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In this issue...



Performing Arts scholarship launch

Polwhele House School, Cornwall, has launched a new performing arts scholarship to provide talented performers in the region eligibility for a bursary plus a range of other opportunities.

Headmaster Alex McCullough, said: "It is important to us at Polwhele House to recognise talent in the arts alongside academic achievements. We offer a range of opportunities for our children – including tuition, lessons and extra-curricular sessions and our regular performances are always well received. We hope the scholarship will promote the importance of the performing arts and help talented children achieve their aspirations."

The scholarship will allow pupils to receive over 8 hours of tuition in performing arts per week, alongside representing the school in competitions and performances, participate in workshops with specialists and develop their leadership skills and personal progression.

The scheme is run in association with Jason Thomas Performing Arts, a well-established dance school based in Cornwall, which has been providing training for students for the last 17 years with many going on to attend prestigious dance schools around the world.

In tune

As part of Bromsgrove School's ongoing commitment to the Performing Arts, the School has taken receipt of a state-of-the-art concert grand piano featuring sophisticated VC technology and an independent Capo d'Astro for perfect adjustment in the descant registry. There are less than 100 such instruments across the world.

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The route to well

Head teacher Marina Gardiner Legge explains how Heathfield School, Berkshire, has implemented an innovative Australian programme for happiness, wellbeing and sound mental health.

With mental health continuing to feature prominently in the news, the central importance of happiness and wellbeing is never far from our minds. Taking a positive approach to help students develop the 'pillars' of good mental health to stay well and optimise quality of life is key, and with careful planning this can become an integral part of school life.

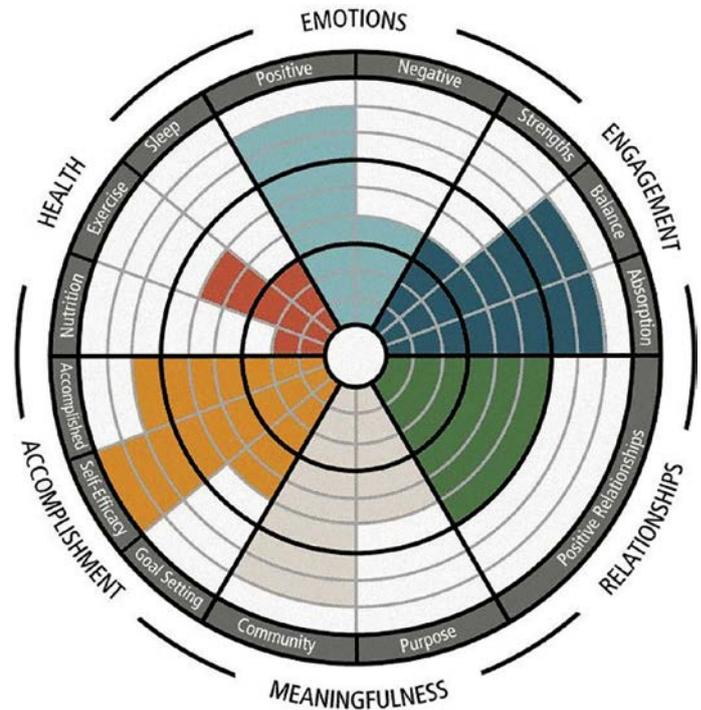
At Heathfield School we have chosen to implement an innovative mental health and wellbeing programme which has taken Australia by storm and we're fortunate to be the first UK school to adopt the programme. Rather than identifying those in distress or 'at risk', the 'Flourishing at School' programme aims to promote wellbeing from the outset.

As Flourishing at School is based on leading psychologist Martin Seligman's work on PERMA (Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning,

Accomplishments), it fits well with Heathfield's pastoral care system. In addition to this the programme includes a physical health element looking at sleep, diet and exercise which are key aspects of life in a vibrant boarding school.

The survey included in the programme only takes 10 minutes and can be done as part of a pupil's PSHE lesson on their own laptop, slotting in well to the existing curriculum. The delivery of individual results takes place with senior pastoral leads and each feedback session is timetabled to fit in with the individual pupil's own timetable; this can include use of tutor time, PSHE time and boarding time, making Flourishing at Schools well suited to the boarding environment. The results are scrutinised and an individual plan is created for each student, regardless of her 'score'.

The results the pupils receive are taken directly from their own answers, as opposed to the results the senior pastoral leads see. This is done to protect the pupils from comparing themselves against average scores, and shows us where our pupils are already flourishing, while also identifying any areas that need further development or pastoral intervention. Crucially, this is a primary level intervention to make sure our pupils are mentally fit and healthy – and is proactive rather than reactive. It is particularly useful in a boarding school environment where we have



such prolonged periods of contact with pupils – including involvement in their sleep and nutrition.

Our Director of Pastoral Care Kathryn de Ferrer and Director of Boarding John Gale, both hugely experienced individuals, take the lead in delivering the programme and individual feedback sessions, which we have been able to integrate seamlessly into our school day. They are supported by the PSHE team and Form Tutors, all of whom are skilled at delivering high quality wellbeing initiatives and have adapted their experience readily to the Flourishing at School programme.

John Gale has worked with the founder of Flourishing at School, Jason van Schie, for over a year and a half now, bringing the programme to fruition. Jason has come over from Australia to spend time with us and has worked with our staff, pupils and parents, educating them with regards to the Flourishing at School programme. John also has strong background knowledge about the programme, having

initially discovered it while looking for a process to establish a baseline for mental health and emotional issues for new pupils at his previous school. Our senior pastoral team has the strong foundations needed to deliver the programme.

And the cost of the programme in time and money? The ease of application of this programme and survey is surprising given the vast positive impact it has. When mental health is flourishing, you are better able to deal with problems or issues and develop resilience and grit. Some may argue that Flourishing at Schools comes at a significant cost but for us the cost of running the programme is negligible, as its value is incalculable.

Heathfield is the first school in both the UK and Europe to introduce Flourishing at School, and we hope to lead the way in creating a Flourishing at School network for schools in the UK that adopt the programme, with John Gale and Jason van Schie recently speaking to the HMC Wellbeing Committee on its success and ease of implementation at Heathfield.



Wellbeing

Pupils 'thrive' on workshop

A Yorkshire prep school has seen its Year 5 and 6 pupils "thrive" thanks to their participation in a unique wellbeing workshop.

The taster session at Ashville Prep School saw the children participate in a fun and interactive session to boost self-esteem, reduce social anxiety and give them greater self-awareness, led by teacher Esther Jones.

The Thrive Programme, of which Mrs Jones is a consultant, is a fun and interactive programme which gives children, teens and adults alike the skills to gain a sense of power and control over their lives.

Ashville is the first junior school in the country that the organisation has worked with, and the plan is that the boys' and girls' experience will help shape a full school programme currently being written by Mrs Jones.

Pupils embrace wellbeing day

At the end of February, pupils across the school from Infants to Sixth Form took part in Abbey Gate College's first Wellbeing Day.

The pace of life, concerns about school work, friendships, parents and the impact of social media on children's lives means that it is more important than ever for pupils to learn how to manage stress and take care of their own wellbeing.

The whole school were off timetable for the day so that pupils could participate in a variety of talks and activities themed around positive mental health and wellbeing. The sessions focused on enabling students to understand their feelings and emotions and develop strategies to look after their own wellbeing, as well as that of their friends.

Younger pupils enjoyed a mixture of activities, including singing for fun, dance yoga and British Red Cross first aid, and participated in workshops such as personal safety with PC Sally Malone.

Mother of four Mrs Jones said: "The Thrive Programme is all about teaching people to create good mental health, and it was marvellous being able to deliver this session here at Ashville Prep School.

"The programme can be used to overcome many different issues, including exam stress, lack of confidence, phobias and anxieties."

"It is also highly beneficial for any children or teenagers who are struggling to cope with a new diagnosis or manage a chronic or life limiting condition. It's about getting people flourishing and enjoying life."

Ashville Prep School Headteacher Simon Bailey said: "The wellbeing of pupils is extremely important to us and this session was extremely beneficial to all those Year 5 and 6s who took part."

At the Senior School, the morning sessions involved talks on key wellbeing topics, such as mental health first aid, alcohol awareness and time management.

The afternoon saw pupils learning new skills, getting active, getting outside in the fresh air, working together, getting hands-on, learning strategies around resilience and managing anxiety, taking time out from the usual routine and getting creative. Pupils chose two activities from 21 possible choices, ranging from yoga to gardening, mindfulness to money skills and camp craft to chess.

Feedback from pupils was overwhelmingly positive, with children saying how much they had enjoyed the day and felt inspired.

Head of Pastoral, Nerys Moses said: "When you hear a Sixth Form pupil leaving a session of yoga and loudly announcing, 'That was one of the best things I have ever done!' you realise how worthwhile it is to devote time to wellbeing."



Rugby's Nigel Owens speaks

Dauntsey's School, Wiltshire, pupils and members of the local community enjoyed a fascinating talk from Welsh international rugby union referee, Nigel Owens MBE. Nigel gave an enthralling and inspiring talk about his prolific refereeing career and then spoke frankly about his life, his struggle with mental health issues, and the importance of accepting yourself for who you are. The event was part of the School's annual Mercers' Lecture series.

A group of 18 Sixth Form students ran a pre-lecture

discussion with Nigel over dinner. Conversation ranged from his early family memories, his views on modern day rugby, through to how it felt to officiate his 80th international rugby match this month during the NatWest Six Nations Championship.

Following dinner, Nigel delivered his lecture to some 1,000 people, packed into the School's Memorial Hall. He captivated the audience with his honesty and humour and provided food for thought when talking about his early life, including the bullying he suffered.

Sports centre under construction

Construction has now begun on the new £6 million Sports Centre at the Grange School, Cheshire.

Due to be completed in December 2018, the new Grange Sports Centre will provide a high level facility including premier netball, badminton, football, and basketball courts.

Other facilities will include an area tailored for activities such as yoga, dance, gymnastics and aerobics, a dedicated area for rowing machines and free weights, an external climbing wall and bespoke classroom facilities.

As part of the build there will also be a new multi-use games area for sports such as netball and tennis, which will be fully floodlit and laid with a high performance surface. New changing and catering facilities have been incorporated into the design which will further enhance the user-experience.

In recent years the school has enjoyed considerable national success in netball, hockey, rowing and athletics, whilst also encouraging participation at all levels of sport for general fitness and wellbeing.



Pictured: Mrs Debbie Leonard (Head), Nigel Bantleman (Site Manager, Seddon Construction) with sixth form students Miles Hogg and Ella McGrath



Eco-aware initiatives transform school life & attitudes

The devastating impact of waste plastics in the oceans, and the widespread popularity of one-use plastic drinks bottles, has received much publicity of late. But St Mary's School, Essex, has been keeping well ahead of the curve, as Sarah Wilding, the school's Eco Co-ordinator, reports.

All schools have a responsibility to create a sense of stewardship, not only to the young people in their care, but also to the wider community. We can see it as a way of future-proofing. At St Mary's Colchester we have completely embraced environmentalism and sustainability and these are integral to our school ethos, from our School Development Plan through to delivery of the curriculum.

We set out on our Eco journey at St Mary's in a very small way: the school caretaker and I gathered together any used or unwanted materials lying around the school that we knew could be recycled; I would take some home with me and he would load up the school mini-bus with the rest and take it to Colchester's recycling facility. How things have changed!

Having begun simply by recycling a few used plastic bottles and the odd cardboard box, in September 2007 I decided to carry out an audit of what we were doing and where we could go with our eco-friendly initiatives in school. I brought together a very small Eco Team – the caretaker and I were joined by a few willing student volunteers drafted in from St Mary's School Council – and together we formulated an Eco Action Plan.

Staff and students at the school committed to recycle as many materials as possible and initiatives were put in place to 'reduce or re-use', including:

- recycling all packaging and reusing it for art projects
- making good use of the local Freecycle in order to obtain items for School use, such as water butts and plants and seeds for the School Gardening

Club as well as offering items the school no longer needs

- collecting and donating bras for Breast Cancer
- being part of the organisation Virtual Skip
- uniform recycling for cash to re-invest in Eco Projects
- considering environmentally sound options, such as timed lighting and installation of photovoltaic solar panels, when carrying out refurbishment at the School

When getting these initiatives off the ground, we found the structure of the Eco Schools organisation extremely helpful. Established by the environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, this is the largest educational programme in the world, engaging millions of children in 67 countries and inspiring them to consider the environment and how they can help to safeguard it for future generations. Eco Schools representatives visited us to assess us for their Bronze Award and we passed with flying colours. We quickly progressed to Silver – in record time, apparently – and went on to receive our first Green Flag in July 2008.

This success encouraged interest in eco initiatives at St Mary's to grow and with it grew our Eco Team. Our students were keen to volunteer to help dig the school's garden and pick our own produce, to collect pens,

coffee pods and even bras for recycling. Even to collect litter on the school field and count bugs for our annual biodiversity study. Our students were getting the message that every one of us can make a difference; no matter how small your contribution, it all counts.

With a new Year 7 cohort joining every September, it was important to keep up the eco momentum. This is perhaps the hardest part, but the eco message has become so ingrained in the St Mary's psyche that the older students take it upon themselves to pass the baton to their younger friends. It is no coincidence that the Eco Schools Green Flag award has to be re-applied for every two years – every new generation of students must show the same level of commitment as the last.

Joining the Eco Schools programme gave us a lot of support and training as well as a wealth of online resources, which have allowed us to refresh our approach on a regular basis. Any school looking to become involved in eco initiatives would be well advised to become a part of it.

Many schools think that they need to have their roofs plastered with solar panels and mini Eden projects in their school grounds – I call it Eco 'Bling' – and find the whole concept of becoming a more sustainable community





Plastic water bottles banned

daunting. However, they often do not realise that all the small things they are probably already doing can be recorded and celebrated. Once that initial audit has been carried out, it is fairly straightforward to establish an achievable Eco Action Plan.

As a school, we re-visit our Action Plan on an annual basis and discuss what we have achieved and how we can build on these achievements. We discuss what we were unable to achieve and how we can approach things differently. We try to have a main focus every year - this year it is reducing our plastic waste, which has proved to be quite controversial; however the media attention and the pressure from the students has been the driving force in pushing for a whole school ban on disposable water bottles. Young people today are naturally inclined towards saving our planet.

Initially you do need a 'champion' to spearhead the school's eco campaign and to inspire others and, yes, you do need to be determined and tenacious. However, once other members of staff see how important this is to the young people they teach, it is difficult not to jump on board. I have even heard of primary schools designing their entire curriculum around Eco Schools!

A commitment from the Senior Leadership Team is also needed in order to give credibility to whatever you are trying to achieve. The way to sell any eco initiative to SLT is that it will end up saving the school money and will form a part in their Whole School Development Plan by satisfying the school's Corporate Social Responsibility Policy.

We also try to surround ourselves with likeminded organisations, and try to influence our stakeholders to follow our example. We are always looking for fun and innovative ways to engage students and staff, from our bi-annual 'Grub in a Tub' competition - edible plants grown in containers ranging from guitars to suitcases - to our annual Trashion Show - make an entire outfit from recycled materials, including shredded paper, tin cans and household rubbish. Our gardening skills have been recognised in the local community through Colchester in Bloom, the local agricultural show and further afield in the Royal Horticultural Society's school gardening competition.

We have won countless local, regional and national business awards for Environmental Awareness over the years and this is a really important way of sharing best practice - and our enthusiasm - with others for the benefit of the next generation.

Keen not to contribute any further to the high volumes of plastic waste produced locally and globally, students at St Mary's School have taken the decision to no longer use single-use plastic water bottles with packed lunches, choosing more environmentally-friendly re-usable containers instead.

The water bottle ban was suggested by the school's student-led Eco Team, whose members are encouraging the student body to make use of refillable bottles. This is largely to reduce the number of plastic water bottles reaching landfill, but also to ensure that students are not harmed by chemicals from over-used

bottles that can leak into drinking water.

St Mary's Eco Schools Co-ordinator Mrs Sarah Wilding said: "After reading the Guardian article A million bottles a minute: world's plastic binge 'as dangerous as climate change' our Eco Team felt compelled to act. The ban on single-use water bottles and our Eco Week events gives us the opportunity to send the message to the rest of the school community. The students presented their research and ideas about how the whole school can get involved during a special assembly."

Outdoor learning ~ opportunities everywhere

Schools in urban areas often feel that outdoor learning isn't for them. But Robin Davies explains how even students in inner cities can benefit.



It's long been accepted that encouraging children to get out of the classroom into the great outdoors is beneficial. The idea that letting children experience nature at close quarters, allowing them to get their hands dirty and acquainting them with their environment has never been a difficult proposition to sell.

This widely held idea has increasingly been backed up with educational evidence. According to the National Child Development Study, a longitudinal piece of research that tracks almost 10,000 people born in 1958, children who belonged to the Scouts or Guides were about 15 per cent less likely to suffer anxiety even at the age of 50. Other studies have discovered more immediate benefits. Outdoor learning can reduce attention deficit disorder and rates of myopia among children, support wellbeing, enhance creativity and increase memory.

Accessing the great outdoors, however, is not so easy for schools in built up areas. Which is why residential trips have become popular. They foster children's engagement with learning by showing them why what they learn at school is important. And for inner-city children they give them an experience of the countryside many will not have had before.

Excellent though residential trips are, however, they have one obvious drawback – most schools can only access them infrequently and some not

at all. Moreover, if a school's idea of developing character is based solely on a week away at an outdoor centre, inspectors and others could well ask what it is doing to support and nurture it for the rest of the year.

Outdoor learning done well should not be a flash in the pan – and it can be done well in cities as much as in the countryside. To inculcate wellbeing and develop academic potential, whatever is learnt outside has to be linked back to what is learnt inside. There has to be a seamless weave between the activities children pursue outdoors and the curriculum taught in the classroom, otherwise whatever benefits students derive can be easily lost.

At the heart of outdoor learning is a paradox – the opportunities are endless, however, the curriculum's learning objectives can be prescriptive and finite. Ideally teachers should take the opportunities offered when they arise – if it's a sunny day, out into the playground their class can go. However, to be effective this seeming spontaneity should be planned. Everything teachers do outdoors or on a trip should be aligned to their students' learning, otherwise back in the classroom the lessons learnt just fizzle away. This means teachers have to plan beforehand what they wish to teach. It also means the SLT have to be astute enough to oversee the full framework of trips across

year groups and subjects to ensure a tightly woven fabric of learning.

In urban areas planning can require more negotiation and creativity – transport is more complicated, open areas are less accessible. But they do exist. Teachers may not be able to go the full Bear Grylls in major cities – but they can usually access local parks. They can organise a trip to a museum or to a theatre or even the local post office. If that isn't always an option, they can use outdoor learning nearer to home. They can ask their children to measure plants in the school garden if they have one, or to read Macbeth in the playground as it was originally performed – in the open air.

Of course, outdoor learning, especially for older students, often falls victim to curriculum pressures. But if it is seen as a necessary complement to the curriculum rather than an accessory to it, and even better, hitting learning objectives from two or three subjects at the same time, it becomes a lot easier to do.

At its best, outdoor learning contextualises theoretical learning. Maths students trying to understand volume, for instance, will most likely learn it better if they are allowed to measure water in containers in the playground. And that lesson can be learnt as easily in London or Manchester as it can in Surrey or Hampshire.

Robin Davies is Assistant Director of Education at the Cognita Group of schools.

Tree planting initiative

Pupils from The Study School, Surrey, took the classroom outdoors as they planted free trees from the Woodland Trust with the Deputy Mayor of Kingston, Cllr Mike Head in Green Lane Recreational Park, New Malden.

The school successfully applied for a Copse pack of 30 silver birch, rowan and wild cherry trees from the Trust after hearing about the scheme from a TV advert.

Ciarán Mc Auley, Deputy Head Teacher from The Study School, said: "The students get a sense of purpose, a sense of ownership, they are doing something for themselves, their school, their local community and they really enjoy that. We decided to plant the trees in Green Lane as a memorial to those who died in World War 1 and we were lucky to have Cllr Ken Smith who

is also Chairman of Malden and Coombe Royal British Legion, to talk to the children about the significance of World War 1 and the work the British Legion does to support veterans."

The Woodland Trust's Schools and Community Engagement Manager Karen Letten said: "*Trees create inspiring learning spaces – natural, sustainable, and dynamic outdoor classrooms where pupils can mix mud with maths and spades with science while connecting with nature and having fun. It's these lessons that the children will remember well into adulthood.*"

Woodland Trust commissioned research shows that primary age children who plant trees felt that they were 'doing their bit' to help the environment and remember it as a significant experience.

Defra (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) is supporting the Trust to deliver 400,000 trees to primary schools in England over four years.

Schools can apply by visiting the Woodland Trust website or searching for 'school tree packs' on-line. Trees are delivered twice a year, in March and November. www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/freetrees



Head shares his thoughts on British extra-curricular expertise

Brendan Wignall, Headmaster of Ellesmere College, Shropshire, addressed a select group of Chinese Government ministers while they were in Britain.

He spoke at a British International Education Association event about the benefits of extra-curricular activities in British schools.

He said: "We have offered advice to a number of Chinese bodies over the years about broadening the education system that they have and addressing the development of people who can become leaders in their own country, very much modelled on what Ellesmere has to offer.

"It was a great honour to be asked to share our experiences to such an elite audience.

"I was very proud to share Ellesmere's wide range of achievements with the teachers

from China, including those in Academic pursuits, Music, Drama, and sporting achievements; they were thoroughly impressed.

"Children in many Chinese schools have very little time for arts, sport, leadership opportunities or further global engagement activities.

"The heavy focus on academic results means children may study until midnight with just a few hours of sleep".

Mr Wignall (pictured right) addressed the group on a variety of important themes, including safeguarding, academic rigour, curriculum development, pastoral support and boarding school management.

Government ministers Mr Xu, Minister Counsellor of Chinese Embassy, and Mr Ho, of UKCBA, were among the audience at the event in London.

There were also other Chinese dignitaries there and a large group of teachers from Shanshayuan Shangyou School in China, who were attending a 10 day intensive teacher program with BIEA to learn best practices in UK schools.

"The best questions were those that really made you think, but at the same time were easy to answer; 'What makes a successful school?' being one," Mr Wignall added.

"The answer is a committed leadership team, an excellent set of professional teachers, a globally recognised set of qualifications and a broad approach to pupil development via an expansive co-curricular programme.

"At Ellesmere we believe that developing the whole pupil is much more than just passing



examinations; a philosophy which is paramount to the continued success of nurturing our students."

Following the talk Ellesmere College will have the opportunity to host, and take a key part in, teacher training programs with BIEA and visiting teachers from global schools.

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Preparing students for the contemporary university experience

How well are schools preparing their students for university? What are the contemporary challenges that students face? If TV dramas like *Skins* are anything to go by, sex and drugs dominate the scene. Yet comedian Stewart Lee has been critical of such portrayals and doubts that youngsters are really so 'confident, savvy and cool' when they arrive at university.

So, while it is entirely appropriate that those leaving sixth form will have received guidance on headline-grabbers such as drugs, alcohol, sexting, and so on, this still leaves many students insecure about and unprepared for some of the more mundane social issues and personal challenges that university presents.

This article's authors are a Head of Politics and Citizenship at Stamford Endowed Schools and a Professor of Politics at the University of Essex. They have often compared notes on these overlooked issues... the three in focus here are homesickness, etiquette, and independent study...

With mental health and mindfulness now part of the national consciousness, schools need to offer more specific and practical guidance about the challenges of leaving home. Research from the University of Warwick show that that up to

70% of students will experience homesickness¹. This is not of course a new problem but digital technology makes it easier for students to isolate themselves in virtual seclusion. Schools, we suspect, drastically underestimate this problem and it is rarely discussed explicitly with students before they leave for university. Stamford Endowed Schools are creating a programme to address this issue, based partly on links with the National Citizen Service (NCS) which university guidance guru Liz Salt has described as 'the best kept secret in education'. Let it be a secret no longer. The NCS² has a tailored programme of volunteering and teambuilding activities involving two weeks living in university campus dorms. It targets Year 11 students and gives them a taste of the twin experiences of being away from home and living with new people. Impressively, the whole experience currently costs no more than £50 due to government backing, so there are no cost implications for schools or students. Meanwhile, within Stamford Endowed Schools there is a thriving cooking-for-university course and this year this is being extended to include washing and ironing skills. Most fundamentally, all students will be given specific guidance on recognizing homesickness and strategies for tackling it.

Like interactions with peers, interactions with academics do not always slot easily into place. Part of the problem is lecturers' complaints of a perceived lack of initiative. Schools accustom students to extensive support and a swift answer to questions. Academics are less accessible and less willing to respond to queries about things like essay deadlines and textbook availability – especially when answers could be readily found

in a handbook or syllabus. The problem is exacerbated by a lack of formality. Every academic has a story about a student's email beginning 'Hey Tony' – or indeed without any greeting at all. Students used to texting and social media are unduly colloquial and struggle to recognise the grades of formality within university life. Admittedly, academics do not make it easy. All but the oldest are children of the less deferential society that the UK has become over many decades, and many are comfortable with first names rather than titles. Yet academics are not without a sense of their own importance and they resent any assumption of informality. An echo of French classes can be useful here. Hopefully most sixth-form students can still distantly remember the distinction between the formal 'vous' and the informal 'tu'. They then need to learn the norms of usage: you begin by using 'vous' with any potential authority figure, but may then receive a signal to switch to 'tu'. The rules in academic life are the same: assume formality, and switch to informality if invited. These may seem trivial issues but understanding them not only saves embarrassment and stress but also helps in the building of personal relationships with academics – potentially a very rewarding part of university life.

The challenges of independent study are manifold. There are questions about what and how to read, how far students can and should work together, how to take notes during lectures, and above all about the notorious issue of plagiarism. This crime is so much more tempting given the ease of cutting and pasting, and also more confusing in an age of streaming and file sharing which has blurred the concept of



David Tuck is Head of Politics at Stamford Endowed Schools is the co-author of 'Political Ideas' published by Hodder Education



Rob Johns is Professor of Politics at the University of Essex and is author of *Takeover: Explaining the Extraordinary Rise of the SNP* published by Biteback

intellectual ownership. Plagiarism is covered in some 'A' level subjects with heavy coursework elements, but all students should be made explicitly aware of what it is and how to avoid it. This might reasonably be thought the job of universities but, through convention more than lack of time, they provide too little such guidance – especially on academic practice beyond plagiarism. To give their leavers a running start, schools need to incorporate this into their own programmes.

Schools have become adept at preparing students for the more lurid aspects of university life but at the expense of the more mundane – and the more common. Through proactive working between schools and universities, and eliminating each's guesswork about the other, students will receive a much improved preparation. Recommendations from such collaborations can easily be worked into existing personal development programmes, and the National Citizen Service in particular provides excellent life experiences at minimal cost. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

1 <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/counselling/informationpages/homesickness> 2 www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/national-citizen-service

First MFL SCITT Trainee

Steph Millar has become the first trainee teacher to pass through Bolton School Girls' Division as part of a new national Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) programme.

The innovative link-up between state and independent schools is led by Sheffield comprehensive Silverdale School and is aimed at attracting more Modern Languages' teachers. Bolton School is the Northern partner and hub school for the scheme and it is anticipated that Steph will be the first of many trainees passing through the school.

Steph spent a busy half-term at Bolton School, taking on a Year 8 and Year 10 Spanish class as well as undertaking some team teaching with Year 7 French, Year 9 Spanish and Year 9 French. She shadowed a Year 10 Form in order to get a better understanding of the role of a Form Tutor and also shadowed

the life of the MFL department, attending INSET, departmental meetings and even consultation evenings. She completed lots of lesson observations in the department and to gain an idea of teaching languages across all stages, she also visited Bolton School Junior Girls' School to see younger pupils being taught French. During her placement, Steph also observed a PSHEE lesson and some History lessons in order to help her with her Content and Language Integrated Learning assignment (teaching subjects such as science, history and geography to students through a foreign language).

Steph now returns to Silverdale School to complete her professional training and to her first placement near Sheffield as she strives to achieve her Post Graduate Certificate in Education and gain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).



Takeover!

It was all change once again at Rosemead Preparatory School and Nursery, London, where a new Headmaster was installed – just for the day!

After only joining the school as Headmaster in September, Mr Phil Soutar found himself cast aside as Mr Magnus Tibbalds, age 8, took over the running of the school for the day. Magnus had won this opportunity in a competition and took to the role effortlessly.

After greeting parents and pupils at the school gate, Mr Tibbalds then led the Celebration

Assemblies in both the Prep and Pre-Prep departments. He joined the teachers for coffee at breaktime and had lunch with members of the Senior Leadership team. He was able to tour the classrooms to check on learning and signed some important letters with the Head's PA.

Magnus described his experience as 'fun and exciting' whilst Mr Soutar, who was able to regain his position as Headmaster at the end of the day said 'rather worryingly, Mr Tibbalds did a great job and I will be looking over my shoulder for his approval in the future.'

Pictured at work: Mr Tibbalds, Dawn Stewart the Head's PA., with Mr Soutar in the background

Gold Standard Testing for Independent Schools

About Password

Since their launch in 2008, Password tests have been used by for accurate and reliable "gold standard" English language and maths assessment. The tests, designed by experts and aligned to international standards, are used overseas to facilitate student recruitment and admission, and in the UK for screening on arrival.

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"Password Pupil has given King's Ely a single-platform testing management system for years 6-13 for all our international applicants. The content is rigorous, valid and randomly generated and managing the system has proved simple with excellent customer support from the Password ELT Team. From an academic point of view the system offers a cohesive way to compare results to the CEFR and general English levels while the online writing tasks are varied and appropriate for Academic school-level English. Within the school we have become far more efficient as Password means all of us in admissions and management can access results directly, reducing emails and phone calls on a day-to-day basis. Password has given us a bespoke, professional and effective product that exceeded our expectations and meets our international admissions needs completely."

Matthew Norbury, Academic Director of International Programmes, King's Ely, Cambridgeshire



“Social media has its place and that is away from the thriving interactive hub we have created...”

The evolving role of a library, not just a place to read books!

Julie Littler, librarian at Abbey Gate College, Cheshire, discusses how important it is to get the right provision for pupils in terms of lunchtime activities and the active role a library can play.

“Some young people live with their head in a book; transported to different worlds, fighting dragons, kayaking down the Amazon or learning how to breathe again after their first broken heart. Some become habitual memory sponges for the eating habits of a narwhal or short-tailed chinchilla. It thrills me that school libraries have incredibly successful book loan schemes and reading clubs. However, we must never neglect those who use the library as a comforting cover story or a security blanket. School libraries are so much more than books on shelves.

“At lunchtimes they are a go-to area for those who may not be drawn to the football or hockey pitch and those who may or may not have the confidence to walk into a science club or debating society. Many students come alone, so the welcome needs to be warm but not overpowering. Having weekly themes and printed quizzes (with a supply of pencils and chocolate for prizes) available by the door enables a purpose for each student to walk in and feel occupied. Then once they are in, a supply of reassuringly consistent and also fresh, engaging activities await them.

“A weekly chess club, hosted by friendly Sixth Formers, grows in its popularity, but a selection of board games based on luck rather than skill is more inclusive.

...libraries are a go-to area for those who may not be drawn to the football or hockey pitch and those who may or may not have the confidence to walk into a science club or debating society

Maybe started by the librarian yet often easy to leave unsupervised once individuals have joined and exchange is underway. Other constantly accessible ideas include puzzle books, monthly prize-winning activity sheets known as the ‘I’m Smarter Than You and I Like Chocolate’ quiz, advanced colouring books and pencils, a ‘Quick Pick’ section with ‘Where’s Wally?’ books, the ‘Guinness Book of Records’, the ever-popular ‘1001 Cars to Drive Before You Die’ and ‘Beano’ annuals. All of these offerings are conversation starters and the librarian can help to nurture this and involve others. I am constantly surprised and delighted where young minds can wander to and the challenges their inquisitiveness can overcome. They have nothing to prove to a librarian. No tests to complete. Everyone is equal. Although it is a ‘No Phone Zone’, there are no ‘Silence’ signs in our library.

“Very soon, the same faces will appear and participate in events such as candleholder making for Diwali, ‘Cake and Classics’ and team quizzes. Teaching and support staff and students of all ages are encouraged to come along to every event. Once more, barriers are broken down, friendships are made and confident young people emerge. Having two long-term senior library assistants and a team of younger ones serving for a term each, it becomes a badge of honour. These quiet students are soon creating and hosting quizzes. They are presenting awards to others and come September, the circle starts once again.

“Five years ago, the library was very traditional. A good stock of books but students said that they felt uncomfortable in the silent atmosphere. An empty library is a waste of resources and space. The weekly theme was the first change. Having a display area outside of the external door

was a great boost. Pushing out new themes and displays every week can be a challenge but it keeps the library fresh and purposeful. Staff are wonderful in providing display items too. Less than 24 hours from sending out a quick email, I have offers of bagpipes, snooker tables and scuba equipment! It took the staff a short time to adjust to the new approach to the library but their support is unending and invaluable.

“On a practical level, it takes a dedicated librarian to run the library as it is. The planning, preparation and delivery of everything takes time but even just 12 hours a week, including an hour a day of contact time, can make the plan work. Devoting time to train student assistants to properly run the loan system, process logging and backing new books is essential. Not only in assisting in time management but in enhancing the pride and respect students have for their space and facilities.

“‘Rugby Six Nations Week’ was ideal to promote health and sports injury books. Open them up too, a closed book often doesn’t have the interaction. Get some fresh bread and Brie in for ‘French Week’. Students and staff will have to ask for it in the correct language of course! ‘Magic Week’ conjured up unknown talents of students and staff in an encouraging and supportive atmosphere. Year 7 students became celebrities and Geography teachers were seen in a whole new ‘cool’ light.

“Financially, as with everything else in education, it pays to be savvy. A discount on book buying is a must. Donated board games are welcome but a decent stock of quality chess sets and basic games are a real investment. Apart from that, a good supply of chocolate prizes is a great incentive. Just one pound



a week on edible rewards is money well spent.

“So yes, we have books. They are in plentiful supply and kept right up to date with exciting new publications arriving on a regular basis. The arrival of new books always causes a frenzy of excitement. We talk about the books and share favourite snippets. Sometimes throwing diverse questions into the mix. ‘How different would ‘Swallows and Amazons’ be if everyone had a mobile phone?’ or ‘Which character from any other author would really shake things up if they were placed in Hogwarts?’ Again, after initial encouragement by the librarian, these are all student led. Traditional printed books are a mainstay and should always be so. It supports diversity in lifestyle. With young people being exposed to so many different situations and their minds able to process so much more information and ideas than ever before, sometimes we just need to approach reading differently. Students already have the imagination. Giving them the guiding hand to feel confident in sharing their ideas without judgment or classroom restraints is a librarian’s privilege.

“We have just two computers in the library and they are for homework only. I may research something online upon request but social media has its place and that is away from the thriving interactive hub we have created. We have a haven for all students, habitual readers or not, where they comfortably mix with all year groups and staff. Where the atmosphere is very much inclusive and minds and spirits are constantly enlightened.”

Picture Book Award winner

Bishop's Stortford College has announced the winner of the ninth Bishop's Stortford Picture Book Award.

Following the voting in which 16 local schools took part: 3rd place; Dogger (the 40th anniversary edition) by Shirley Hughes. 2nd place; Kevin by Rob Biddulph. And the winner, voted favourite by 12 schools, Bathroom Boogie by Clare Foges and Al Murphy.

This is a second win for this partnership. Their previous book Kitchen Disco also won the Picture Book Award two years ago.

Martin Brown, illustrator of Horrible Histories announced the winner after an hour in the company of the shortlisted authors and illustrators who introduced a cast of pigs, wolves, grannies, cats, frogs and a rather dim dog. The audience learned to draw Kevin, an imaginary friend and boogied on down to the Bathroom Boogie. Everyone had a whale of a time and are eagerly anticipating the 10th anniversary event.



Sixteen local schools in Hertfordshire and Essex took part and over three and a half thousand votes were cast. Any other local schools who wish to take part next year are invited to get in touch.

Maggie Garrett, Senior School Librarian said, "It was lovely to meet local primary schools involved for the first time this year as well as the stalwarts who have been with us since day one. This event just keeps on growing, and the picture book choice just gets better and better too. We have some of the best illustrators and writers in the country coming to this event and it was great to see three previous winners returning."



Cruella lives

Cumnor House, Sussex, celebrated World Book Day when the whole school participated, both pupils and staff – with many dressing the part!

Getting more kids active and maximising potential in those who have talent

There are currently 7 million children aged between five and 15 years in England – and nearly four out of five of those children are not doing the recommended 60 minutes of daily exercise. Whilst others are showing real potential in their sporting achievements and could benefit from extra support to enable them to achieve their full potential in the future.

Public Health England and ukactive are supporting a major exhibition and conference aimed at physical activity and healthcare professionals to offer free advice on how to get more kids active and how to recognise and support grass roots sporting stars of the future. Elevate 2018 is completely free-to-attend and will be held at ExCeL London on Wednesday 9th and Thursday 10th May.

The conference sessions and seminars are aimed at physical activity providers, sports coaches and fitness experts in order to increase activity levels in children and teenagers, create more inclusive activities from grass roots and to help identify and support talented athletes.

There are over 200 speakers including BBC's Dr Michael Mosley, Sport Relief coach Greg Whyte OBE, ukactive Kids chairman Dean Horridge, Dr Mike Loosemore, Martine Verweij from Kids Run Free and Dan Edwardes from Parkour Generations. Subjects covered include getting kids active at school, keeping teens active, driving participation for those with disabilities and maximising potential.

Maximising Potential

When you hear the word 'performance', the natural reaction is to think of elite athletes – but everyone can benefit from enhanced performance, both in amateur sporting endeavours and everyday lives. Performance doesn't just mean intense training designed

to shave milliseconds off a sprint time, or to boost endurance so you stay at the peak of your game throughout the entire 80 minutes of a rugby match. Of course, that's part of it – but it's also about reducing stress, helping students stay focused at their studies and fuelling day-to-day life through informed nutrition.

In a two-day programme of free-to-attend seminars the full range of performance will be covered – from the role of psychology and nutrition among elite athletes, through new innovations in personalised programming for maximum results; to the vital importance of sleep, meditation, nutrition and recovery in optimising everyone's performance in their day-to-day lives.

A wide range of equipment and facility products will also be available within the international exhibition, from the latest gym equipment with new product launches from suppliers such as Matrix, Watt Bike and Concept 2, to play equipment, climbing walls and swimming pool anti-drowning technology. For those looking to invest in new gym facilities or renovations there are also a wide range of facility providers from flooring and acoustics to full range solutions from Willmott Dixon.



Dr Michael Mosley



Prof Greg Whyte OBE

Find out more and register for your free pass to attend online now at www.elevatearena.com

Making Science Matter

Rarely are projects run solely to spread enthusiasm but the Abingdon Science Partnership, ASP, does just that. Its aim is quite simply to get children, students and adults interested in science. Set up three years ago by staff at Abingdon School, the Partnership's focus is community science, getting involved with schools, clubs, local organisations and events. Now entering its fourth year, ASP has been hugely successful so far and has a very bright future ahead of it.

The model could be copied by other schools...

Jeremy Thomas, the ASP Co-ordinator says: "We want everyone to explore science, not just to learn what's on a syllabus, and it's exciting no matter what age you are. We started with our own ideas but now we are part of big, national projects such as the Polar Explorer Programme which puts primary school children in touch with scientists working in the polar regions, and ATLAScraft where secondary students from several schools constructed a virtual version of CERN's ATLAS detector in Minecraft. We want people to see how fascinating science can be, and not just the headline stuff – every day science is great too."

The Partnership has a dedicated science lab at Abingdon School

which hosts activities and events including Science Oxford's Saturday Science Clubs which regularly attract up to 60 primary aged children and their parents. The clubs, which are practical and hands-on, are run voluntarily by ASP staff and Abingdon School students. They explore diverse topics from building rockets and investigating fossils to making models of human digestion. And they've even run science for adults too with a 'Gunge for Grown Ups' evening.

Sophie Batin, Education Outreach Manager at Science Oxford said, "The Abingdon Science Partnership has been invaluable in supporting our programme of fun, interactive science activities for young people

and their families in Abingdon and beyond. The sessions are always well received – families love the exciting mix of hands-on science and inspirational teaching that the Partnership provides."

Brownies, Beavers, Rainbows, Scouts and Guides all use the ASP lab. Children can work on badges, Science Investigator and Star Gazer, and get involved with projects such as clean water and sanitation in developing countries. Interested parties include 10 Downing St who invited the 30th Abingdon Beavers to visit and demonstrate their project.

ASP's activities cover over 50 schools and community organisations across Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire and



Gloucestershire. The Partnership supports CREST at ten schools with around 300 Year 2 and Year 3 pupils gaining the Star award each year. ASP has also become a catalyst for the growth of local STEM outreach activities, supporting these in both maintained and independent schools and youth groups. The Partnership works with local community organisations including the annual Abingdon ATOM Festival of Science and Technology.

Louise Warren, Head-teacher of Buckland CE Primary School, said, "We had the privilege of sending three of our classes to the Abingdon science lab. The children all returned, challenged and enthused having taken part in a wide range of activities from investigating floating and sinking and using levers to create water extraction devices, to the excitement of Bunsen burners heating different compounds. Our Year 5 and 6 children were captivated by comparing the DNA of a human and a shark whilst our younger ones await their turn with great anticipation."

Jeremy Thomas said, "We have made great strides in our first three years and we've been overwhelmed by the response. It's fantastic to see how exploring science in different ways can really capture the imagination, particularly of school age children. If ASP and other initiatives can continue to fuel this enthusiasm then I'm very optimistic about the future of science in the UK."





Advice on setting up your school's (science) partnership

Jeremy Thomas's top tips:

Things to try:

- Appoint a member of staff to co-ordinate activities, with a substantial timetable reduction
- Decide on whether you can support regular or one-off events
- Find out if local schools have any existing networks supported by local education authorities or school consortia
- Look for national organisations supporting partnerships in your area such as the National STEM Learning Centre and the Ogden Trust
- Look at existing schemes such as BSA CREST Awards which provide structure and resources for activities (www.crestawards.org)
- Consider paying external providers to run workshops and invite other schools to join in, for example the National Space Academy (<https://nationalspaceacademy.org>)
- Consider which staff will want to be involved, focus on volunteers first as not all staff will be interested (however when they see others enjoying it, it becomes infectious).
- Use older pupils as mentors or ambassadors to run clubs and activities for younger pupils
- Spread the activities across different year groups to avoid the same pupils being targeted

Potential pitfalls:

- Staff time and conflict with other duties and activities
- Logistical challenges in finding venues for visitors during the school day
- Evening and weekend activities ease pressure on facilities but can have staffing problems
- Transport costs if working with schools over a larger area
- When running activities mixing visiting pupils and pupils from your own school, consider the ratio carefully as pupils in their own school tend to be more confident

What are the benefits?

- Connecting pupils and staff with a wide variety of people outside the school
- Increasing staff experience and the variety of teaching skills
- Making peer observation and collaboration a natural part of everyday activities
- Giving pupils opportunities to develop essential skills in leadership, communication and teamwork
- Raising the profile of your school in the community

And finally:

Getting a massive buzz from every successful event and a sense of achieving something of genuine, educational value.



A+

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A dedicated minibus compliance course is launched in response to the discovery of a shocking gap in knowledge

Chris Maynard, MD of Castle Minibus explains why he has developed and launched the MCC Minibus Compliance Course especially for school staff members.

In a recent survey of our existing school customers we were shocked to discover that over 60% didn't know what a section 19 permit was. A section 19 permit is required by not-for-profit and schools with charitable status to enable them to run a minibus without a CPC commercial operators licence. It is essential that every minibus has and displays one. They are cheap at £11 and easy enough to obtain, but they do require certain administration and safety considerations to be completed, such as regular safety inspections and accurate record keeping etc. If a school doesn't know about section 19 permits it is unlikely they will know about their legal obligations when it comes to managing their minibus. Unfortunately, minibus management is just not seen as an area where formal training or education is needed.

If a teacher or member of staff is given additional responsibilities such as first aider or SEN co-ordinator they will receive training to ensure they understand what the role entails. As far as we can see school transport managers, or those members of staff given the responsibility of managing the minibus don't have that kind of training or education available to them.

We are not talking about training to drive the minibus, we are talking about all the issues surrounding compliance that the DVSA can

check on at any time, unlike a private car the DVSA can stop a school minibus for no reason or perform spot checks within schools on its maintenance and management.

Change of recommendation to 10-week checks

Our survey was completed whilst we called existing school clients to check they knew the government and Community Transport Association (CTA) had changed their recommendation that minibuses should receive safety inspections and maintenance checks by qualified professionals every 10 weeks as opposed to the previous recommendation of 17.

"DVSA recommend that inspections are carried out at least every 10 weeks. You must ensure that a safety inspection is carried out before it's used, if your vehicle is used very rarely."*

More alarming perhaps than the 60% who had never heard of a section 19 permit, were the 70% who had no idea the checks were required at all.

Skipping over the safety checks

As Castle Minibus' customer service guided schools through the application for the section 19 permit on the government website, they noticed that a recent change means question 20 on safety inspections is skipped over by any

school operating not for profit/hire or reward – they are told to move onto question 21. So, even the application for a section 19 permit doesn't make the safety inspection element clear. (Castle will be writing to the DVLA and select committee on this point).

Castle Minibus is a trusted advisor to schools and we are the champions of minibus safety and the MCC will give staff a clear understanding of responsibilities, procurement, legislation, training, maintenance, compliance and health and safety, including a practical minibus safety check and an introduction to Castle's free School Transport Manager app that makes checks and reporting quick and simple.

The first compliance course will be held in Bicester in April (already fully-booked), delivered by Castle's advance driver trainers and ex-traffic police, but we are able to deliver the course to schools across the UK. We are in the process of accreditation for the course from RoSPA and have already received the backing of several large school, safety and driver training associations such as the ISBA, IMTD (Institute of Master Tutors of Driving), Graham Feast Road Safety Consultancy and the MSA (Motor School Association of GB).'

For more information visit www.castleminibus.co.uk/driver-training/mcc or call 01869 717569

*www.gov.uk/government/publications/section-19-and-22-permits-not-for-profit-passenger-transport/section-19-and-22-permits-not-for-profit-passenger-transport#annex-2---recommended-maintenance-arrangements

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*bookings to be made and paid for in full by 30th April 2018





Historians visit Ypres

Yr9, 10 and 11 historians from Towers Convent School, Sussex, made their way to Ypres in Belgium to see the battlefields and show their respects to the soldiers, who died in the First World War. The group visited war cemeteries, where pupils and staff laid poppies on the graves, row after row of them, neatly positioned and respectfully maintained. They also walked

in the muddy trenches, feeling very sombre and grateful to the soldiers, who had endured such degrading conditions for so long.

At The Menin Gate three pupils, whose relatives were buried there, took part in the Last Post Ceremony. They laid a wreath, on behalf of The Towers, under the gate in front of hundreds of onlookers, definitely a once in a lifetime experience.

Helping young people reach new heights since 1941

The Outward Bound Trust is a leading educational charity that uses the unpredictability of the wilderness to stretch young people physically and mentally until they achieve something they never thought was possible.

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method to enable young people to realise their true potential and develop character. From their centres in jaw-dropping locations in Snowdonia, the Scottish Highlands and the Lake District, highly qualified Outward Bound® instructors guide participants through outdoor adventure and challenge to embed learning and skills that typically go beyond those which are learned in the classroom. These include independence, leadership, teamwork, self-awareness and resilience.



Find out more at www.outwardbound.org.uk/schools

First night away

The Knighton House School, Dorset, year 5 pupils took a trip to the field studies centre, Nettlecombe Court, in Somerset. The trip is one that covers many subjects in the curriculum, and beyond, as well as providing the pupils with an exciting night away and lots of fun.

Nettlecombe Court itself is a field studies centre which prides itself on being environmentally aware; the girls learnt lots about environmental awareness - from our local responsibility to the wider effect of global warming.

The investigation of the best materials for a hedgehog's nest linked directly to their work in the science lab; they were able to understand first-hand the thermal properties of materials that a hedgehog might use for hibernation. At first they struggled to understand that

the investigation with hot water, leaves, mud, sticks and grass in the woodland was anything to do with their investigations in the science lab, but gradually they learnt that language such as 'fair test' and 'control' is not limited to the lab.

The history of Nettlecombe Court (it is first mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, when it was stated to be held by William the Conqueror) links directly with the pupils' study this term of Medieval history when they return back to school.

As well as all of this outdoor learning they built dens, sang songs around a campfire, played games on the 'croquet lawn' and finished the trip with a scavenger hunt around the extensive grounds. Given the cold February weather the lashings of hot chocolate went down a storm. A super first night away from home for many.



Eye-opening business excursion

Sixth formers from Derby High School were given an insight into the world of business with a trip to a world leader in making construction and agricultural machinery. Business Studies students spent the morning at JCB, in Uttoxeter, where they were given a tour of the site, watched the production line in action and visited the company's museum.

Alec Lee, Head of Sixth Form at Derby High School, said: "I

was very pleased to accompany the trip to JCB this year as the feedback from previous years had always been really positive - they run a very slick corporate operation at JCB, which was very interesting for students to see, but the highlight was later in the visit when we were able to go into the manufacturing area of the plant and see the machinery being made and assembled from start to finish."



D1 or not D1? – That is the question

Should NON D1 holders be allowed to drive a school minibus? John Couppleditch, Sales Director for Eva Minibus examines the issue in more detail.

During conversations with schools it is still evident that opinion is split about allowing members of staff without a D1 to drive a minibus.

A D1 category on the driving licence allows the holder to drive a vehicle capable of carrying 9-16 passengers.

Those passing their driving test after 1st January 1997 will not have D1 on their licence. Year on year there are more drivers within schools without D1 (Anyone 38 and under).

Can a minibus be driven without a D1?

According to www.gov.uk/driving-a-minibus "You might be able to drive a minibus if you hold a car driving licence and meet certain conditions – otherwise you'll need to apply for a minibus licence.

If the minibus is not for 'hire or reward'

You might be able to drive a minibus with up to 16 passenger seats using your current car driving licence as long as there's no payment from or on behalf of the passengers (it's not for 'hire or reward')".

Conditions you must meet

You can drive a minibus within the UK as long as the following conditions apply:

- you're 21 or older
- you've had your driving licence for at least 2 years

- medically fit
- you're driving on a voluntary basis and the minibus is used for social purposes by a non-commercial body
- the maximum weight of the minibus is not more than 3.5 tonnes – or 4.25 tonnes including specialist equipment for disabled passengers, for example a wheelchair ramp
- no towing

Let's focus on minibus weight

The 3.5 or 4.25 tonnes they refer to is the gross vehicle weight – The maximum weight that the vehicle is allowed to operate at, including passengers, fuel and luggage.

You should be mindful of available payload when operating a minibus.

The payload is the difference between the unladen weight of the vehicle and the gross vehicle weight.

Let's look at an example of a 15 seat minibus at 3.5t GVW

If you subtract the actual vehicle weight from the 3.5t GVW allowance you are left with approximately 70kgs average payload per seat (including the driver).

Considering luggage or sports kit, you can see that in the case of teenage students you will easily risk operating that vehicle as overweight.

This weight issue can be addressed either by reducing the number of seats – 14 including driver would be more comfortable. Or you can operate a 17 seat minibus by using the increased

weight allowable if the bus is adapted for occasional wheelchair use (removable rear seats and a lift or ramp).

Let's now concentrate on the voluntary driver condition

Schools must take a cautious approach to the 'voluntary driver' angle for the following reasons.

The fact that the member of staff is not being paid, that driving is not in their job description, that they may be driving in their own time does not make it driving on a voluntary basis.

The derogation from the D1 requirement was created to avoid penalising NON D1 holders who wanted to give their time for a charity group. This is different from an employed teacher driving students to a fixture as part of their job.

The Road Traffic Act, uses two key words 'cause and permit'. The fact you have 'allowed' the school employee to drive the minibus creates an occupational driving relationship between the school and the driver.

Until there is a test case to define whether driving for a school, even when employed is classed as voluntary I believe that schools are operating at risk if they allow non D1 drivers to drive minibuses.

Schools should be managing all risks relating to drivers, vehicles, and journeys. EVA are offering free compliance audits for schools running minibuses to ensure they are operating as safely as possible and allowing your pupils to gain access to some fantastic external learning opportunities.



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Minibuses are an integral part of your school's daily function and we have an option that makes it ever easier and more economical to run – *Minibus Lite*, as presented by Bentley Walker Minibus

While minibuses have long been a necessity for schools, something not as many have been aware of is Minibus Lite – an affordable and versatile lightweight minibus which can be driven on an ordinary driving licence. Minibus Lite was first introduced to address the situation where the number of teacher volunteer drivers with the automatic D1 entitlement on their driver licence was diminishing. Drivers who took their B category driving test after Jan 1st 1997 were limited to smaller, lighter vehicles.

The Lite solution was a design where the vehicle maximum Mass was kept within the permissible amounts provided for within the schools section 19 permit.

This huge benefit provides schools with the previously accustomed number of potential drivers while still being safe, legal, compliant and cost effective. There are a whole plethora of reasons which make Minibus Lite a smart option for your school.

Firstly, there are a whole host of financial benefits. With school budgets continually facing cuts, it's important to make your own budget amendments where necessary, but without compromising on the quality of a service or the safety put towards the children. Minibus Lite eradicates the need to invest in a D1 licence which can be expensive and also require teachers to take time out of teaching to take it. A D1 licence is automatically given



to anyone who passed their test prior to 1st January 1997, but not to anyone who passed after this date. A D1 licence is a category which is required to legally drive a minibus on a public road – and therefore a necessity for teachers looking to take pupils out.

Due to the lighter weight of Minibus Lite as opposed to other minibuses, it can result in the fuel cost being less, making it more economical. Whether to a school trip, a sports match or to transfer between campuses, minibuses are a vital part of your school network and if you can easily, legally and safely save costs when investing in them, it can only be a good thing.

The minibus Lite has achieved the highest level of approval, European whole vehicle type approval (EWVTA) with standard, reduced mobility and wheelchair accessible versions in the range.

Requirements of this level of approval include the latest

Euro 6 emissions engines, more stringent seat strength tests, tilt tests to ensure vehicle stability and importantly, production conformity standards monitored by the UK vehicle certification agency.

Put simply, the highest levels of safety, quality and environmental performance.

The Lite concept also has the benefit of providing fuel economy and generous passenger and luggage weight capability, very useful on those sports trips.

No restrictions have been lifted since 1997 and the requirements for vehicles have actually become stricter. Every vehicle is professionally modified for purpose and includes a high standard spec with features such as electric windows, electric mirrors, central locking, electric door mirrors and Lane Departure Warning System. Optional features can include CCTV in the rear cabin, an opening roof

hatch and on board or underfloor wheelchair lift – simply discuss your options when you call to get your Minibus Lite and it can be tailored for your needs. Whether you need it to transfer equipment, pupils or for a range of different purposes, this ease of modification means you can tailor your Minibus to your organisations' precise needs. Minibus Lites' can be ordered on a range of finance options and paid on a fixed monthly cost so there are no nasty and unexpected financial surprises!

When speaking about Minibus Lite, Julie Gogarty, the Managing Director at Bentley Walker said "Minibus Lite is a great option for schools. We hear so many cases where schools are hit by budget cuts or don't have the time for teachers to take tests for their D1 approval on their licence. Minibus Lite takes away all this hassle and cost issues and enables schools to focus on what really matters – the pupils."

Snowy adventure

A group of twelve Second Form pupils from Dauntsey's, Wiltshire, spent half term in the North of Sweden on an 'Arctic Adventure' of a lifetime.

Their base was the city of Skellefteå which was blanketed in thick snow throughout their stay, with temperatures rarely above freezing and as low as -16°C. The pupils tackled a number of challenges including shopping for 150kg of food in another language, cooking their own meals, cross country ski-ing, snow shoeing, ice fishing and night hikes in the snow. The group also spent some time in a Swedish school, learning about what life is like as a teenager in Sweden.

Sam Moore, Head of Adventure Education, Dauntsey's, who led the trip, said: "This exciting trip was a new addition to our adventure education programme and proved to be a great success. We created an itinerary which was a mix of challenges in the snow as

well as a day of tough quests at the Boda Borg centre. The pupils had to look after themselves, their

equipment and each other in this demanding environment. This was also an opportunity to learn

about the Swedish way of life and how the locals cope with the arctic conditions in the winter."



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Survive and thrive in the winter wilderness

Sledding with husky dogs, building snow caves, and fishing through ice holes were just some of the skills mastered by Lewes Old Grammar School (LOGS), Sussex, pupils on their latest school expedition.

Nine students in Years 10 embarked on an experience to Finland for a survival skills course on the frozen River Tornio and into the surrounding tundra.

The trip saw pupils embrace the hostile elements as they skied and snow-shoed across the ice. Tasked with building their own expedition level base camp, pupils cut and shaped ice blocks, created their own cooking area, and learned how to strategically arrange tents to avoid harsh winds.

Before heading on the excursion, students spent a weekend learning emergency first aid and preparing for search and rescue scenarios.

Hannah Thorpe, PE teacher, said: "This year, the temperatures were well below freezing but the

children got to grips with their environment straightaway and made the most of the experience. It was particularly gratifying to see them tested on their practical skills at the end of the expedition by taking part in a cross country ski expedition which included an emergency "scenario". They did an amazing job of creating survival bags which could take casualties out of difficult forest terrain and we felt very proud!"

"Our students were captivated by this once-in-a-lifetime experience," said Tim Laker, school bursar and operations manager. "It's inspiring to see pupils flourish outside of their comfort zones and learning how to survive and thrive in extreme conditions prepares them well for life in England too.

"A trip like this really goes beyond academic learning to develop people in all sorts of ways – improving self-confidence, teamwork skills, and reinforcing the importance of perseverance.



Immersive educational experience

Dinosaurs in the Wild is landing at London's Greenwich Peninsula for an extended run until 31 July. The show is an immersive, live-action educational experience that enables teachers to take school groups of 7-11-year-olds somewhere they've never been before – 67 million years back in time to the late Cretaceous Period.

Using cutting-edge special effects and the latest discoveries in palaeontology, Dinosaurs in the Wild is specially designed to ignite pupils' imaginations and bring science to life by putting school groups face to face with living dinosaurs.

The 70-minute adventure allows pupils to ask questions as they explore their surroundings on TimeBase 67, an extraordinary research station on the Cretaceous plains. Dinosaurs in the Wild was developed with the support of more than 100 specialists and led by palaeontologist Dr Darren Naish to ensure that every detail is scientifically accurate and realistic.

Over 4,500 pupils have attended Dinosaurs in the Wild in the past year, across the Birmingham and Manchester tenures.

To support teachers before and after this unique experience, Dinosaurs in the Wild is also providing free curriculum-linked resources for English and Science lessons in Key Stage 2. Teachers can download these exciting activities at: <https://dinosaursinthewild.com/education-resources>

Tim Haines, Creative Director of Dinosaurs in the Wild and award-winning producer of hit BBC TV series Walking with Dinosaurs, said: "With Dinosaurs in the Wild, we wanted to create an immersive experience that takes pupils back in time, using the latest technology to portray incredible details about the creatures and their surroundings. It will truly change your pupils' understanding of how dinosaurs looked and ignite their passion for scientific discovery."

School group bookings enjoy a special ticket price of only £12 per pupil, as well as free tickets for accompanying teachers (one per five pupils in primary; and one per 10 pupils in secondary).

Tel: 0800 852 7244
www.dinosaursinthewild.com/education

Hey, teachers, leave them kids alone!

(Pink Floyd: *Another Brick in the Wall*)

Debate unites young and old, teachers and students, says Michael Benjamin, Head of Public Speaking and Debate and Teacher of English at Ratcliffe College, Leicestershire, as he reports on discussions about uniform and homework.

For the audience of teachers, parents and Years 5 and 6 students, the music of Pink Floyd ushered the Ratcliffe College, Leicestershire, junior debaters onto the platform, foreshadowing an enthusiastic discussion of student control, by teachers, at Plumtree School in Nottinghamshire.

Two teams made up of Ratcliffe College Key Stage 3 students argued the questions of 'school uniforms' and 'homework' in a pacey, political style debate. Inspired by Head Teachers, Phil Simpson of Plumtree and Jon Reddin of Ratcliffe College, the idea was to engage the young with the old, encouraging confidence of learning through formal conversation and argument.

Year 8's Victoria Wheatley, captain for the proposition, quickly asserted 'that uniforms are essential as individuality can be achieved through personalised buttons won for achievement.' A Plumtree student and Ratcliffe Year 9 student, Oliver Hunt, countered offering 'the expense of uniforms to some students is simply too much and that not all students are academically capable to win merit buttons – look at America – they don't do uniforms – and they seem to do just fine in the world!'

The question of 'homework' was met with fire on both sides of the aisle. Year 7's Sam Davies confidently made the case 'after 8 or 9 hours of focused school work, we then have



extra-curricular or chores or an older relative to visit. Come on, isn't enough, enough?'

As the debate intensified, so did the audience's delight, producing a cutting question from Year 5 Plumtree student, Sara, 'school uniforms keep you from getting bullied. I really love mine.' Cheers from the audience were met with a response from the opposition's Maisie Ashford-Clark noting 'dealing with bullying is about people who are mean, it is not about expressing individuality through your own clothes.'

Parents from Plumtree joined in with one noting that 'control is the key word here. Our children should be encouraged to think for themselves and be leaders – no uniforms.' Another parent fully supported uniforms 'when in the military service, I knew that as soon as I put on my uniform – it was time to work. Keep them.' And keep the children talking.

With a vote of 68% to 32%, the audience collectively decided that uniforms and homework must stay!

Michael Benjamin featured in January's ISM with his top tips for setting up a debating and public speaking initiative at schools. The article is still available online at www.independentschoolsmagazine.co.uk/issues/2018-jan/jan-magazine.html#p=12



Efficient new builds

One of the oldest prep schools in the country – St Aubyn's School, Essex, founded 1884 – has embraced modern architecture with two major new facilities.

The new Gordon James Dining Hall has been confirmed as the most energy efficient new building in the London Borough of Redbridge.

While the new Nursery, with an equally efficient energy performance, has enabled there to be two identical but integrated

nurseries operating in the same building.

The first project comprises a new Dining Hall for use by the whole School, with an associated commercial kitchen facility on the Ground Floor and a central Staff Room and rehearsal/drama facilities on the First Floor.

Both buildings have been designed by Michael Foster AA Dipl MA RIBA (a former partner of The Tooley & Foster Partnership). They were built by contractor Kind & Co.

Pictured: current head Len Blom with his predecessor Gordon James.

Westonbirt is latest to receive CAP Silver Award

The Housekeeping Team at Westonbirt School is celebrating a coveted CAP Silver Award. It is the first school in the South West education area to achieve this accolade.

CAP Awards recognise 'unsung heroes' who exhibit hard work and dedication to provide exceptional environments. They are only presented to departments that meet the highest standards in Housekeeping and Catering, following a rigorous full-day inspection by independent assessors.

Westonbirt School occupies an impressive Elizabethan-style mansion with parts dating back to

the mid-19th Century. Headmistress Natasha Dangerfield said: "I am delighted that the Housekeeping Team has been recognised for the work undertaken to present this wonderful building. It's paramount that the school looks its best at all times to provide a caring and inspirational learning environment for our pupils."

After joining the CAP Continuous Awards Programme in 2016, Westonbirt School achieved Bronze level. Since then, the housekeeping team has benefited from the programme's 12-month improvement plan, which guided the department to the Silver Award. In 2018, the target is a CAP Gold!



Tel: 01858 540 200
www.capaward.co.uk



Profile

In conversation with Iain Kilpatrick

Born: 1967

Married: Katrina; two children Emma (16) and Miles (14), both at Sidcot

Schools and University: The High School of Stirling, Stirling University (BA in English), Edinburgh University (PGCE and Master in Education)

First job: 1985, Royal Bank of Scotland, working in branches and head office departments

First management job: Head of Expressive Arts, Strathallan School, 2000

First job in education: Assistant Master at Strathallan teaching English in 1995

Appointed to current job: September 2012

Favourite piece of music: Messiah by Handel

Favourite food: Haggis, 'neeps and tatties'

Favourite drink: Thatcher's Gold cider or a nice glass of red wine

Favourite holiday destination: Perthshire in Scotland

Favourite leisure pastime: Going to the theatre, especially to see opera

Favourite TV or radio programme/series: House of Cards and the Today programme (Radio 4)

Suggested epitaph: He had a remarkably good sense of humour for a Scotsman!

Q You were educated in Scotland and spent your teaching career there before moving to Sidcot. What struck you most about the differences between a Scottish and an English education when you settled south of the border?

A *My experience in Scotland was quite varied. The first school I taught at offered A Levels in addition to Scottish Highers. The second, only offered Scottish qualifications. One of the attractions of Sidcot was the choice of IB in addition to A Levels in the Sixth Form. I am a greater believer that one size doesn't fit all when it comes to education and the choice of course is fundamental to a young person having the best chances of success.*

Q Sidcot is a Quaker school with a history stretching back to 1699. It was one of the first co-ed schools in the country when it welcomed girls in 1808. Recent independent research indicates that an education based on Quaker values can make a real difference to student outcomes and well-being. How would you summarise those values and their benefits?

A *Joining the Sidcot community has shown me how the Quaker values of equality, truth and respect make a quantifiable difference to our students' academic outcomes and their school experience. We have recently taken part in a research study with the University of Bristol which has validated this approach. The study, which involved four Quaker schools, examined the relationship between students' perception of our schools and their engagement with learning. It pinpointed the open and respectful relationship between teachers and pupils as the cornerstone to our success. It suggested the open, respectful and supportive culture results in students who are less anxious and stressed and therefore are more open to learning, achieving success naturally.*

Q You are well-known for an approach to education where school is not just about passing exams. This dovetails with the Sidcot philosophy. Was this something you always subscribed to, or is it something which you – as a non-Quaker – have come to realise more since your current appointment?

A *As a non-Quaker, I have rather developed the zeal of the convert when it comes to values in education. The early Quakers were instructed to 'answer that of God in everyone.' I believe that 'God' and 'good' are interchangeable terms depending on your point of view, but the basic principle of maintaining optimism and openness*

in our relationships are qualities that endure. We are interested in educating our students to think for themselves and bring integrity and resilience to their lives long after they leave school. In the complex and complicated world our young people are going into these values, which stem from our Quaker heritage, seem both contemporary and essential.

Q What is the Sidcot 'Learning Wheel'? Is it a model which could be copied by a school without such a firm Quaker ethos underpinning its work?

A *Our curriculum is mapped to our values and culture through our Learning Wheel, which ensures our culture and values are central to our teaching and learning, and are experienced in every classroom, every day.*

The Learning Wheel shows the thinking behind what we do in and out of the classroom and how our values inform our approach to education. We aim to develop our students academically but what's also equally important to us is a focus on developing students' emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills, their social awareness and their sense of community. We are not here to develop experts in rote learning and regurgitating facts.

These values are not exclusive to Quakers. I believe they will resonate with those schools, like Sidcot, who are also focused on preparing students to take their place in the world as global citizens. These future leaders will need to be curious, open-minded and confident in examining evidence and making decisions based on critical reasoning. Our Learning Wheel is therefore a model for schools which strive for an inspirational education which is as much about nurturing the spirit as it is about academic outcomes.

Q The 600 students at Sidcot hail from 30 different countries, and must bring an interesting global perspective to life at the school and how you teach. Your recent appointment of a Director of Peace and Global Studies won widespread headlines, but what impact has this had in the classroom?

A *Having a global perspective with a focus on preparing students to take their place in the world as global citizens has long been at the heart of our approach at Sidcot. We were very proud to cement this philosophy by being the first UK school to appoint a Director of Peace and Global Studies who leads our drive to embed Peace and Global Studies throughout the curriculum.*



Iain Kilpatrick has been head of Sidcot School, Somerset, since 2012. He has previously been head of Beaconhurst School, Stirling.

Our aim is to create a school filled with Peace Makers and Change Makers and Peace Education has created a learning environment which gives voices to our students. It empowers them to challenge, question and be curious while also developing the essential skills of tolerance, acceptance, empathy and understanding – the essence of great leaders in a global society.

It's not just in the classroom where you will experience Peace Education here at Sidcot. It is very much the golden thread which weaves its way throughout school life. We have a Centre for Peace and Global Studies, a peace field with Yurt village, an innovative speaker programme exploring contemporary global issues and an increasingly popular annual Festival of Peace designed to connect with a broader audience exploring the concepts of peace and Quaker values.

It was therefore very rewarding to be appointed an Ashoka Changemaker School, one of only 15 such schools in the UK. Ashoka, through its network of social entrepreneurs, believes that anyone has the capacity to effect system change given the right encouragement and nurture.

Q You offer the choice of studying the International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB) or A Levels in the Sixth Form. Have you noticed any swing from one to the other in recent years? Do students from abroad tend to opt for the IB rather more than their UK-domiciled classmates?

A *About 20% of our Sixth Form will study the IB, with the rest taking A Level. This balance has remained pretty stable in the years I've been at Sidcot and those opting for IB are an eclectic group of international and UK students. What they have in common is a shared interest in internationalism and many of them will go on to study abroad, if not at undergraduate level, then as post-grads.*

Q Aside from their studies, many of your Sixth-Formers follow the SPICE leadership course, described as 'a unique programme designed in line with the Quaker values of Stewardship, Peace, Integrity, Community and Equality'. What are the essentials of the course? How much time are students expected to devote to it?

A *As is the ethos throughout our entire school, developing the whole person, alongside academic achievement, is*

what defines a Sidcot education. And it matters to us that our students move into the next phase of their lives full of enthusiasm and cheerful confidence, equipped with the skills to be self-reliant and resilient.

For our Sixth Formers we have the SPICE programme which looks to develop the skills and attributes much valued in the wider world. We particularly focus on leadership during the Sixth Form and the SPICE leadership course gets students thinking about teamwork, independent learning, intellectual enquiry and service to others. These are vital skills and attributes employers are calling for – they need people with the wherewithal to think for themselves, able to make independent decisions while still working collaboratively.

Q Gender identity seems to be much in the news, with certain commentators concerned that it may be unhelpful – even damaging – to young people to read too much into what are often passing phases of adolescence. Some schools now opt for 'gender-neutral' uniform policies and modes of address. How are you approaching this sensitive issue? Or is it one which you expect will drop out of the limelight before long?

A *I think the issues that some young people have with identity are age-old. However, they are only now being openly spoken about, which has to be a good thing. Adolescence is a difficult time for some people and schools are now far more attuned to the pressures. In my opinion, the key to supporting the individual is recognising them for who they are and how they present themselves in a calm, non-judgemental way. I think teachers are good at this but we need to encourage parents to take a similar approach.*

We have started a range of parent engagement events this year called 'Let's talk', which range from how to support homework to teenage mental health. The format is quite simple – a short presentation by a member of staff or visiting speaker followed by a chance for parents to speak to each other; sharing experiences and exchanging tips and hints. This has been very well received by those attending and has helped parents feel less isolated, become better informed and, therefore, more able to support their children. We are introducing a gender-neutral uniform option from September to give students greater choice in how they present themselves and have changed the wording in our school policies away from using boys and girls.

Q Is Brexit going to present a problem of teacher recruitment, and make the UK less attractive to boarding pupils from overseas? If it is, what steps can be taken to mitigate?

A *We have a global perspective here at Sidcot, so for us Brexit brings a new dimension to our strategic focus. Fortunately UK independent schools will always be in demand internationally – globally they are considered the gold standard in education.*

However, without a doubt Brexit and its consequences will have an impact on both student and teacher recruitment. The drop in sterling has certainly made us and other UK independents schools more attractive financially but we are battling against the uncertainty that comes with the current political climate.

Sidcot has always recruited very well from China. This special relationship has been formalised recently with an agreement to collaborate in a venture to build an international school, inspired by the teaching and pedagogy of our progressive school, in the Sichuan Province of South West China.

Unfortunately, we may see things become more challenging for both students and staff from European countries. There could be changes to legislation and of course we will need to consider the impact of border control. Whatever the final outcome, I hope Britain will continue to be a welcoming, inclusive and friendly country for people to come to study and work.

Q Who, or what, inspired you to get into teaching? Do you still teach?

A *I was inspired, perhaps not surprisingly, by an English teacher called Jim McGlone. He had an infectious love of literature and always encouraged us to question everything we read. He was quite an anti-establishment figure around school – a bit of an aging hippy – and delighted in teaching controversial authors like Albert Camus and Dario Fo's 'Accidental Death of an Anarchist', rather than the texts prescribed by the exam board. I still teach, although very little. Instead I spend a lot of time observing teaching and learning throughout the school. I particularly enjoy 'pupil shadowing' when I follow a year group timetable. Being a Year 7 for a day is an extremely enlightening – and exhausting – experience!*

Finding the right recipe for resilience

Dominic Price, Headmaster/Proprietor of Merton Court Prep, Kent, reflects on the Cross Association Junior Conference held earlier this month (March).



It was indeed a rare privilege to chair the biennial Cross Association Junior Conference at beautiful Combe Abbey, Warwickshire – and what a recipe for a great conference we had...

Take a strong dash of inspirational speakers and dynamic practical advice to Heads and their Deputies, add an eclectic mix of delegates, from all six Independent School Associations (GSA, HMC, IAPS, ISA, Society of Heads & COBIS), stir in an excellent opportunity to share stories, network to make new friendships and strengthen old ones and voila – a marvellous medicine, to restore and recharge our professional and emotional batteries...

At a time when our regulatory inspection regime is becoming increasingly burdensome and distracting, at a time when Charitable Status is under constant, relentless challenge and at a time of increasing negativity by Central Government, with an

antipathy bordering on neglect, towards our Independent Sector, never, as school leaders, have we had the need to be more grounded and self-reflective, whilst maintaining those vital leadership qualities of optimism, positivity and enthusiasm.

This conference was a unique opportunity for a show of real unity, across our sector, and, despite the heavy snow, delegates from a myriad of different sorts of schools, large and small, Trust and Proprietorial, arrived to enjoy a powerful gathering of like-minded folk, seeking to become better equipped and more confident in facing the vital challenges of Junior and Preparatory School Leadership.

'Aiming for Excellence' was the putative title of our conference. However, with invited speakers of the calibre of Barry Hymer, on Growth Mindset and on how to encourage parents who are keen to nurture a growth mindset

in their children, Dick Moore, on the emotional and mental health of young people, and how important is that special skill – 'Bouncebackability', David Boddy on building resilient students, parents and schools by helping them to 'Mind their Hearts' and Nina Jackson on 'Finding your Fizz', using sherbert lemon – advice to help put the 'fizz' back into classrooms for teachers in need of 'mental wealth', the themes of Wellbeing and Resilience were very much to the forefront of our thoughts.

Wellbeing has, for some time now, been recognised as a key area of proactivity, for schools, in order to ensure better learning, emotional stability and personal success for children.

Whilst 'wellbeing' is now an oft-used word, along with its bedfellows of 'mindfulness' and 'resilience', many of us already do much in our schools to ensure a holistic approach to learning, with

strong pastoral care, of our pupils, particularly in the Primary phase.

Increasingly though, schools are having to consider how best to help parents with their own wellbeing (as well as attending to pupil wellbeing), working with parents to help them make sense of the pressures and stress of the everyday demands in their busy lives. This pressure and stress, impacts on their relationship with their children and also in turn impacts on their relationship with their children's school. This, then has an inevitable 'knock-on' effect on school staff and school leaders.

So let's make sure we also look after our most valued assets – our staff and our school leadership team, using advice, support and laughter especially.

Most importantly, however, let's make sure we, as school leaders, look after ourselves...

Top national prize

A Derby Grammar School student visited the House of Lords to pick up a top national prize which was open to thousands of students across the country.

Elliot Butterworth was awarded the Independent Schools Association (ISA) Whitbread Memorial Prize 2017 by Lord Lexden, President of the ISA.

The prize recognises and celebrates outstanding involvement in, and service to, the wider aspect of school and community life; in conjunction with achieving academic excellence in GCSE results. It is open to 440 schools and 5,000 students across the country.

Elliot, of Etwall, is studying Physics, Maths and Further Maths in the Sixth Form at Derby Grammar

School after achieving six A* and three 9 grades in his GCSEs in 2017.

Elliot was accompanied by his parents and Carol Bramall, Head of Sixth Form at Derby Grammar School.

Lesley Reynolds, Acting Head at Derby Grammar School, congratulated Elliot on his achievement.

She said: "Elliot's achievement is outstanding, we are so proud of him. The award is also justly deserved, he is a friendly and engaging individual and an excellent role model to our younger pupils."

Elliot achieved a Gold award in the British Physics Olympiad in 2016 with his mark in the examination paper ranking in the top 10 of all entrants across the UK.

He also plays hockey and rugby for Derby Grammar School and is a member of the school's choir and award-winning Barbershop Choir. He plays in the school's Swing Band and has embarked on his Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award after achieving Silver and Bronze.

The teenager is a member of Christian Union and a vital link between teaching staff and the pupil body in co-ordinating the school's charity work with the YMCA. He also plays a key role in Derby Grammar School's work with a school in Tanzania, helping to co-ordinate fundraising activities.



Elliot with Lord Lexden and Mrs Bramall



Sixth international campus

Malvern College, Worcestershire, has struck a deal with authorities in Chengdu, China which means it is now on course to open six international schools in just seven years, placing it at the forefront of UK independent schools operating abroad.

International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox witnessed the signing of the landmark agreement (centre back picture above) during his trade visit to China last month (February) with Prime Minister Theresa May.

"This is extremely exciting for Malvern College International and puts us right at the forefront of UK providers opening schools internationally," said Headmaster Antony Clark. "We are delighted to have this opportunity to further expand the Malvern College family of schools through this exciting development in Chengdu.

"We are proud of our record in providing a British-style independent education with its emphasis on the holistic development of pupils and a focus on values, whilst working closely with our international partners to adapt the educational provision to the needs of the local context."

The new campus is due to open in 2019 and will eventually, together with the College's existing campus in Chengdu, which opened in 2015, provide education for more than 1000 children between the ages of 3 and 18.

In the meantime, this September will see the opening of Malvern College Hong Kong, following on from Malvern College Pre-School Hong Kong which opened in 2017. The school also has campuses in Qingdao, China and Cairo, Egypt.

Malvern College Chengdu will retain the values of a traditional Chinese education while helping pupils to adapt to a Western-style learning environment. Its vision is to create a pathway to English-speaking universities around the world.

Malvern College International's schools in mainland China are predominantly for Chinese nationals, with around 35 per cent of leavers going on to study at UK universities, thus contributing directly to the rapid international growth in the UK Higher Education sector.

"The success of these schools overseas has a direct positive impact on a wide range of UK manufacturers and suppliers ranging from examination boards, architects and engineers through to furniture and textbook suppliers," said Allan Walker, Malvern College's Director of International Schools.

Research by the International School Consultancy has shown that the appetite for Western-style, English language-based education around the world shows no signs of abating.

A taste of the orient

Westfield School, Tyne & Wear, celebrated Chinese New Year early in a very unique way bringing the Far East to the classrooms of its Junior House last month (February).

Dubbed Shanghai Maths Week, pupils aged between three and 11-years-old saw lessons transformed as they experienced unusual teaching techniques from the Asian city, which regularly tops international league tables for mathematics achievements.

From repetition of language and numbers to interactive problem solving and whole class participation, teachers took inspiration from Shanghai to reshape maths lessons in a nod to the upcoming Chinese occasion.

Morning exercise routines formed part of the celebratory week too, modelled on those which many Eastern corporations adopt helping to get creative thoughts flowing. Parents, grandparents, guardians and staff were encouraged to join in, forming a group of over 100 participants in the sports hall.

Additional activities during the educational initiative included tastings of Chinese speciality dishes such as noodles, dragon dances with handmade puppets, and role play acting out the Chinese Zodiac Story.

Mr Neil Walker, headmaster, said: "Shanghai Maths Week has been a fantastic addition to our academic calendar, allowing our Junior House girls to open their minds and imaginations to a new culture, from participating in enhanced maths lessons to engaging and exciting activities with a difference".



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So much more than just making music...



Without wishing to detract from the proud moment when a child reaches a certain level of competence and has developed the requisite skills to deliver a compelling performance, it is well-established by research that the benefits of investing in a musical education extend beyond the ability to play an instrument or entertaining an audience, says Stasio Sliwka, Director of Music at King Edward's Witley.

“Children who play an instrument or sing as part of an ensemble or orchestra are required to work as part of a team. As such they are not only honing their musical skills, they are also further developing their ability to perform in harmony with their fellow musicians.

“Of course, a further advantage of being part of a team is the opportunity it brings to meet people. Very often, a shared interest in music can offer an excellent vehicle to forge new friendships, sometimes with individuals with whom a child would not necessarily usually socialise. This can bode well when a young musician makes the move from school to university – joining a music based society, orchestra or choir represents an excellent strategy to build those all-important friendship groups away from home.

“While some music instruments lend themselves particularly well to creating a collective sound, others might potentially be deemed as more ‘lonely’!

“To overcome this, we make a point of inviting pianists for example, to join an ensemble, providing our pianists with the same socialising / team building options. Much music is now available for piano ensembles with arrangements for up to 18 pianists on six pianos.

“Equally, if a child elects to play a less mainstream instrument – for example the viola or bassoon – in any orchestra, school or otherwise, there is likely to be less competition to gain a place so we encourage children to take advantage of the extensive choice of musical instruments at

their disposal. Every new pupil is given the opportunity to learn an orchestral instrument with the offer of fifteen taster lessons.”

In addition to playing together, being part of a musical ‘team’ brings with it access to a wealth of other non-curricular activities. We are proactive in arranging trips and events in this country and overseas, and this means the children are often travelling together and spending significant amounts of time rehearsing for the regular programme of concerts involving the school’s talented musicians.

“Watching our older pupils interact and support the young children from local preparatory schools at our annual successful Orchestra Day provides another example of the power of music – to overcome the stereotypical age divide which can so often prove a barrier to children communicating with each other during their teen years.

“Social skills are not only developed in terms of building bridges with a pupil’s peer group. The one-to-one tuition which goes hand in hand with learning a musical instrument also encourages children to enhance their ability to communicate with adults. For those pupils who are boarding at school, this can represent valuable quality time with an adult and a chance to experience the undivided attention which children can sometimes miss when separated from their regular home life.

“Beyond the social skills associated with learning a musical instrument there are other well documented benefits which are proven to impact

on a child’s academic performance.

The organisational, analytical, self-discipline and listening skills which are required to achieve success as a musician are regularly applied to other areas of a child’s learning journey. According to an article in Psychology Today (March 23, 2015) an October 2013 study found that Albert Einstein’s brilliance may be linked to the fact that his brain hemispheres were extremely well-connected. The article reports ‘The ability to use right brain creativity and left brain logic simultaneously may have been part of what made Einstein an incredible genius. More and more studies are linking musical training with improved brain function and higher academic achievement. Practising a musical instrument regularly engages all four hemispheres of your brain at an electrical, chemical and architectural level which optimises brain power.’

“Venturing into the world of music can also be viewed in the context of learning a valuable life lesson, in that it is very much a discipline which demonstrates the importance of committing to a new skill.

“You get as much out of music as you put in, which is why we have such a strong emphasis on the need for regular practice. This year we’ve introduced timetabled practice for our musicians which is generally a slot before the official start of the school day and supervised by our Graduate Assistants. After the initial anticipated general lukewarm reception to this initiative we are now seeing 95% of our pupils really benefitting and because the children are able to witness the rewards

for putting more effort into their studies, they are fully embracing the extra practices. Encouraging our pupils to practise by promoting the use of modern technologies, such as the ABRSM (Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music) apps is also helping. The school has invested in a number of iPads to ensure that pupils are able access this resource, which helps to overcome the loneliness sometimes associated with endless playing while also advocating a quality rather than quantity approach to practice.

“At a time when the mental and emotional health of children is high on the public agenda, the considerable therapeutic benefits of music must not be overlooked. When a child is playing an instrument, or using their vocal talents, it provides a welcome chance to break away from the stresses of the day and to focus on something totally different. It is no coincidence that music features as a recognised therapy in a hospital or healing environment...

“We have put a lot of effort into creating a welcoming environment within the music department and it is definitely paying off. It has been interesting to note that during examination periods, when most pupils will experience some degree of anxiety, we see many of our musicians putting in extra practice as a means of escape which helps them to find their inner calm.

So, it seems there is indeed truth in Plato’s saying...

‘Music is a moral law. It gives soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and charm and gaiety to life and to everything.’

Choirs united

One of the events in the Durham Vocal Festival featured The Chapel Choir from Barnard Castle School, County Durham, which joined the choir of Cundall Manor School, North Yorkshire, to sing choral evensong at Durham Cathedral.

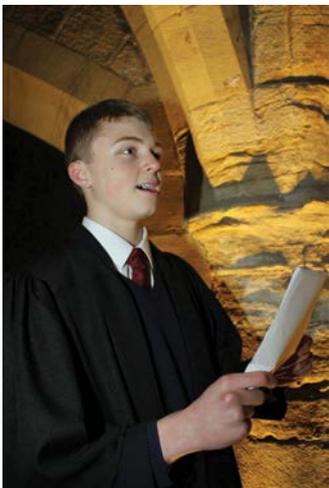
The choirs performed before a host of invited guests, and dignitaries including the Lord-Lieutenant of County Durham Sue Snowdon, Wing Commander Josh Fortune of RAF Leeming, Mayor of Durham Cllr Bill Kellett, the mayor's consort Jean Chaplow and Mayor of Barnard Castle Coun Sandra Moorhouse.

The joint choir numbered more than 70 voices and performed under the direction of Barnard Castle School's director of music Simon Dearsley and organist Dr Robin Harrison.

The festival event continues the busy recital schedule of the Chapel Choir of Barnard Castle School, which has seen them performing extensively in venues throughout Teesdale, County Durham and North Yorkshire.

The 40 strong choir has also travelled to cathedrals as far afield as London while also singing regularly within the school's own chapel.

Barnard Castle School headmaster Tony Jackson said: "The Chapel Choir of Barnard Castle School was delighted to be singing choral evensong at Durham Cathedral once again this year. The Durham Vocal Festival celebrates the finest vocal music with singers from just around the corner, across the country and overseas and it is a wonderful opportunity for us to join together with Cundall Manor School choir to display the incredible talent that we have within our schools."



Pictured: Barnard Castle School chorister Matthew Forster, 14, of Manfield, near Richmond



1001 nights

Bromsgrove Preparatory School has staged its first production on the stage of the School's brand new Cobham Theatre.

The Tales from The Thousand and One Nights is a selection of stories that range from the profound to the comic.

Charlie Woollhead, Head of Drama said "It was a really joyous

experience. We set out to fill this new space with life and stories, a task that we have achieved. The young performers delighted audiences each time they took to the stage, without exception. It is extremely heartening to see young people grasp the challenge of storytelling of this nature and come away successful".



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Festival of music



Musicians at Bolton School Junior Girls' School performed at the annual Music Festival playing on a wide range of instruments that included the piano, ukulele, double bass, saxophone, drums and electric guitar. An Ensembles

Class brought the Music Festival to a close. Every year group had the opportunity to be part of the audience throughout the two-day event and parents and family members were invited to come along and watch as well.

World-class piano

As part of Bromsgrove School's ongoing commitment to the Performing Arts, the School has taken receipt of a state-of-the-art concert grand piano.

Handcrafted in Austria, the Bösendorfer 280 VC grand Vienna Concert piano features sophisticated VC technology and an independent Capo d'Astro for perfect adjustment in the descant registry.

The concert grand piano will grace the stage of Routh Concert Hall, part of Bromsgrove's new Performing Arts Centre which was officially opened in November 2017 by Professor Julian Lloyd Webber, Principal of the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and

the Honourable Christopher Lyttelton, 12th Viscount Cobham. Professor Lloyd Webber and the Conservatoire are closely involved with The Bromsgrove International Young Musicians' Competition, hosted annually at Bromsgrove School.

The Bosendorfer 280VC has only been in production since last year and is one of under 100 similar models worldwide.

Director of Music, James McKelvey said "We are thrilled to have such a world-class piano at Bromsgrove. It will surely enhance the playing of our talented young musicians and in turn, the audience's experience of our concerts.



Pictured (l-r): James McKelvey – Director of Music; David Halford – supplier Coach House Pianos; Peter Clague – Headmaster; Rupert Lane – Governor

Youngsters making music

Last month (February) pupils from Winterfold School, Worcestershire, held their first Music Makers' Concert – an opportunity for all children in Pre-Prep to showcase their musical talents.

A packed Penryn Hall audience was treated to the delights of Do Your Ears Hang Low and We Can Play on the Big Bass Drum by Kindergarten 2 and Reception children.

Year 1 and 2 children performed El Cumbanchero and The Magic Travel Machine, demonstrating

their progression in Music from the Early Years. There were star performances by select Prep pupils, the Girls' Harmony Choir and The Groove Diggers to help with the younger pupils' aspirations to grow as musicians and continue their musical journey.

Denise Toms, Headmistress said "These children are some of the youngest children at Winterfold. They displayed a huge amount of talent and it shows there is great potential for the future of Music at the School".



Theatre workshop

Thirty-seven members of Exeter Junior School's Drama Club took part in a workshop run by 'The Four of Swords' Theatre Company.

Former pupil and professional actor Phil Symes returned to school together with business partner Sarah White and Rhodri Cooper to work with the children on techniques to stage the fight scene at the beginning of 'Romeo and Juliet'.

The group were preparing to perform an edited version of the play.

In the Drama Studio, the children studied 'napping', a technique

where you make a sound while pretending to hit your opponent. They also studied physical movement and projecting their voices.

English and Drama Coordinator Rita Pettet said the children had a wonderful morning: "Comments from the children included 'It really helped us with our stage presence', 'Learning how to portray a fight was really fun, 'We had to build trust between each other so that we could perform the fight scene' and 'It helped with our understanding of the scene in the play,'" she said.

Professional jazz musicians inspire

Musicians at St Benedict's School, London, performed alongside professional musicians in a highly successful Jazz Soirée, following a series of jazz workshops.

World class drummer Sam Blue, who has performed with Corinne Bailey Rae, Professor Green, Plan B, Paloma Faith and Tom Jones, joined the school's jazz ensembles, along with Marcel Pusey from Bassistry Music on bass guitar and jazz singer Megan

Thomas, resulting in a superb evening of entertainment.

The Senior and Junior Jazz ensembles and Big Band performed popular jazz standards such as Summertime, Ellington classic Take the A Train and Miles Davis' All Blue. The Jazz Choir, accompanied by double bass and guitar, sang Don't worry, be happy, and Leonard Cohen's Alleluia, with confident improvisations from several singers.



Pictured: Some of St Benedict's jazz musicians, with visiting professionals



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Playing a musical instrument helps boost academic results

Many studies have shown that music education can influence the course of brain development and have an effect on children's abilities in non-musical tasks such as language and mathematical skills.

New research, led by Daniel Müllensiefen, a music psychologist at Goldsmiths (University of London), aims to uncover the social and psychological processes that result in those effects. Beginning in 2015 and initially centered on Queen Anne's School, Berkshire, the project now includes schools from other parts of Britain as well as schools in Germany.

As well as musical ability and academic results, the team sought to measure other traits and abilities in students, such as intelligence, personality, their sense of school belonging and their view of their own personal strength and capabilities. Researchers went back to the school each year and the same students sat 20 tests and questionnaires, including three musical listening tests, an IQ test and a personality test.

Almost 180 girls aged 11 to 17 sat the tests, which were then compared with their academic results and whether they viewed their abilities as innate or changeable. The study found evidence to suggest that different aspects of capability and personality were inseparably linked – from musical ability, to conscientiousness, to academic performance.

The research suggests that music lessons help boost academic results by convincing children of their own intelligence and their natural ability to learn and acquire new skills. As a result, teenagers who are high achievers in music are

more aware that learning requires time and effort – but crucially that the time and effort pay off. This then has a positive impact on their school work.

In contrast, children who took fewer music lessons or did not learn music at all were inclined to have a more defeatist attitude, not believing they were capable of performing – and as a result, made slower academic progress.

Learning to play a musical instrument gives an immense sense of achievement that helps children and adults accomplish more in other areas of life.

Key findings include:

Music helps you connect. Music can improve your social life and children who become involved in a musical group or orchestra learn important life skills such as how to relate to others, how to work as a team, leadership skills and discipline.

Choosing to take music lessons can help build confidence. Once you are aware that you are able to do something well – such as playing the piano – you naturally become more confident of your skills and of your ability to acquire new ones.

Daily practice helps a musician learn how to play. Years of regular practice and daily musical exercises are necessary to reach a level to master difficult pieces; this daily routine helps teach patience and discipline.

Learning to play a musical instrument makes you use both parts of your brain and this in turn boosts memory power and stimulates your creativity.

Last but not least, learning to play a musical instrument is FUN! Music lifts the spirit and simply makes life more enjoyable.

This year's Learn to Play weekend (17–18 March) sees the Yamaha flagship music store in Wardour Street, London give hundreds of free taster music lessons, as do many other venues up and down the country.

www.wherewecanwego.com to find venues near you
www.musicforall.org.uk/learntoplayday for more details



Pupils look on the bright side of life

Pupils from Sibford School, Oxfordshire, looked on the bright side of life for their 2018 school production ... and performed the Monty Python hit musical 'Spamalot'.

A riotous comedy full of misfit knights, killer rabbits, musical monks and ferocious Frenchmen, the Sibford production played to delighted audiences over three nights.

Director and Head of Drama, Neil Madden, said: "The cast worked their socks off, giving up their evenings and weekends to put on a very professional production. I was extremely impressed with how easily the pupils entered the world of Monty Python and it was a joy to witness their confidence soar with each performance. It is humbling to work with such talented children".

Spectacular ballet production

Just as Imperial Vienna is the elegant home of the waltz, so fin de siècle Paris conjures up visions of the dancers and cafés so memorably captured by the French impressionists. In their Farlington School, Sussex, production of Gaité Parisienne the de Braam Ballet Academy transported packed audiences to the raffish streets and studios of Montmartre, providing romance, exuberance and vitality in spectacular fashion. Natalie van de Braam's direction and original choreography enabled the talented troupe of 45 dancers to showcase awesome balletic skills – not least some exhilarating double pirouettes – as well as superb ensemble co-ordination and empathy.



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"The performance was fantastic and the children were thoroughly immersed in the magic of theatre"

Tutoring ‘complementary to classroom education’

John Hutchison looks at how the activities and influence of The Tutors' Association seek to maintain the highest levels of standards in an unregulated yet ever-growing sector.

The Tutors' Association (TTA) was set up, first and foremost, to create a community for members of the tutoring profession. TTA exists to provide them with support in six areas:

1. **Recognition** – of a commitment to behaving ethically and professionally
2. **Development** – opportunities to learn and acquire new skills (or hone existing ones)
3. **Collaboration** – opportunities to exchange knowledge and experience
4. **Resources** – access to information and resources that assist with all aspects of tutoring
5. **Engagement** – helping to shape the future of the profession
6. **Reputation** – creating a voice for the profession and building bridges

The sixth of these is particularly important in relation to schools. TTA sees tutoring as complementary to classroom education and not as some kind of superior alternative. There are things that classroom teaching can achieve in terms of teamwork and social learning skills that tutoring cannot provide, and equally there are things that one-to-one tuition can provide that cannot be replicated in classroom teaching – no matter how small the class or how excellent

the teaching. Tutors share a passion for helping children to learn – the core skill that is needed long after school years are left behind. They actively seek to engage with schools and teachers and to work with them to help children achieve their full potential.

TTA held its second Annual Conference recently at which some 200 tutors and agencies, including Gabbitas Education, gathered to listen to an array of speakers on a range of topics that reflected the diversity of the tutoring and supplementary education sector. Speakers ranged from Mary Curnock Cook, who talked of the role that she believes tutoring has to play in the wider educational landscape, to Mursal Hedayat who shared the story of her journey from refugee to founder of an organisation that employs fellow-refugees as tutors to address language gaps. Delegates also had the chance to break up into groups and attend their choice of nine seminar topics on a range of subjects from understanding SEND and Generation Z, to the role of neuroscience in learning and practical advice on making lessons more interesting.

The conference represents a microcosm of the activities TTA undertakes in support of its other objectives of providing development, engagement, collaboration and reputational advancements for the profession.



Tutoring is a profession that employs hundreds of thousands of people as tutors and one that, consequently, touches and potentially transforms the lives of millions of children and adults as students. As one of the oldest tutoring agencies in the world and a founding member of the Association, we believe that with this level of influence comes responsibility. Membership of TTA is a significant reassurance to parents that a tutor or an agency takes that responsibility seriously, and we require all our tutors to have successfully passed a DBS check and to sign up to a code of ethical conduct.

When asked about the ambitions of the Association, its President Adam Muckle stated, “It is our aim to be a standard-bearer for good practice, and to demonstrate the highest standards of self-regulation. As part of this, we have also developed a tutoring qualification in collaboration with the University of Worcester that is starting to attract significant numbers of would-be tutors. In addition to developing varied tutoring skills, the diploma pays special attention to understanding appropriate safeguarding practices and how safeguarding, tutoring and learning relate to effective tutoring relationships.”

BTEC courses alongside A-levels

Ampleforth College, Yorkshire, has announced the introduction of BTECs in Countryside Management, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship and Hospitality, supporting its ambition to provide a holistic education for its pupils.

Countryside Management will explore the legal and practical side of managing an estate and builds on Ampleforth's already thriving gamekeeping activities, while Enterprise and Entrepreneurship will give students the skills they need to feel confident in running their own business. Hospitality will focus on event management as well as the importance of the hospitality industry for the economy.

Students can choose to study only BTECs, or to follow a mixed pathway of one or two BTECs alongside one or two A Levels. The courses will be led by Harriet Thompson, Assistant Head Academic Development, who joined Ampleforth late last year and reports into Director of Studies Hannah Pomroy.

New girls' house

Milton Abbey School, Dorset, will open its second girls' day and boarding House in September 2018 in response to the high demand for girls' places at the school.

Mrs Emma Williams (pictured below) has been announced as the Housemistress for the new girls' House, Damer House. Emma currently teaches French and Spanish at Milton Abbey, helps with the School's Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and is an Assistant Housemistress. She has a First Class Honours degree from Newcastle University in French Studies and a PGCE in Modern Foreign Languages at the University of Buckingham.



John Hutchison is Chief Officer and Director of Tutoring at Gabbitas Education
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How to help your students win places at an American university

Katharine Harrington, VP of Admissions and Planning at the University of Southern California discusses the different opportunities on offer and some key points to remember about applications.

Economic globalisation continues to spread worldwide and looks to be a reality future generations will embrace and expand upon. The implication for secondary school age students considering their futures is a simple one: do whatever you can to train for a global career.

For some, this can mean studying a foreign language or taking a semester abroad. Others still will prefer to explore the opportunities that universities outside of their own countries can offer.

The US continues to be an attractive destination, given the many quality options available across the country as well as the lack of language barriers for students coming from English-speaking countries.

US universities offer something else as well, especially for students originating in the UK: a very different educational model that focuses not just on depth – but also breadth – over a four-year undergraduate degree. US universities require students to take a variety of subjects beyond those connected to their majors, as opposed to the linear model more typical in the UK. At a university like the University of Southern California (USC), almost as many minors are offered as majors. Students therefore have the opportunity to explore broadly across several fields of knowledge. This broad foundation of knowledge allows students to bring “multiple ways of knowing” to the challenges that await them after university.

For US universities, the application process differs greatly, so it can be difficult for students, parents and teachers to know what admissions counsellors are looking for. The best advice for students: be authentic. Contrary to popular belief,



universities are not solely looking for students who have perfect grades and a plethora of extracurricular interests; they are also interested in students who have something unique to offer.

Compared to the UK, many American universities employ a more ‘subjective’ selection process. What this means in practice is that schools will often look beyond grades and achievements (though those remain important) and examine the whole person. With each college a student applies to, there is plenty of opportunity to let their personality shine through. USC, in particular, looks for ambitious and talented individuals who bring enthusiasm and energy; they want students whose first choice is USC. We are looking for candidates that want to be a part of the university and will be successful once they arrive here. This requires an exploration of not only academics but character.

Finances are another important consideration. It’s no secret that US universities are more expensive than universities in the UK and typically, do not offer needs-based financial aid to international students. However merit-based scholarships and athletic scholarships are available at USC and other colleges, so it is certainly worthwhile to explore this in more detail ahead of applying.

There are a few tips my team and I typically share with teachers and school advisers who are guiding students through the application process:

- Ensure students carefully research the university they are applying for; each US university has unique attributes and it is important to showcase to each college what it is that makes them uniquely attractive from the student’s perspective – and vice versa.
- Qualitative portions of the application (i.e. personal statements) should focus as much on the person as on grades and extracurricular activities; US universities will be looking for both.
- Ensure the application shows broad interests, as students will be expected to take on a variety of subjects outside of their majors.
- Teacher recommendations, while academic in nature, should also provide insight into the student, and those special qualities that make them a good fit with the university they are applying for.

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Sporting high-achievers & their education needs

There are many schools who are in the privileged position of educating high-performance athletes. These incredibly focused and dedicated young people are an asset to our schools, not least through their chosen sporting path, but also because surrounding other pupils by these individuals raises the levels of aspiration and expectation, thus creating an even higher performing environment.

But what can be done practically in our schools to support such pupils academically in the classroom, and in their chosen sport to ensure that they are emotionally and mentally ready for the world when they leave school? Jo Hayward, Deputy Head at Devon's Plymouth College (pictured right), reflects...



This will depend on whether schools have their own integrated high performance programme or whether they are supporting fewer individuals, but a lot of the strategies that we use work in both scenarios - from swimmers, pentathletes, fencers and divers on our integrated programmes, to supporting pupils representing their country in sports such as table tennis and ski-ing, as well as those playing traditional team sports. It is easy to forget that these incredibly talented young people are often, at times, leading the lives of young adults, away from home, often independently, and we must help them be as prepared as possible for the pressures they will face. As Tom Daley, Olympic medallist and World Champion, who came back to his former school earlier this year said to the pupils, "The years you spend here at Plymouth College are really going to make a massive impact on what is to come in the future. The lessons in life I learnt here, not just school lessons, have helped me so much in my career in diving and outside of diving."

A large part of the success of any programme lies in the communication and close working relationship between all parties working with the athletes. As Nicola Byrne, Head of Girls' Boarding, in a boarding school which is sending four pupils to the Commonwealth Games later this year in Australia says, "The maintenance of open and regular communication between coaches, academic and boarding staff, medical staff, parents and athletes is crucial. This allows the school to identify any early issues before they become in any way detrimental. At Plymouth College, bi-weekly staff briefings, which includes academic, boarding and

sports staff, allow for an open forum for staff to discuss individual pupils, to share their successes but also to highlight concern. Boarding staff attend weekly meetings with the swimming team for example, with all coaches, house-parents, and the school nurse present. This allows staff to put all information together in a way that enables us to 'join the dots' and to look for patterns of behaviour and potential burnout. It also ensures that the athletes are receiving a consistent and supportive message from all parties. No one part of the pupils' lives works in isolation, therefore ensuring that that practices are shared and that the athlete is supported in the best possible way."

In terms of practicalities, as a school, we have chosen to be flexible with our timetable. As Phil Mutlow, Director of Sport states, "Our flexibility with regards to games periods enables high performance athletes to either train during school time or to study in this time, thus freeing up further time elsewhere.' In addition, some training schedules are not as flexible and occasionally athletes can only train when their facilities are available, as happens with our high performance divers who can only train at certain times of the day. With communication and negotiation with their coach, pupils and staff work together to create a workable timetable, yet still maintain high expectations and standards of students. With the agreement of the Head of Year, pupils can, where necessary, study fewer subjects to allow them time in the day to solidify their learning on fewer subjects. The boarding routine and school day is tailored around the various timetables. There are double sittings for breakfast and a flexible supper timetable.

Specialist tutor groups allow the flexibility of pupils being registered whilst eating breakfast, meaning not only do they get dedicated pastoral time with their tutor, but can also train, eat a breakfast which meets their nutritional needs and attend lessons on time. Pupils are able to rest in the Health Centre when required and there are multiple opportunities to complete prep around the numerous training times.

However, workable timetables for pupils are only feasible with an incredibly flexible and understanding staff. There is a general acknowledgement amongst all staff of how much pupils need to juggle day-to-day. This, combined with academic staff who are responsive if they are aware that an athlete has been away competing or training during regular lesson time, by giving pupils longer to complete work, providing extra lessons or revision sessions, being pro-active in the run up to an event by providing work in advance (and always avoiding next day homework), and by being available on email, helps reduce overall stress. As James Watson, the school's Boys' Swimming Captain explains, "Plymouth College individually works with pupils to construct training times which are integrated with an equally as important academic timetable. Being a swimmer, I sometimes have to miss days of school to attend swimming competitions. However, my education does not suffer as I can speak to teachers who are more than willing to hand out information sheets and even arrange extra study sessions during breaks and lunch times to accommodate for this lost lesson time."

Acknowledgement of the needs of high performance athletes has

led to a further improvement in the approach in other areas of the school. A year-round cricket mentoring programme set up by Plymouth College's Head of Cricket, Matt Byrne, works with cricket scholars to look at a variety of topics including time management, strength and conditioning, goal-setting and nutrition. As Matt says, "The year-round cricket programme supports cricket scholars and keen, committed boys and girls who wish to develop their skills, not only in the three key areas of the game - technical, tactical and physical - but also to explore the mental side of the game. The programme provides 1 to 1 and group coaching throughout the academic year. All members of the programme also have a focus on their academic performance, which is closely monitored through weekly mentor sessions with the Head of Cricket, who works in conjunction with the students' form tutor and Head of Year. This balance between a focus on cricket-specific activities and academic responsibilities is encouraged through the promotion of a growth mind-set from both the individual and the collective group."

It is this focus on the whole pupil, rather than simply 'athletes', that has helped Plymouth College develop its young people into successful, confident and mature young adults who perform to the best of their ability, both inside and outside the classroom.

Whatever path these talented young people choose to follow, the array of skills, strategies, leadership experience and qualifications that they have gained whilst at school puts them in an enviable position as they embark on their future careers in the sporting arena and beyond.

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Rubber crumb artificial pitch infill causing concerns among parents

Keeping children safe is the number one concern for both parents and schools. Yet, while years of experience has taught us what measures need to be put in place to ensure safety – new concerns and worries crop up all the time.

The past few years has seen increasing coverage about the use of rubber crumb, an ingredient which forms part of many artificial sports pitches, used throughout the country in schools, leisure facilities and public playgrounds.

Most types of crumb rubber are made from recycled tyres and other materials which emit chemicals called polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). These are known carcinogenic chemicals and the concern for many is that the PAHs can be transferred onto the children using these sports pitches. Critically, tests carried out have never been able to give a conclusive answer to the concern that these chemicals can be absorbed through the skin through abrasions or being inhaled or ingested, which can happen when the turf is disturbed.

The strength of public feeling

In Chicago in the United States, concerns about the safety of

children using an artificial pitch made with rubber crumb is dominating local news headlines at the moment. In Nile Valley District, a large recreation centre opened towards the end of 2017 and included an artificial turf field with crumb rubber infill.

Since the installation, a number of parents have raised concerns that the turf infill is made from recycled tyres and, as such, are refusing to allow their children to use the pitch. The story has been picked up by a leading media organisation and across social media, resulting in a PR nightmare for those who made the decision to install the pitch.

The concerns in Chicago echo worries already raised here in the UK and across the world. Public feeling suggests that the tests which have been done have never conclusively proven that these artificial pitches are safe, and understandably that means parents

are reluctant to allow their children to use the facilities.

Future-proofing your investment

It's clear that these concerns are not going to go away, and when parents do speak out – as has been seen in Chicago – significant media focus is placed upon the decision made to install an artificial pitch which uses rubber crumb.

What's frustrating to many parents who voice their concerns is that there are alternatives available. UK-based business Murfitts Industries, a leading supplier of artificial pitch infill, launched a revolutionary new type of infill at the end of 2017. PRO-gran is a Polymeric Infill that is engineered to offer the very best in performance while being safe for players and the environment. The infill combines the exceptional dynamic properties of rubber but is then coated in polyurethane in order to make it 100% safe, releasing no PAHs.

It's been through a rigorous testing programme and exceeds the EU's toughest standards that are applied to toxicology and toy safety. This means that PRO-gran is one of the few products which can boast it is 100% safe for people and the environment.

PRO-gran gives an unbeatable playing experience and is much longer lasting than alternative infills – tests show that it will remain in perfect condition for over 12 years, well beyond the lifetime of a typical pitch.

Murfitts Industries owner Mark Murfitt said: "No parent should have to worry about the health



To find out more about PRO-gran please visit www.murfittsindustries.com

of their child when they play on an artificial pitch. Although the consensus of the studies about rubber crumb is that it causes no significant risk to health or the environment, worries remain. After a year of research and development we're pleased to offer a product that not only eliminates any concern about player or public health, but also creates a more enjoyable playing experience."

For any school looking to install an artificial pitch, PRO-gran helps to eliminate the risk of negative feedback from parents and also stands the test of time, protecting children and the pitch for years to come.

NEW

PRO-gran: THE SAFE CHOICE FOR ARTIFICIAL 3G PITCH INFILL.

100% safe for children. 100% peace-of-mind
for schools and parents.

At Murfitts Industries, we are fully aware of the concerns that parents have about the safety of black rubber crumb infill used on artificial pitches.

As a leading manufacturer of crumb rubber, we have spent the past year developing PRO-gran, a safe alternative infill. Releasing no PAH's, PRO-gran exceeds the EU's toughest toxicology standards and meets the criteria for REACH 1274/2013 as an article.

In a nutshell, PRO-gran is a safe surface for your pupils to play on, it eases the concerns of parents and provides peace-of-mind to schools and colleges around the world.



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Consecutive Triumphs

Ballard School, Hampshire, is celebrating a trio of sporting successes as their U13 girls team have won consecutive hockey, football and, most recently, netball tournaments.

In a tournament involving six other schools: Walhampton, Stroud, Castle Court, Twyford, BCS, West Hill Park and the Ballard B team they won all of their group matches. Ballard then progressed to the semi-finals where they met BCS and won 5-2. This set up the final with champions Twyford, a school renowned for its netball.

In the final, Ballard got off to a strong start and were 5-2 up at half time. Twyford fought back hard and pushed Ballard back to 5-5. In the end it was a great piece of play by Ballard that led to a well-deserved 6-5 win.



Ballard's Director of Sport, Justin Whitbread said: "This shows the dedication the girls have put into breakfast training, improving their fitness and skills in PE lessons and by working in partnership with Lymington Netball club. We are delighted with the progress of Netball at Ballard School and to win against such strong competition is a credit to the girls."

Greg joins wheelchair tennis elites

Cranleigh School, Surrey, pupil Greg Slade, recently crowned the UK's National Wheelchair Tennis Champion, has been selected to be part of a world-leading new programme. Designed by Great Britain's leading tennis charity, the Tennis Foundation, the new development programme will help Greg and six others to progress towards future international success.

The launch of the new Wheelchair Tennis Junior Futures Potential (JFP) Programme will play a key role in the development of talented, young wheelchair tennis

players in the UK. It aims to help gifted juniors progress to the first level of the Tennis Foundation's World Class Wheelchair Tennis Performance Programme – which boasts the likes of Wimbledon Doubles Champions Gordon Reid and Alfie Hewett at its pinnacle.

The JFP programme comprises six two-day training camps, covering everything from coaching and performance to elite sport education.

The new initiative is considered to be at the cutting edge of junior wheelchair sport development programmes across the world.



Annabel Tri's for the top

Bishop's Stortford College Sixth Former Annabel Hunt is a triathlon star of the future. The seventeen-year-old from Bishop's Stortford is setting her sights on at least a top 10 placing in the Fyn ITU Aquathlon World Championships (U20s GB Team) and top 5 the Fyn ITU Aqua Bike World Championships (U20s GB Team). She hopes to one day fulfil her dream of becoming an elite triathlete.

Her recent achievements include 9th place Aquathlon European Championships 2017 (U20's GB Team), age group win in AJ Bell London Triathlon Super sprint 2017, Highly Commended East

Hertfordshire Young Sports Performer of the year 2017 and Walden Jnr 1st place girl (Club Championships) 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017. She has also recently qualified for the 2018 Fyn ITU Cross Triathlon World Championships and the 2018 Etna ETU Winter Triathlon European Championships, however could not compete.

When asked how she manages her training schedule and A Level studies, Annabel commented, "One of the reasons I joined the College was for their Elite Sports Programme which supports my training schedule and my studies with a balanced timetable."

Swimmers success in the Olympic Pool

Six children from The Gower School, London, competed in a national swimming competition at the Olympic Pool in east London

After winning gold medals in the north London regional heats, The Gower School children were selected to swim in the Independent Schools Association's National Swimming Gala at the London Aquatics Centre.

Sports Captain Cy Sherliker, 11, won the bronze medal in the Year Six boys backstroke event, Vita Braden, 9, won the bronze medal in the Year Four girls freestyle event, and Head Girl Echo Braden, 11, won a silver medal in the Year Six girls 4x50m freestyle relay.

Miss Emma Gowers, Principal,



said: "This year we had a record number of The Gower School children representing London North region in the competition. They all put in an immense effort in the competition and some of them made new personal bests on the day. We are very proud of them indeed."

Technical Surfaces: putting best practice at the centre of synthetic pitch maintenance

Technical Surfaces is the UK's largest and leading provider of maintenance to all types of synthetic sports surface, from 3G pitches to tarmac tennis courts, cricket wickets to athletics facilities.

Our motto is Maintaining Standards, and we apply this to every service we provide, ensuring that pitches can be enjoyed at their best and safest. We work closely with leading installers, testing laboratories and manufacturers of carpets and infills to deliver quality sports facilities with consistent performance levels.

Our unique contribution to the industry can be defined by two key qualities: legacy and innovation.

Technical Surfaces has operated nationwide for over 20 years, with services ranging from regular maintenance to deep cleans, repairs and full pitch refurbishment. Our client base spans the length and breadth of the country and includes schools, leisure centres, local authorities, sports clubs and universities.

Whatever type of surface you play on – 3G, sand-based, water-based – pitch performance is paramount. Therefore, it is important that the correct approach to maintenance is taken for every carpet system.

To achieve the maximum life from a synthetic sports surface it is essential that the correct maintenance regime is implemented as soon as possible from installation. It will also be necessary to carry out non-routine works to prolong the life of a facility and ensure a safe playing environment for users.

As well as providing a specialist maintenance service, Technical Surfaces also supplies machinery and equipment to help customers perform their own maintenance tasks. Machinery is available to meet every level of in-house expertise and resources, with certificated training and demonstrations on all machines supplied. Technical Surfaces is proud to be the sole UK Distributor of the SMG range of dedicated synthetic sports surface maintenance machinery,

and we work continually alongside their research team in Germany to develop new and improved techniques and equipment.

Technical Surfaces has always been at the forefront of our industry, spearheading initiatives to help improve industry knowledge and best practice in synthetic surface maintenance.

Our commitment to research is well-established and sets Technical Surfaces apart as the UK's leading maintenance provider. We have been involved in several academic studies and research projects focussing on developing guidelines for maintaining synthetic turf; the effects of brushing on the wear rates of synthetic carpet systems; and enhancing industry understanding and awareness of the efficacy of current sports pitch maintenance techniques.

The research partnership between Technical Surfaces and Loughborough University has earned recognition from the Journal of Sports Engineering and Technology, and our current KTP collaboration with their Sports Surface Research Group continues our efforts to improve and progress the way that our industry approaches the maintenance of synthetic surfaces.

In 2018 Technical Surfaces will celebrate 7 years since the launch of our pioneering Online Technical Information System. Commonly known as OTIS, the software was unveiled to our contract customers in April 2011, allowing them to manage the maintenance, usage, health & safety and day-to-day administration of their facilities online.

Increasingly, owners and operators of 3G pitches find they are required not only to maintain the surface, but also to record both maintenance and usage for the purposes of



warranty protection. In particular, it is stipulated that the growing number of 3G pitches being installed as part of the FA, RFU and Football Foundation's Framework Contract be maintained to an appropriate standard to comply with Quality Control and warranty requirements, and undergo frequent testing to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

With this shift in attitude comes a greater emphasis on best practice, ensuring that the individual requirements and circumstances of each sports surface are considered when implementing a maintenance programme.

OTIS was developed primarily to meet this changing need of our customers, and of the industry as a whole. Logging both maintenance and usage is critical to ensuring the longevity of a synthetic sports surface. Without accurately recording both aspects it is impossible to ensure that your surface is being cared for properly.

Technical Surfaces continually monitors the condition of every playing surface we maintain, and through OTIS encourage our customers to do the same. Monitoring pitch activity and maintenance helps to determine whether the maintenance programme in place is suitable

for the level of use a pitch is receiving. If any changes are required, we work with all parties involved to adjust the maintenance programme accordingly.

Our work on the development of a 3G Hybrid® system represents another important industry contribution. Derived from our patented Regeneration®, the 3G Hybrid® system involves removing the sand infill from the carpet pile and replacing it with a specialist grade mix of new rubber granules. For the end user, this is an exciting development; transforming the old, tired sand-filled pitch at their local school or sports centre into an attractive prospect for a kick-about or league match. And for pitch owners/operators, the chance to increase revenue and minimise disruption and downtime is equally appealing, with the improved playing performance and drainage capabilities of the 3G Hybrid® system.

To learn more about Technical Surfaces, our latest news and the maintenance services we provide, please visit our website at www.technicalsurfaces.co.uk





Legends at sporting dinner

“Be the best you can be, whatever you enjoy” - that was the message from Rio 2016 gold medal-winning hockey captain, Kate Richardson-Walsh, five-time Olympian and World champion swimmer, Mark Foster, and former England rugby skipper, Lewis Moody, as Trent College hosted a ‘Night of Legends’ charity Sporting Dinner.

Compered by sports broadcaster, Jill Douglas, the celebrated trio offered words of advice, which helped them achieve at the very top of their sports, captivating more than 200 pupils and guests gathered for the annual dinner.

Earlier in the day, Richardson-Walsh, who was made an OBE after Team GB’s Rio success, checked out the next generation in action as some 40 young pupils from Trent College and its junior school, The Elms, took part in a hockey training session.

With Trent College’s own girls’ teams excelling in both the National outdoor and indoor finals over the past 12 months, a group of female students then got the chance to meet and quiz the exceptional sportswoman they are all inspired by.

The school’s rugby players were joined by Nottingham Rugby Academy players to enjoy a Q&A session with 2003 World Cup winner, Lewis Moody, who captained England at the 2011 World Cup and toured New Zealand with the Lions in 2005.

Amongst the dinner guests were a number of Trent College’s own sports stars, team captains and scholars.

Richardson-Walsh said: “I worked on being the very best I could be and tried to do that every single day. You can’t do more than that, no one will ask any more of you than that. Whatever it is be the very

best you can be at that.”

Moody agreed and concluded with a message to the students: “The reason we all started and the reason we succeeded is because we did something we enjoyed. Too often today kids are pushed in various different directions. If you enjoy something, and want to commit to it, you’re going to want to give it your all and be the best at it.

“I wish you guys all the luck in the world, because you’ve got such bright futures ahead of you. Whether it’s sport or academic, whatever it is you go on to do, Trent College is a wonderful place to start that journey. I’m sure the teachers you have are very proud of all of you. It’s a pleasure being here, thank you.”

All proceeds from this year’s dinner went to Trent College’s Kenyan Schools Partnership and the Trent College Foundation. The event was sponsored by Land Rover, along with partners Wrights specialist roofing contractors, Skills Group, DFS and Thorntons.

Since 2004 the Trent College community, including The Elms Nursery and Junior School and Trent Parent Association, has raised over £20,000 to support education and infrastructure projects in two rural schools in Kenya.

The Trent College Foundation provides a source of funding for bursaries to widen student access, to help support a number of the school’s capital projects and to directly support a range of teaching and learning projects and extra-curricular activities.

Foster added: “Whatever you do, with sport, with school, with life, commit to it. Don’t be afraid of failure. You never actually fail, you learn from it and move on. Sport is very good for teaching you that.”



Pictured: Lewis Moody and Mark Foster (back), Kate Richardson-Walsh (right) with representative Trent College sports team captains and the Head, Mr Bill Pent

Budding Lewis Hamiltons?

The Karting Team from Bancroft’s School, Essex, have safely secured their slot in the London and South East Regional Finals of this year’s British Schools’ Karting Championships.

On 7 February, the Woodford Green School took 4 teams, each of 3 drivers, to TeamSport Acton for the Regional Qualifiers. Twenty four pupils had originally tried out for the team, and this was narrowed down to the final twelve through trials at Brentwood. The top two teams from the Qualifiers would proceed to the Regional Finals. The Bancroft’s boys planned each race to optimise results and great teamwork ensured they produced results.

The enthusiasm of current year 13 pupil and team captain Amir Sampat led to the School introducing a Karting Team three years ago. In their second

year of competing, they reached the National Finals, where they finished a respectable 15th.

They are hopeful of repeating the achievement of reaching the Nationals’ again this year, but believe they are capable of doing better. Amir and teacher James Foley both maintain that Bancroft’s have their strongest team ever this year. Amir said, “At the practice session, the top nine Bancroft’s racers all finished within ½ a second of each other – a clear demonstration of our strength. I am thrilled to have qualified for the Regional Finals of the British Schools Karting Championship. It has been great to see the progress of the team’s young enthusiastic racers through the years. We hope to repeat last year’s success at the Regional Final in April and book our place in this year’s National Final.”

Cross country competition

Milton Abbey School, Dorset, annual Prep School Cross Country competition took place last month (February) on a sunny winter’s afternoon with the Abbey providing a stunning backdrop for the many youngsters taking part from nine local Prep Schools.

The Milton Abbey cross country course is well known for providing quite a challenge for competitors with its off track route around the school grounds and up in to the woods – however the views of the stunning Capability Brown landscape more than make up for the exertion needed and muddy trainers! The schools taking part were Sandroyd, Hanford, Knighton House, Leweston, Forres Sandle Manor, Sunninghill, Salisbury Cathedral School, Castle Court and Chafyn Grove.

The children competed both individually and as teams and three schools came out as clear winners across all the age group individual and team categories: Hanford, Sandroyd and Forres Sandle Manor.



Regional Conference hosted

Felsted School, Essex, hosted the annual Round Square Regional conference, welcoming delegates from 27 Round Square Schools from a range of countries across Europe and the Mediterranean.

Round Square is a worldwide network of innovative schools in over 50 countries across six continents, who share a universal set of values. Membership of the Round Square opens up access for Felstedians to numerous exciting opportunities to visit over 80 schools worldwide, through exchanges, gap year opportunities and educational conferences.

Every year, the conference focuses on a specific pillar of the Round Square values, which this year was the topic of Democracy. Opened by former Felstedian and Magic Bus Charity Founder, Matthew Spacie, the conference challenged any preconceived notions of democracy by highlighting the difficulties that we face in day to day life with politics and how technology is shaping this.

Felsted pupils led workshops to pose questions on the intricate dimensions of democracy and to take apart any broad, overarching definitions that have been taught in the past.

During the conference, delegates also heard from BBC Reporter, Mr Thomas Sparrow who gave a deeply insightful talk about the 'Alternative for Deutschland' and how democratic values and principals can lead to right wing ideologists taking the centre

stage. All the keynote speakers made themselves available throughout the conference, to take part in follow-up workshops. The delegates were given various tasks over the weekend, including preparing for an interactive debate on democratic voice, free will, political discord and social harmony. All the pupils were engaged and interested with the various subjects presented to them, and the topics sparked some passionate debates.

As well as workshops, talks and debates the delegates worked with the North London based Community Theatre Group, Haringey Shed to create a new country to hold the first democratic election. The delegates were presented with six politicians who over the course of the weekend revealed more about their character before the delegates had to vote for who would win the election.

Head of Global Education and Round Square Co-ordinator at Felsted, Daniel Emmerson said: "It was a delightfully insightful conference, thanks to the superb efforts and participation of our own pupils and everyone who attended. It was wonderful to see just how engaged they all were with their subject and how eager they were to listen to the views of other people, even when they conflicted with their own ideas. With a follow-up Round Square conference on the subject of post-truth politics coming up at Herlufsholm School in Denmark, this is sure to be a mere chapter in our Round Square journey as a school."

Student drives sponsorship for the sparkle foundation

15-year old Gustav Burton, a Year 10 student at Felsted School, Essex, will participate in the Renault UK Clio Cup Junior Championship's 2018 season to raise money for UK registered charity and international NGO, the Sparkle Foundation.

Gus, a member of Team Pyro, will take to the track in the 'Sparkle Car'. He will donate 100% of proceeds from sponsorship advertising to the foundation and aims to raise at least £15k this year.

Sparkle Malawi will use all money raised by Gus to contribute to the construction of two new classrooms, an office and toilets for the children and staff of the Sparkle Foundation and the project in Malawi.

Gus said: "I feel confident I can make a serious bid for the Clio Cup Junior crown in 2018 – the

category has really raised the bar in junior motor sport as the cars are the most technically advanced in the marketplace, plus there's all the professionalism that Renault Sport is renowned for that comes with it. I see it as the best arena in which to develop as a young driver."

For those wishing to get behind young Gus and the Sparkle Foundation, car sponsorship packages start from as little as £500 and sponsors who pledge between £2k and £5k will also secure their logo on Mr Burton's race suit or helmet.

It's estimated by the British Automobile Racing Club that circa 41,500 people will attend the Clio Cup Junior Championship 2018 race meetings. The event will also receive coverage via Renault on line.

For more information about the sponsorship packages available, please visit gusburtonracing.com



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Has our 'throwaway' culture caused the teacher retention crisis?

When you look around your staffroom; do you see colleagues who are invested in, who feel empowered and trusted enough to stay for the 'long haul'? Do you consider teachers the pillars of your school? Asks Ben Coombes...

As a society, we run the risk of our rampant consumerism infiltrating the workplace – thinking that if there is any conflict in ethos and approach, then the relationship has no future, and we should invest our limited resources elsewhere.

You only have to glance at the newspapers to see that teacher retention is a very real problem, and one that could seriously impact on our children and economy for years (if not decades) to come. It is unilaterally acknowledged that more teachers are leaving the profession than are being persuaded to join it, and the Department of Education appears to have run out of tricks up its sleeves. There is no money to be able to offer corporately attractive salaries, and the funds for advertising and recruiting are fast running out. So surely, the obvious answer is to spend the money available investing in our current teaching body,

“Employers have gone away from the idea that an employee is a long-term asset to the company, someone to be nurtured and developed, to a new notion that they are disposable.”

Barbara Ehrenreich

through effective educational management? Seamus Nevin, head of policy research at the Institute of Directors agrees, saying “A constructive working environment is fundamental to staff retention – and managers have an essential role to play in setting the tone”.

Performance appraisals are seen as an important, if not fundamental, part of effective management. Although, in their current form they are not an appealing process for anyone – management or teacher, so no wonder the attitude of “if in doubt, chuck it out” prevails. The present method of teaching appraisals adds yet more paperwork, and red tape, to teachers’ ever-growing mountain, both of which have been cited as reasons teachers are leaving the profession; and it’s no wonder when TES reports that the average primary school teacher already spends four days on paperwork for every ten days of teaching. However, without properly appraising our staffroom, and thereby generating an accurate overview of the positive and negative aspects, we cannot begin to manage properly, or understand the issues, let alone put in place retention mechanisms. So whilst performance appraisals are a valuable resource in improving the under-achiever, they need to be fit for purpose (showing faith not fear) and utilized to empower the professional, rather than provide management with an excuse to not have to manage.

As it stands, the current appraisal system is “one size fits all”; an approach all good teachers know not to adopt in

their classroom, as it does not allow for a true reflection of strengths and weaknesses. It is possibly the greatest irony of all in the education system that we do not show our teachers the same respect, and level of individualization, that we expect them to show pupils. The present appraisal method encourages reporting on staff in a binary manner – “up to standard” or “needs improvement”. With the multitude of responsibilities senior managers are expected to juggle, can we blame them for looking for the quick and easy option of “managing out” (which is not really managing at all) the under-performers who might jeopardize the all-important Inspection rating? Removing the “odd one out” is, after all, what we’ve been taught to do in every other aspect of our life, but goes against everything teachers stand for in their classes.

So how should school work to retain staff? To have a harmonious staffroom we must ensure cohesion and mutual respect; teachers who feel they are treated as professionals, and invested in, will in turn be more willing to apply themselves to a common goal. David Rock’s SCARF model for leadership (based on neuroscientific findings) includes ‘A’ for Autonomy, and that is what we should be encouraging. There is often the temptation, especially when you are time-poor, to tell a colleague how to perform a task, forgetting that they too are a trained professional, with their own ideas and approaches. If we develop a process that is fit for



Ben Coombes left a 30-year career in education to found IWeYou; a consultancy dedicated to improvement – whether it be individuals, corporations or education. Based in Bruton, Somerset, Ben travels all over the UK to deliver his appraisal programme to both schools and businesses. Please drop an email to ben@iweyou.org for a no obligation conversation about how he can help you administer this approach in your school.

purpose, based on generating peer responsibility in a peer-designed process where the standards and expectation come from collegial responsibility, then perhaps our teachers will begin to feel more empowered and valued. It costs around £4,000 to recruit a new teacher (according to the Select Education annual review) surely £4,000 that would be better spent compounding our initial investment in our staff body?

In sum, management in schools must adapt to survive (to paraphrase Charles Darwin). The systems used to manage staff must be to support staff – allow them to feel autonomous, creative and empowered. There also needs to be a school-wide change of mentality; both in the Leadership Team and the staffroom so that there is a unity of purpose, an acceptance of individuality and a respect for our professionals. Education is most effective when it is consistent – we are doing no-one any favours with a constant turnover of teachers, and eventually the recruitment pool will run dry, and where will we be then?

Conference goes global

It was a real global gathering of the minds as students from Manchester High School for Girls welcomed a group of international delegates to their Model United Nations (MUNHigh2018) conference.

Pupils from schools in Latvia and Iran were joined by over 300 teens from across the UK to debate some of the world's burning issues; from nuclear disarmament to LGBT rights.

MUNHigh2018 Secretary General, 18-year-old Alexandra Thacker,

helped organise the two-day event with a group of seven other Sixth Formers from Manchester High. She said: "We were thrilled to welcome delegates from Iran and Latvia; they brought a distinct international perspective to the event and made it feel all the more like a real United Nations meeting. We hope that our successors at MHSG will continue to build relationships with schools worldwide and make MUNHigh an internationally renowned student conference. Model United Nations helps develop our understanding of the world around us and gives us a forum to discuss pressing issues that currently challenge the global community. Our theme this year was technology and we felt it was important to highlight the benefits and challenges that technological innovation brings for ours and the next generation."



Pictured: From left: Manchester High School for Girls Head Mistress, Mrs Claire Hewitt, Katrina Gulave and Elizaveth Lagutina from the International School of Latvia, Sana Ajilchi and Melissa Nikoosokhantayar from Narjis School Tehran, Iran, and MUNHigh2018 Secretary General, 18-year-old MHSG student Alexandra Thacker

Hair donations

Just a week after the Duchess of Cambridge was in the news for the same generous act, eleven of Cobham Hall School, Kent, girls and staff were presented with thank you certificates for each donating a length of their hair to be used to create wigs for children with cancer.

Spanish teacher and Round Square Representative Miss Jessica Caro Quintana, who saw a leaflet in a hairdressing salon back in September, set the challenge. Unbeknownst to her at the time, the challenge would become deeply meaningful. Her sister, Aida, also a former teacher at the

school, was later diagnosed with a brain tumour and subsequently shaved her head for surgery, donating her hair too.

Girls from across the school took part, from Year 8 through to Year 13, and beyond, with an alumnus, Ming O'Neill-Byrne also contributing after hearing about the challenge through her sister.

In addition to donating lengths of hair, the School also donated the sum of £500, which covers the cost of making one wig. Miss Caro Quintana expects more girls to participate, with many planning to grow their hair longer to be able to contribute the required length.



Introducing Kitebrook News!

BBC News School Report gives young people in the UK the chance to make their own news reports for a real audience. Kitebrook Preparatory School, Gloucestershire, was delighted to participate in this opportunity to help develop students' journalistic skills.

Audiences can follow Kitebrook News stories by visiting their YouTube channel and by searching for 'Young Reporters Kitebrook'. Their most recent story covers Kitebrook's Senior Choir at the Liverpool Peace Proms and the news team are currently covering Young Enterprise Week at the school. Kitebrook News has also collaborated with Cotswold TV covering the Head for a Day story.



Printers Unlimited by Roberts Ink

A new way of doing things

Printers Unlimited by Roberts Ink has a refreshingly simple approach to a printer solution – providing printers at no cost to the school on free loan. With no rent, lease or purchase costs more schools

are catching on to their offer. Schools simply agree to only use the Roberts Ink supplied toner, and their cost of the toner is competitive – a school may never buy or rent a printer again.



Their zero waste plan offers recycling boxes to return the empty cartridges for re-use via a zero waste scheme. The zero waste scheme will reuse the cartridges or be remanufactured into something else helping schools to meet their duty of care about responsible waste management.

Currently expanding across the North West they are poised to move their operation up to be able to offer it nationally.



Email: info@printersunlimited.co.uk
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Litter Collection to Mushroom

Leaffield Environmental has launched a range of 'Mushroom bins' that add an element of fun to litter collection.

Available with or without 'character faces', Mushroom bins are made from colourful and highly durable polyethylene with smooth surfaces for easy cleaning. The use of an internal plastic refuse sack is recommended and gives the bin a large capacity of 60 litres (70 litres with an optional extended plastic liner).

At an overall height of 800mm, the Mushroom bin is tall enough to make an impact but short enough for even young children to deposit their litter in the 150mm diameter open aperture in the top of the lid.

Completely recyclable and suitable for indoor and outdoor use, this new, colourful range of Mushroom bins is proving popular with younger children who have already been heard giving the character-faced bins names.

What will you call yours? Maisie... Megan... Mason... Max?

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www.leaffieldrecycle.com

A lesson in lockdown

Even though a school or working environment should always be considered a safe place, regardless of whatever is going on outside, unfortunately this is not always the case. Although major incidents or threats of violence at these types of premises are still rare, they are growing in frequency and, when they occur, it is vital to have a lockdown procedure in place.

The word lockdown used to be an 'Americanism' typically associated with riots in US prisons, but it is now being used globally to refer to situations where evacuation is more appropriate than evacuation as a means of keeping people safe.

Although they would hope never to have to implement one, schools and other organisations should have a coherent strategy for lockdown procedures. Surprisingly, there is no statutory requirement to have a lockdown policy or procedure – organisations can simply choose to have one if they feel that it would help them to manage risks.

It might soon be the case that a mandatory strategy is required.

The use of an integrated alarm and communication system plays a key role in this regard, as it significantly accelerates both comprehension and crisis management procedures. It means announcements and instructions can be communicated directly to the persons concerned, with adequate volume and good speech intelligibility. Furthermore, emergencies can be immediately reported to a central location, the nature and extent of the danger verified, and measures to assist people taken immediately. In order to get maximum value from any investment, such a system can also be used for internal everyday communication.

Although the reasons behind the growing number of lockdowns are certainly cause for concern, by having clear and effective communication systems installed alongside well rehearsed and understood procedures, schools and public buildings can be sure they are doing all they can to protect occupants.



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Heads Hunted

Among the upcoming head and principal appointments:

Downside School Somerset
Netherleigh & Rossefield School Yorkshire
Wakefield Girls' High School Yorkshire

If you would like mention made of your upcoming head or principal appointment for which applications are sought please let us know – there is no charge for a listing.

News items, contributions, comments and suggestions are always welcomed by the editor.

Please email to:

mail@independentschoolsmagazine.co.uk



The Paragon School, Bath, playground has a new piece of fairytale magic in the form of an Owl & the Pussycat wood sculpture; a homage to Edward Lear.

Based on the trunk of cut-down tree, this multi-faceted sculpture features an owl, pussycat, moon, stars, candles, a large rig for a sail, as well as giant pot of honey. Installed into the curve at the base of the tree is a new boat for children to sit in, inscribed with a line from the famous rhyme.

The Cupressus tree had been a much loved play place and spot of summer shade for most of its sixty years. There was sadness when staff realised the tree had died and had to be felled. Having been such a feature of the playground at the school, they knew they wanted to do something special, something that would complement the other wood carvings in the grounds.

Schools featured in this issue include:

Abbey Gate College	Cundall Manor School	Kitebrook Preparatory School	Rosemead Preparatory School
Abingdon School	Dauntsey's School	Knighton House School	Sibford School
Ampleforth College	Derby Grammar School	Lewes Old Grammar School	Sidcot School
Ashville Prep School	Derby High School	Malvern College	St. Aubyn's School
Ballard School	Ellesmere College	Manchester High School for Girls	St. Benedict's School
Bancroft's School	Exeter Junior School	Merton Court Prep School	St. Mary's School
Barnard Castle School	Farlington School	Milton Abbey School	Stamford Endowed Schools
Bishop's Stortford College	Felsted School	Paragon School	Study School
Bolton School Girls' Division	Gower School	Plymouth College	Towers Convent School
Bromsgrove Preparatory School	Grange School	Polwhele House School	Trent College
Bromsgrove School	Heathfield School	Queen Anne's School	Westfield School
Cobham Hall School	King Edward's Witley	Ratcliffe College	Westonbirt School
Cranleigh School			Winterfold School



The Independent
Schools Magazine

Vires per Verum – Strength through Truth

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

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