consider support for parents

Listen to the pupils, use language they can relate to and hear what they are telling you. This might take the form of small group work or pupil wellbeing surveys: we do both! This can help to identify trends over time if you do so regularly. In addition, it will help to identify locations around the school where pupils may feel more vulnerable. New build schools are increasingly investing in open plan toilets which provide the necessary privacy but avoid being hidden areas away from staff where pupils might typically feel more vulnerable. Location mapping and understanding your campus from a pupil perspective is an especially useful exercise to conduct. Also, consider providing training for parents to help them navigate the teenage journey which may take the form of workshops, webinars and providing them with information. Taking a holistic approach to a particular reported safeguarding concern is essential to help prevent reoccurrence and this means recognising the harm and the context it is happening in. Do not dismiss peer-on-peer abuse that takes place away from school, online and during the holiday. Ensure allegations against staff are handled correctly and low-level concerns are recorded and procedure followed robustly.

## Interrogate the data

Discuss and interrogate the data regularly. I meet regularly with

my DSLs both to support them in their demanding role but also to push them and challenge them on the concerns data. It is key to be able to identify emerging issues or trends early on to enable early intervention which will most likely result in a more effective outcome.

## Implement effective transition

Effective transition enables new pupils to settle quickly into their new school. Information sharing between schools is essential to ensure that issues which make pupils vulnerable are passed on and their transition is planned for proactively. I insist that all DSLs from feeder schools confirm the presence or absence of safeguarding concerns well before the pupil's start date to enable us to plan their transition. The effectiveness of transition is likely to be inversely proportional to the vulnerability of new pupils.

This provides simply a flavour of what we are doing to respond to the complex issue of peer-on-peer abuse which I expect will continue evolving as schools become better at dealing with concerns and supporting those who experience peer on peer abuse.

Finally, good safeguarding requires the child to be kept first and foremost at the centre of decision making and to have a say in the decisions being made about them whatever the context of the safeguarding. As with any safeguarding issue, if one feels that additional support and advice is required then this should be sought from safeguarding partners. But the success of any strategy will also be heavily dependent on the behavioural expectations we have of pupils and staff and one should be able to feel the climate of the school within a short time of being in it which might be summed up by having positive, happy pupils and staff owing to respectful relationships, clear boundaries and professional standards. ”

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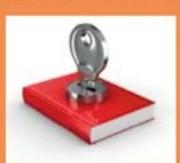
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# Everyone's Invited: how educational institutions should respond to sexual abuse allegations

A report by Christine Braamskamp, partner and co-chair of the Culture Risk and Sensitive Investigations practice at the law firm Jenner & Block LLP.



In April 2021, Ofsted initiated a review of sexual abuse in schools in response to the huge number of testimonies published on the Everyone's Invited site. Although the review was carried out on an expedited basis and relied on data taken from only 32 schools, the resulting report, published in June, shone a light on the extraordinary scale of peer-on-peer sexual harassment and sexual assault in UK schools. This was not the first public scrutiny of these issues. In 2016, the House of Commons Women and Equalities Select Committee reported on sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools. Its report included data showing that 5,500 sexual offences were recorded in UK schools over a three-year period, including 600 rapes. Yet the June 2021 Ofsted report shocked many with its findings on the prevalence of misconduct. The findings include: 90% of girls and nearly 50% of boys over 13 receiving unsolicited explicit pictures or videos; 92% of girls and 74% of boys reporting sexist name-calling on a frequent or occasional basis; and nearly 80% of girls reporting sexual assault against others of their age. At the time of writing, 51,060 testimonies have been posted on the Everyone's Invited site. These shocking statistics cannot be ignored by schools, which are under more pressure than ever to address these deeply complex problems.

As well as devising a RSHE curriculum responsive to these issues, schools are expected to maintain procedures to encourage reporting; to refer complaints to police or social care where appropriate; to investigate reports themselves (including anonymous complaints); and to preserve the confidentiality of complainants as far as possible as well as maintaining the rights of the accused. Through my team's work with educational institutions, charities and companies, I see at first hand the challenges an organisation faces when dealing with such issues. Ensuring fair treatment of both complainant and accused is extremely difficult, especially at a time of heightened public scrutiny,

and there are particular challenges for schools, where those involved will be young people, where resources are often stretched and where much will play out on social media. Government guidance alone is not sufficient (and, in any event, it is too vague), and training on these complex and nuanced issues is imperative. Schools will want to be prepared and informed; hastily arranged assemblies or chaotic and ad hoc responses to allegations may be well-meaning, but will not benefit anyone. Putting in place well understood processes around reporting and investigations is key. Being able to follow clearly prescribed processes will ensure calm and fair handling of incidents. That said, it all starts with the school's values and culture.

## Cultural Reviews

Fortunately, many schools are undertaking wider reviews of culture and behaviour, in an effort to identify systemic issues as well as flagging to the community that they are taking the Everyone's Invited initiative and the issue of sexual misconduct in schools seriously. Such reviews require senior support and resource if they are to be undertaken effectively. Some schools have asked experienced former judges to conduct independent reviews. For example, Highgate School engaged a former Court of Appeal judge to examine its policies and procedures in this area.

The key issues to be grappled with when carrying out reviews of this nature include: whose views will be sought? What will the scope of the review be? Will recommendations be made public? Will remediation and action plans lead to meaningful change? The last point is key: such reviews are of little value in the absence of institutional appetite to implement recommendations and drive change.

## Reporting

Schools which prioritise ethical conduct among their people will want to ensure that effective reporting is both encouraged and facilitated. This support can take many forms, from helping people

identify signs that their peers may be involved in misconduct; to making provision for anonymous reporting; to assuring people that those making genuine reports will not suffer as a result, and that they will be believed and taken seriously. The Ofsted report identifies several barriers to reporting, with pupils fearing that they would be disbelieved, suffer reputational harm, or lose control over the process after making a complaint. Schools must understand and address these barriers. In order to establish trust in the process of reporting, a school must at all times act consistently with its stated values and its (reporting) policies and procedures. Any deviation will chip away at trust in the process and will detract from the school's efforts to foster a culture where pupils feel that complaints and concerns will be taken seriously.

Further, schools will want to emphasise fair process for all involved. Because of the particular stigma attached to allegations of a sexual nature, and the inability of those accused to test anonymous complaints, pupils should also be made aware of the potentially very damaging consequences of false complaints.

Similarly important is the expectation of confidentiality for complainants, and pupils should be reassured that where possible a complaint will be treated confidentially. However, there are occasions when complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, including where a school may need to pass on an allegation or evidence to the police or social services. It can be difficult to assess the appropriate scope of confidentiality 'in the moment'. Establishing strong relationships with local police and having clear guidelines in place (on which relevant staff have been extensively trained) will be essential.

## Investigative Process

Finally, a robust and fair investigative process is vital in terms of retaining the confidence of complainants and those accused

of wrongdoing, as well as parents and the wider school community. Where there is no police or social services intervention, it will fall to schools to investigate reports themselves. Investigations into allegations of sexual misconduct are by their nature notoriously challenging, even for professional investigators. In the context of schools there is the additional difficulty of taking accounts from young people - something that police officers receive specialist training for, to ensure not only that the complainant's voice is properly heard, but also that the account is taken fairly, without influencing the complainant. It is unrealistic for management and governors to expect school personnel to be able to undertake these specialist functions without considerable support and training.

In addition, the potentially very serious consequences for all involved in such a process mean that record-keeping is of paramount importance. This is essential not only because the school's response to a complaint may come under scrutiny, but also because the subject of an investigation may well rely on data protection legislation to make a formal request for all documents held by the school that relate to him or her, even if they have not been disclosed as part of the investigative process.

## Conclusion

The Ofsted report states that "[...] even where schools and college leaders do not have specific information that indicates sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are problems for their children and young people, they should act on the assumption that they are." Implementing this approach throughout an educational institution is a complex challenge, yet action must be taken, and clearly outlined and well-understood values, processes and procedures will serve as the guardrails that can help a school and its community navigate these challenging issues fairly, calmly and with the wellbeing of all involved firmly in mind.

# CHANGING FACES... CHANGING PLACES...



Mr Mark Hopton, Chairman of Governors at Solihull School, has announced the appointment of the Executive Head who will join the school on 1 January 2023.

Mr Charles Fillingham will join Solihull from Francis Holland School in Regent's Park where he was appointed Headmaster in January 2016. Mr Fillingham succeeds Mr David EJJ Lloyd who will step down after 12 years as Headmaster of Solihull School on 31 December 2022.

During his career, Mr Fillingham has served in boys', girls' and co-educational schools including five years as Director of Studies and Acting Head of Lower School at Archbishop Tenison's CE High School in Croydon and eight years

as the Deputy Headmaster at City of London School for Boys immediately before joining Francis Holland.

Mr Fillingham is a modern linguist with a PGCE from Bristol University. He holds two degrees at Masters Level, one from Jesus College, Oxford and one from King's College, London.

In his spare time, Mr Fillingham enjoys endurance and outdoor sports. He has run the London Marathon and also cycled from London to Paris to raise funds for a school minibus. He supports Bristol City Football Club, enjoys reading and is a Freeman of the City of London. He and his wife, Clare, attend the Emanuel Church in South Croydon, where Clare also works. They have one son currently in Year 11 and one daughter currently in Year 8.



Canbury School, London, has appointed Carolyn Yates as Head with effect from this month (September).

After ten years in television production (working on educational and children's programming for ITV, Channel 4 and the BBC), she chose teaching as a career.

Having taught English in several maintained schools, she moved to Queen's Gate - an independent day school for girls aged 4-18. During her tenure, Ms Yates has

served in a variety of leadership positions including Head of English, Head of Upper School and Head of Sixth Form, with some of these responsibilities overlapping.

She is an advocate of the power of small schools, believing that children learn best when they are secure, nurtured and, most importantly, treated as individuals.

She has an MA in Modern Literature and is an avid theatre-goer, book-reader, park-runner and gardener. She has two children and inspired both to read English at university.



Mr Sam Gosden is the new head of Dolphin School Trust, London, from this month (September).

Sam has worked in the independent school sector for the past twenty years, leading music departments and being head of IT and digital strategy at London Prep schools. In 2018, as Deputy Head, he became a founding member of the senior leadership team of Kensington Park School, building a new independent 11-18 co-educational school

in Central London. In this post he developed strategy, recruited students and nurtured robust links with local communities. He is on the Firefly Advisory Board and has led digital strategy for each school he has worked in. He has a BA Hons from the University of Surrey. His other core interest is in music - choral conducting all around Europe, jazz and composition and he plays the piano, saxophone and double bass. He is a keen cyclist and uses this mode of transport every day to come to school. Sam is married with two children.



Eddy Newton has joined Marlborough House School, Kent, as Headmaster.

Since graduating from Jesus College, Cambridge with a degree in Classics, Mr Newton has devoted his teaching career to Prep Schools. He was Head of Classics at the Dragon School between 1989 and 1996 and, after a number of senior roles in other Prep

Schools, including Headmaster of Felsted School, he became Headmaster of Chafyn Grove School in Salisbury in 2004, where he stayed until August 2015. He was also Chairman of IAPS in 2013. Following Chafyn Grove, Mr Newton moved to be Principal of the Cothill Trust, which oversees some seven Prep Schools, before returning to the headship of a standalone Prep School at Marlborough House School.



Dr Michael Truss takes up the position of Principal of Concord College, Shropshire, this month (September). He studied as a Theobald Scholar in Physics at Balliol College, Oxford, continuing his journey in academia with a PhD in Theoretical Astrophysics and a postdoctoral fellowship in Astrophysics at the University of St Andrews. Different university roles

followed in the UK and abroad, eventually leading to a move into teaching at Bedales School in the UK, where he became Head of Mathematics and Head of Academic Enrichment. Since 2015, he has been Deputy Head (Academic) at Barnard Castle School, where he has overall responsibility for all aspects of academic life, overseeing a rise in top grades at A Level and a redevelopment of the academic curriculum.



Boundary Oak School, Hampshire, has appointed Sophie Savage as its new Head. She was previously Academic Deputy Head, having previously been Head of Mathematics and Head of Seniors at Boundary Oak. Sophie has 17 years' experience in

teaching and will succeed current Headmaster James Polansky, who has been Head of Boundary Oak for the last 5 years. James is also Co-Proprietor of the School and Co-Founder of its owners, QV Education. James will become Executive Head of QV Education, overseeing each of their schools within the group.



Mike Stanley is the new Headmaster at Forres Sandle Manor School, Hampshire.

Mike joins the school from his position as the Deputy Head of Walhampton Prep School.

Following his graduation from Cardiff University where he studied Ancient History, Mike started his teaching career at

Duke of Kent School in Ewhurst, where he was Head of History and Religious Studies and a Boarding Houseparent. Following his marriage, he moved to London and took up a post at Rokeby School (Kingston upon Thames) where he was a member of the SLT and Head of Years 5 & 6 for seven years before relocating to Lyminster and joining Walhampton Prep School in 2005

Following the retirement of Dr Michael Carslaw, the Council of St Leonards School, Fife, has appointed Mr Simon Brian as the new Head. Simon was previously Deputy Head at Charterhouse in Surrey. Charterhouse is also an IB World School. This is his second Deputy Headship, as he previously held the role at Cheltenham College. Simon also sits on the Governing Board for Longacre Prep School in Guildford, with a particular focus on the Education and Welfare committees.

Growing up in England and Hong Kong, Simon was educated at Ripon Grammar School in North Yorkshire, before going on to read

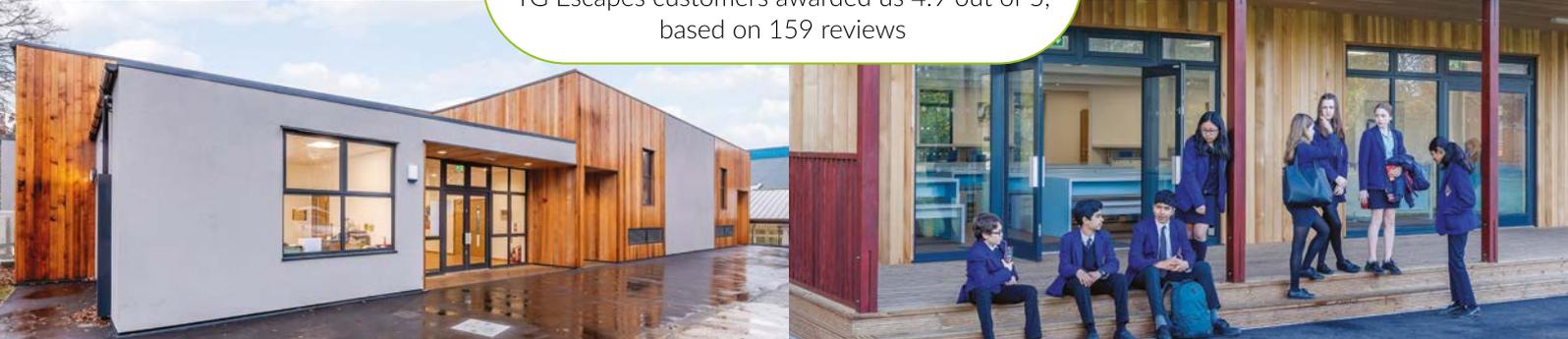
French and German (MA Hons) at the University of Edinburgh. Upon graduating, he taught in France and Austria, before qualifying as a teacher from the Institute of Education in London. His teaching career began at Dulwich College, where he taught French and German. He then moved to Highgate School where he was Head of French, later becoming the Deputy Head (Academic) of Years 7 and 8. From there, Simon moved to Cheltenham College to lead the Modern Languages faculty, before being promoted to Director of Studies, and then taking on his first of two Deputy Head (Academic) positions.

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