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The Independent Schools Magazine



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In this issue...



Digital show raises over £600 for charity

The Queen Mary's School, Yorkshire, community came together to organise a Virtual House Show. What is known as the wackiest and wildest House competition of the year was taken into the virtual world providing an opportunity to promote teamwork, keep community spirit high during lockdown, and raise money for charity.

The girls were tasked to create content for an extraordinary video. The theme was a certain letter of the alphabet for each House to interpret in any way they wished.

There was everything from dancing with dogs, a news broadcast with Dolly Parton to Britain's Got Talent, gymnastic tricks on horses and more.

The girls in Year 10 successfully brainstormed ideas and organised all the year groups (Years 3 – 11) and some staff to submit videos which were then edited to create their House Show.

Judges were West End performer and Principal of DPTA theatre school, Damien Poole and the first female Yeoman Warder of the Tower of London, Moira Cameron. They were looking for creativity, presentation, choreography and star quality.

Instead of the usual ticket sales, viewers pledged donations of over £600 to Queen Mary's elected School Charity of the Year, Tiggyswinkles Wildlife Hospital.

Carole Cameron, Head of Queen Mary's, is pictured introducing the show.

Cover background

Expansion plans

Currently a Nursery, Pre-Prep and Prep school for children from 2-13, Copthorne School, Sussex, will expand year on year from September to offer an all-through education right up to Year 11. Copthorne's first GCSE exams will be in 2026. Full story page 32

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successful start to new initiative

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Is Your School Mentioned?

Schools featured in this issue include:

Abingdon Prep School; Adcote School for Girls; Albyn School; Arnold House School; Bede's Prep School; Beech Hall School; Bolton School; Brentwood School; Cardiff Sixth Form; Caversham Prep School; Charterhouse; Christ College; Colchester High School; Copthorne School; Dauntsey's School; DLD College; Downe House School; Duke of Kent School; Eagle House School; Edge Grove School; Edgeborough School; Essendene Lodge School; Fulham School; Haberdashers' Aske's School for Girls; Harrow School; Hereford Cathedral School; King's Ely; Kingsley School; Leighton Park School; Lockers Park School; LVS Ascot; LVS Hassocks; Mill Hill School; Millfield School; MPW College; Notting Hill & Ealing High School for Girls; Queen Mary's School; Riverston School; Sevenoaks School; St. Christopher's School; St. David's College; St. Edward's Oxford; St. Faith's Prep School; St. Peter's School; St. Margaret's School for Girls; Stamford Endowed Schools; Sutton Valence School; Windlesham House School; West Buckland School; Wrekin School; York House School

Inter-school academic collaboration initiative

Nine Academic Scholars at Harrow School, Middlesex, joined forces with students from nearby Notting Hill and Ealing High School to work on a project on Ancient Alexandria. Each of the nine pairs was given a topic to research within the broader theme together with a source.



Hannah Fox

Harrow Classics Master & Master i/c Scholars and Oxbridge, Hannah Fox, explains more...

A baby of the first lockdown. This is certainly what the Notting Hill and Ealing High School for Girls and Harrow School collaborative project was, conceived as an idea over the garden fence with my neighbour who is Deputy Head at NHEHS in the Easter holidays. We hope that it will become a fixture between the two schools and run even better next year with lessons learnt from this inaugural project.

Who? What? Where? When? Those were the initial questions of course. The decision to work with Year 10 pupils was easy. Whilst NHEHS girls are well settled in by Year 9, our boys only join Harrow in that year. But how many pupils to include? I am master in charge of academic scholars here and I am always keen to develop ways they can be challenged intellectually outside the form room, but also not always working as individuals. The numbers vary but essentially there are about ten or twelve in the lower years. Our schools are five miles apart so an online model suited even had it not been for the pandemic, although we did envisage a face to face presentation event at the end. This was sadly not possible, but I think in future years it would be a lovely touch for the girls and boys to meet in person after a term of working together virtually. A ten-week project running over the Autumn

Term with a weekly fixed one hour session seemed the obvious timeframe, allowing a few weeks at the start of term to get the pupils on board and the Teams set up.

I cannot take credit for the inspired idea of Ancient Alexandria as our general theme, as that was Madeleine Copin's (Deputy Head at NHEHS). She is a mathematician and I a Classicist; we soon drew up ten different topic areas for each girl/boy pair to research. There was certainly a very significant amount of preparation going on before September. Ancient Alexandria fitted the bill perfectly – it was a real melting pot of cultures, a hot bed of scientific and literary culture and innovation, not to mention economically key in the Mediterranean world. There was a good balance between STEM topics and humanities based ones, so at one end of the spectrum we had a pair researching the library and others the languages and literature of Alexandria; at the other end, the ground breaking Mathematical discoveries of Hypatia and scientific techniques involved in the underwater archaeology of Canopus and Thonis-Heraklion. By this point a bigger team had evolved with Adam Livings and Peter Swallow at NHEHS running things from their end and Thomasin Bailey helping me at Harrow. It

was certainly necessary for there to be four teachers involved as logistically it was quite complex to make it all run smoothly but also to ensure that the pupils produced meaningful work and not basic level Wikipedia research. It was important that our pupils were challenged and learnt some more advanced research skills. To that end we produced a source question for evaluation on each topic to go alongside the essay each pair ultimately produced. We also asked them to reflect on the relevance of their topic for today's society. Producing a quality bibliography, learning what rigorous internet research meant and being aware of the dangers of plagiarism were all skills we were keen this group should develop.

Teams worked very well indeed for us. Back in September it was a time of channels, before Breakout Rooms had become the staple of a school teacher's lessons. It was so lovely that even the November lockdown did not disrupt the smooth flow of the project. There was obviously much careful planning as regards data protection and parental consent, but essentially pupils could still join at the appointed time even in lockdown at home. The format of the weekly sessions was an initial plenary time before the pairs worked independently with the

mentoring teacher dropping in on the discussions.

The project culminated with two presentation events which were wonderfully impressive and uplifting. Some members of the SMT of each school joined at this point and asked questions of each pair. I particularly liked this aspect of the project – the fact the SMT was able to experience first hand the produce of the term's happy labours. The collaboration was effective on so many levels; there are hard skills learnt such as producing a Microsoft Sway and learning how to research properly, alongside the soft skills of collaborating with a new person virtually and committing to a weekly session throughout what was a challenging term for everyone. Oddly I think it gave us all a healthy focus each Tuesday afternoon and new names and faces quickly became familiar.

There are certainly some aspects which can be improved for next time, but essentially the palpable enthusiasm of the girls and boys and running weekly sessions over a term meant those involved got a huge amount out of the project. Proper relations were forged, and it was a wonderful thing to challenge intellectually these bright able year 10 pupils.

Inclusive rugby partnership

Christ College Brecon has teamed up with Cardiff Blues in a partnership aimed at developing rugby talent regardless of age or gender.

The new partnership strengthens Christ College's existing relationship with Cardiff Blues which provides a direct link to coaching expertise, strength and conditioning programmes, performance analysis and player welfare support for the school's first XV.

Working closely with Cardiff Blues, the school will expand upon its rugby provision with specialised coaching available to all its pupils through timetabled

lessons and extracurricular activities, and a focus on providing development opportunities for girls and primary school pupils.

John Patterson, Christ College Brecon's Director of Sport, (pictured 2nd from left back row) said: "We are delighted to be working in partnership with Cardiff Blues to enhance and expand our existing rugby provision to benefit current and future students. This is hugely exciting for the school and adds a first-class rugby programme to the outstanding educational opportunities that we offer."



The results are in: Teacher assessed grades go ahead

Following confirmation of teacher assessed grades this summer, Joanna Lada-Walicki, independent schools lawyer at Moore Barlow takes a closer look at the government's plans and what schools need to prepare for...

After cancelling GCSE and A-level exams due to the ongoing pandemic, the government has finally outlined its plans for teachers across England to award this year's grades.

It comes after the fiasco of last summer which saw a controversial algorithm in place to determine the future of thousands of students – shortly before the supercomputer was switched off following a backlash from students and parents alike.

Teachers will now be responsible for assessing grades, with a deadline of 18 June for results to be submitted to exam boards. There will not be any compulsory exams and teachers will be able to draw on a range of evidence including mock exams, coursework and other work completed as part of a pupil's course – such as essays or in-class tests – to determine their results. Exam boards have committed to set test papers which schools may wish to use to inform their decisions, however these will be optional and do not need to be taken under exam conditions.

Yet again, schools and teachers will remain at the centre of attention when students open their envelopes in August. With the clock ticking, schools must ensure their staff are well-equipped for the task in hand and prepared to tackle a lengthy appeals process.

Some international exams may still take place, although an increasing number of providers have decided to cancel them for students in

the UK, including Cambridge International and IB exams.

Planning and preparation

It's important that schools set out their plans early to reassure staff as well as students and parents about the process involved.

Further guidance from exam boards is expected in the coming weeks, including a list of evidence that will be accepted to support the grades, but schools must start to think about what 'common assessments' they will use to help them inform their decisions.

Schools might want to consider providing training sessions for staff to run through what is expected and answer any immediate questions they might have. A moderating or mentoring scheme for newly qualified teachers and younger members of staff might be an approach that some schools opt for – ensuring that everybody in the staffroom feels comfortable with the task in hand.

For independent schools in the same group, consistency with the approach to moderation will be important to ensure that students experience a fair practice across the group.

What's the risk?

Pressure on teachers will intensify as the deadline for June's submission draws nearer. With no national guidelines available for the distribution of grades, there is a concern of an absence of a level-playing field, with potential disparity between how schools apply the process across the country.

As was well documented, last year saw grades inflate across GCSEs and A-levels after the cancellation of exams and the use of centre-assessed grades. This year is likely to see a repeat, with students remaining out of the classroom for a longer period of time and teachers grading students using different criteria.

Teacher beware: Appeals process

The government has outlined that all students will be able to appeal their grade – a move that could see a deluge of claims as schools struggle to cope with the work required to comply with the formal process. So much so that the exam regulator, Ofqual, has made the decision to bring results day forward to the 10 August for A-levels and 12 August for GCSEs to allow for adequate appeal time.

Students and parents will be given the option to appeal direct to the exam board, which will adjudicate on the evidence presented by schools. The devil remains in the detail for the appeals process but schools and teachers could face a considerable amount of administrative work to supply evidence relating to individual exam grades – potentially impacting any catch-up lessons planned for the summer months. Schools may consider asking affected staff to ensure they are available at this time in the event of receiving requests for reviews of awarded grades.

There is also the fear that some teachers will be held personally



responsible for the grades they award, and it is important that there is total clarity regarding the factors that need to be taken into account by teachers. Firstly, schools should also ensure that their complaints procedures are up to date. Last summer, my team supported a number of schools which received formal complaints from parents who were dissatisfied with their children's grades. Students may submit data subject access requests (DSARs), hoping to be provided with all information used by teachers to support the award of a grade. These may be made in August, following the release of the results, and the clock will still be running to respond to a DSAR request, even though it is a holiday period.

However the next few months play out, communication and preparation remain key. Schools across the country have faced many challenges throughout the pandemic and the plans for teacher assessed grades this summer is another hurdle to overcome.

Is the 'Power' of schools being lost?

...asks Rose Hardy, Headmistress at Haberdashers' Aske's School for Girls, Hertfordshire...



Schools have always been incredibly powerful environments. A diverse space to learn and grow as an individual, a place in which to flourish and succeed as well as a place to build resilience and to cope with disappointment and sometimes, failure. Yet the true power of a school comes from its ability to foster philanthropy, collegiality, cooperation and culture. Schools are communities first and foremost; they are about people, relationships and collaboration, made stronger by in-person and in-the-moment interactions. Yet, it is becoming clear that the pandemic and prolonged period of school closures is having a rather troubling and much darker impact on everything that schools have always stood for.

The power of schools comes from kinship; that sense of inclusion and belonging to something bigger than oneself. The spirit of community, which is intrinsically driven by being together in a tangible sense, gives context to the environment in which we learn and develop. It helps us to reinforce those values that are important to our mentors and peers, to understand different cultures and grow into the people we choose to be. In contrast, school closures have shifted that palpable sense of community we once took for granted and have changed the way we interact and engage with each other.

À la carte learning

How we respond and connect with the school community is very different when we are online. While remote learning has revealed some very positive opportunities for the future and has been effective in maintaining educational consistency for students during these difficult times, it has fragmented the school community as we know it and as an industry we are stuck between a rock and a hard place. Many independent schools are to be applauded for the quality of their remote provision over recent months and watching our young people adapt and adjust to learning online has been both inspirational and humbling. Yet getting back to the traditional roots of what makes being 'physically' in school so powerful and impactful, is what drives us forward.

Students in turn, have had constant access to screens and mobile devices throughout school closures (and during lessons too) which has added another layer of distraction for some, while being helpful to others. The way that learning has been delivered to students over the last year almost paves the way for a more à la carte style of learning, whereby you dip in and out as you see fit. This is a contentious topic for many heads and there are many debates as to how this might affect the way students learn in the future.

For students used to a strict timetable and the rigidity of the school day, remote learning has led to far less emphasis on the need to complete work then and there 'in the moment' and far more flexibility for some, to distort the traditional structure of face to face lessons. If you want to finish your maths lesson later, you can. Don't want to do PE now? Do it on Tuesday instead.

Recovering the table d'hôte

That controlled structure of schooling has evolved in many ways during lockdown. For many heads, the key will be to recover the proven table d'hôte approach when schools return, whilst still retaining the best of what we have learned from remote provision. Remote learning has undoubtedly put schools under intense scrutiny from parents too, in a way that they have never been before. Never before has the urgency been so immediate for parents in contacting teachers during the school day and expecting an instant response. Likewise, parents are now far more involved in their children's learning day to day, that is a positive of course, but it does bring with it more scrutiny.

Prior to COVID-19 schools have always had total ownership of their resources. Schools held most of the cards, they had the power. Yet during lockdown, that structure has been far less rigid, far more open to interpretation and misuse. In fact, in many cases, it flies in the face of everything that schools are

about. As schools we have also had to think very carefully about the implications around 'access' while remote learning and the potential for lessons to be recorded on videos or shared externally. Not to mention the impact for young people of being on screen all day. Teenagers in particular have found this very difficult; many are turning off their cameras, they simply don't want to be in the spotlight all day.

Power of community

The question is, is the power of schools being lost? While schools will have implemented strict rules during lockdown, that community of learning has been transformed during this period. The reopening of schools is a great relief to many heads and teachers alike, we want to get back into the classroom, back to routine and structure. The ability to re-nurture that spirit of community again will be at the top of the agenda for many schools in March. The question is, will students have the same regard or respect for school on the other side of this pandemic? Many of the goal posts have been moved over the last year and continued uncertainty has led to change and debate in terms of how we view school, how and why we operate the way we do and how we come together as a whole community. While change can often be a good thing, it is important for schools to protect the very thing that makes them so wonderful, their spirit of 'physical' community.

Celebrating Millie's Mark Award

Colchester High School & Nursery, Essex, Early Years Department (Nursery to Reception) has been awarded 'Millie's Mark', a Quality Mark for nurseries that demonstrates their commitment to going above and beyond the requirements for keeping children safe and minimising risks and accidents. This has been awarded by National Day Nurseries

Association (NDNA) in association with Department for Education and Millie's Trust.

Millie's Mark is named after Millie Thompson, who tragically died as a result of choking in a nursery in 2012. Her parents Dan and Joanne Thompson have campaigned for all staff to have paediatric first aid training and having Millie's Mark demonstrates that nurseries have

met this. In addition, it shows they work hard to keep these crucial skills in the forefront of employees' minds, so they are competent and can apply paediatric first aid in any situation.

Ms Gracie-Langrick, Headteacher said, "We are absolutely thrilled to have been awarded Millie's Mark. This is a special achievement and shows how serious our Nursery

staff and Reception teachers are about ensuring children are safe when they are in our care. Although we are now an official Millie's Mark awarded Early Years Department, our hard work of continuously developing our quality care and education will not stop. It is crucial that we maintain the criteria to ensure the ongoing safety of our children."



Don't let technology leave education behind again

500 years ago started the massification of education facilitated by the printing press. A seismic change for education, although it did not crack social inequality since only those who read could access the printed word. Schools took a long time to even out some of the inequality as a factory style/knowledge-based education developed. Fast forward to 2021, social mobility has still not been cracked as hundreds of thousands of school age children have not had access to a device and/or the internet to enable them to continue to learn online. The gap in 2021 is as wide as the gap the printing press created in terms of accessibility to learning and equality of opportunity. As technology races ahead education is in danger of being left behind again. But we can do something about it this time, suggests Robin Gainher...

Covid must be the catalyst to look at how we re-balance the curriculum knowing what we know now. Schools have shown how they have been able to adapt to online learning rapidly and effectively. We have all become more tech savvy with new digital platforms like Teams to learn and to learn quickly. Teaching pupils at home via the power of Teams would have been unthinkable less than a year ago yet we are managing it like it was the new norm – so too are our pupils. And neither should we forget that

simply providing a device to a child is not the solution in itself. Indeed, for children without devices and the internet good and effective learning can and still is taking place. Advocates of text books and pen and paper should not despair; a blended balance of the old and the new is workable. There is no one size fits all solution.

A recent study from eSchool News discovered the use of AI in the education industry will grow 47.5% in 2021. Emerging technologies such as 5G will help increase connectivity, speed, and connection quality thereby enabling multiple communications at an unprecedented rate. The effect of greater connectivity will bring greater opportunities for teaching and learning. Whilst we don't yet know what is around the corner tech wise, we do know it is not slowing down. Things they are 'a-changing' and we need to adapt.

In his talk on the Future of Learning in 2018, Sugara Mitra recommended the internet be seen as a curriculum subject in itself: how does it work? What does it do? What can it do? Imagine pupils looking at their timetable and seeing 'double internet' on a Tuesday morning. His vision for a school's curriculum was to divide it into 3 parts: What was necessary for life; what feels good to know; and thirdly, what was needed for exams only. Just imagine the possibilities. He also advocated using the internet during exams; but that's for another time.

The holy grail of personalised learning can be augmented by technology. For example, lesson content can be uploaded for pupils to access prior to the lesson allowing them to choose when

they engage with the material as well as being able to stop and start the lesson to ensure they go at a pace that suits them. Including enrichment activities can add to the menu of pupil options.

Whilst it may work for the time being with schools being closed, most online learning is not intrinsically engaging when it tries to mimic school. We can all sympathise with pupils' being fed up with looking at a screen all day as they 'move' from one lesson to another. The aim for online education should be to help create the same relationship pupils have with their teachers at school – one-to-one and hands-on – whilst retaining accessibility and standardisation. Resolving the conflicts which exist between efficiency and effectiveness is undeniably a challenge.

Resolving the conflict could lie in making sure online education provides video rich teaching that emulates the one-to-one relationship pupils have with their teachers and it needs to provide pupils with the opportunity to engage in one-to-one/face-to-face conversations with each-other and their teachers about what they are learning about. Success is helping to build relationships between pupils and their teachers online or face-to-face; effective meaningful learning is necessarily a product of effective relationships via whatever means.

Another way to resolve this conflict lies in a closer examination of the old and the new working together not in isolation but in partnership with each benefiting the other to extract maximum learning leverage for our pupils. Taking a binary approach to the challenge – i.e. it has to be the old or the new

way – excludes the possibilities of integrating technology into teaching and learning and vice versa. It also ignores the stand-alone benefits of the old and the new. Technology does not need to be front and centre of a new style education, but it should be utilised to enhance and enrich what we have already.

If there is no better time to re-invent education for the digital age, there are several factors to consider before we throw ourselves into creating new digital strategies and cost modelling. For a start, the wrong question to ask is, 'is technology in the classroom good or bad?'. Instead we should ask what is best for our pupils? How can technology improve their learning? How can it make the curriculum better?

School leaders are often experts in education but not in digital technology. The same is true for teachers. If we want to accelerate digital learning in schools, we must provide the opportunities for teachers to train and upskill meaning investment in time and resources. Research suggests teachers learn best from one another when it comes to technology. Schools can close the digital literacy gap by using teacher leaders and peer support. By empowering the experts in our own schools, we have already started to enable and create 'digital efficacy'.

We should not miss the opportunity to make changes in our schools. The opportunities technology provides continue to move apace; it is time to enable a wave of innovation and support for teachers to lead the way.

Pictured: Robin Gainher was Head at Knighton House School in Dorset until recently, and before then Head at Beeston Hall School in Norfolk.

All aboard for mobile testing and vaccination



Abingdon Prep School, Oxfordshire, has helped evaluate the latest innovative scheme to get mobile Covid-19 testing and vaccination centres out into the community. The 'testing bus' prototype arrived at the school for a trial run, offering lateral flow tests to the staff teaching the children of key workers.

The idea is that any standard city bus or Sprinter van can be converted to a mobile Covid-19 testing or vaccination centre in a matter of days. It can then be dispatched to areas in the community that are either difficult to reach or require a rapid response.

The company behind this latest step in combating Covid-19 is Project MOVE, based at Harwell Campus in Oxfordshire. It provides the UK's only rapidly-deployable, mobile clinical bay platform

designed to be quickly installed into public buses. The multi-use bays provide ample space for doctors and nurses to deliver a variety of clinical services directly into the community. Once the mobile testing centres are no longer needed the bays can be removed and the bus returned to normal service.

Craig Williams, Headmaster at Abingdon Prep said: "We were delighted to be able to help with this project. The whole process from the bus arriving, parking and opening for testing was very quick, accessible and convenient. I am sure it will be a very valuable resource."

Project MOVE medical bays can be rapidly installed in any standard city bus or Sprinter van in a matter of days by any local coachworks company - and with no special tools or skills required.

The clinical bays can be used for administering annual flu vaccines, COVID testing, COVID vaccination, phlebotomy, spirometry, non-COVID drug testing, pre-surgery screening, and other routine medical interventions.

The project was started in mid-2020 as a response to the increased demands placed on the National Health Service caused by the sudden need to roll-out COVID-19 testing and vaccines while still delivering existing medical services.



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Is there value in boosting financial literacy in younger children – post pandemic?



There is little doubt that the future economy will be dramatically impacted as a result of the pandemic and learning how to become financially stable in the future will be ever more important for young people. But do schools have a duty to improve the financial literacy of children from a younger age? A report by Ben Evans, Headmaster at Windlesham House School, Sussex.

Schools have faced huge disruption over the past year and there will be a long list of priorities when children return to school, to ensure that gaps in teaching and learning are filled and children's wellbeing is addressed appropriately. This will lead to increased pressure on time and resources, but we must be careful not to neglect pupils' wider education and the skills necessary for successful and accomplished lives.

Few would disagree that financial literacy is essential for our children and it is something that schools should be teaching and incorporating into the wider curriculum: not just for older pupils but for prep aged pupils too. Financial literacy should not be regarded as something to be covered swiftly in years 12 and 13 ahead of preparation for university or the world of work. Rather, it should form an integral part of the school curriculum from a much younger age ensuring that skills and understanding around finances are developed gradually, with enjoyment and in an age-appropriate way. Children are never too young to learn about financial stability, providing it is delivered effectively and creatively.

Knowing the cost vs. understanding the worth

All prep schools should be reviewing their whole school curriculums to ensure they are still fit for purpose and adequately preparing children for this rapidly changing world. There is no time to rest on our laurels or to continue to teach a curriculum designed purely to enable pupils to pass exams. The current pandemic has made this even more prevalent due to changes in the workplace and what jobs will be available in the future. Nurturing and harnessing an understanding of the value of money, financial management and planning along with the distribution of wealth and what this means, can be taught at a young age through cross-curricular

teaching and then built upon year on year.

Many children will claim to know the cost of everything yet will understand the worth of nothing. This is partly the responsibility of good prep schools, where they spend much of their time, to ensure that children appreciate the value of money and how to use it wisely and with prudence. It is also an essential life skill to enable children to budget well and according to their income and means; how to manage their bank accounts and borrow effectively as well as understanding the pitfalls and consequences of gambling, credit overuse and overspending. Entrepreneurship is also an essential skill which can support the whole area of building financial security and this can be easily incorporated into schools' curriculums from a young age and through a variety of innovative activities.

Delivering financial literacy in a fun, enjoyable and accessible way to young children, needs to be built into the curriculum and to become part of everyday life. This can be done in a variety of ways as children grow, develop and move through the school. For instance, year group/class cake sales where children price the produce, handle the cash and are able to calculate the money made after each event work very well. Charitable endeavours can also help to build knowledge and experience through researching charities, looking at different examples of need and poverty in the UK and globally as well as discussing how children can help. Schools might follow this through with worthwhile fundraising (that is more than just a mufti day), which involves the children giving up their time and hard work and understanding the tremendous value of the money they raise.

Fundraising is a great platform introducing financial literacy

Whole school fund raising is also helpful in boosting knowledge

around financial literacy. Involving children in Christmas fairs, summer fetes and other events, which are run to raise money for school funds can be a great way to enhance engagement. How will the money be best used? What types of events or activities will be popular? Involving pupils in devising and running the activities themselves such as pricing and handling cash, delivers a more hands-on experience.

As schools we should also be teaching pupils how to manage a bank account from a young age. Discrete PSHE lessons, which actually require children to open a fictitious bank account and manage their money – using bank transfers, debit and credit cards, reading and understanding a bank statement, being aware of financial fraud and so on, is particularly useful. For younger children that is all about creating fun and interactive ways to grasp tips around managing money and living within one's means.

As part of our Diploma programme in school we have introduced a number of financial modules. Entrepreneurship is covered through a project in which pupils have to form a company, devise a product to manufacture and ultimately sell it at the Christmas fair. They each have roles within the company from Managing Director, to Financial Director, Sales and Production Managers, and a Marketing Director. Their aim is to make a profit, which is all donated to the school charities. Throughout the process they learn about leadership, teamwork, independence and financial literacy. They learn about profit margins, how accounting information should be presented, pricing to sell and make a profit, marketing to achieve optimum sales and the perils of under costing or over pricing.

Social awareness combined with social conscience

Another great module we have incorporated is the Shop, Cook and Eat challenge where groups of four children are given £5 with

which they have to plan and buy the ingredients for a two-course nutritious meal for them all. They are taken to a low-cost supermarket and given a £5 note which means they can't accidentally overspend or not pay attention to their strict budget. It teaches them valuable lessons about the cost of food and importance of budgeting wisely or facing the inevitable consequences. Other essential life skills are also covered such as planning a menu, cooking it as a team and even setting a table properly.

Social awareness and the importance of a social conscience should be an important element of all school curriculums. How this is covered alongside the national curriculum in a progressive and accessible way is for individual schools to decide, according to their circumstances. At Windlesham, we are in the process of establishing a social enterprise which will involve the whole school community, teaching valuable skills, both practical and financial along the way.

In summary, the reality of managing finances as an adult can be daunting and delivering sessions in an age-appropriate way is vital. As with all things, it is important to keep children informed about current affairs and in particular, the effects of the pandemic on the financial stability of the UK and other countries, without worrying them unduly or causing unnecessary anxiety. As part of an age-appropriate PSHE programme, children need to learn about general unemployment figures, how this affects people's lives and what it means for the economy. Along with the pandemic, the impact of Brexit on trade is also an important topic to cover. Implemented properly and sensitively, it will ensure our children are well-informed, sensitive to the needs of others and better prepared to take their place in society when the time comes.

175 years of inspiring women



St. Margaret's School for Girls, in Aberdeen, are celebrating their 175th Anniversary with the launch of a new Inspirational Women series that they hope will inspire girls across the world.

The brand new series – which is free and open to the public – features stories and insights from women in all walks of life – including sport, science, business, journalism, social enterprise and politics. The series, supported by Aberdeen Standard Capital, is set to inspire and encourage girls from across the globe to be the best they can be.

Anna Tomlinson, Head of St Margaret's School for Girls, said: "It is a privilege to be celebrating St Margaret's 175th Anniversary this year. The school has gone from strength to strength, adapting to the needs of successive generations. At St Margaret's, our aim is to have happy, confident girls who know their strengths when they eventually leave us for the wider

world. We hope that inviting women who have gone on to make a positive difference in their chosen field to talk will inspire and encourage girls around the world to aim high and thrive in their career."

The first webinar of the series took place earlier this month (March) with Dr Nicola Steedman, Interim Deputy Chief Medical Officer at the Scottish Government, discussing her career path to becoming one of the most senior women supporting Scotland's COVID-19 response. Video messages from special guests such as Lorraine Kelly and a new campaign video featuring teachers and pupils from St. Margaret's were shown to celebrate International Women's Day.

Subsequent webinars will include:

25th March

MARY CONTINI, OBE

Bestselling author, food writer, one of Scotland's top chefs and owner of Italian deli Valvona & Crolla.

22nd April

MELANIE REID

The Times writer and disability campaigner.

29th April

JORDAN BROOKS

Former Deputy Director of the Council on Women and Girls in the Obama Administration, and currently the Executive Director at the United State of Women.

18th May

LEANNE CRICHTON, JUDY MURRAY

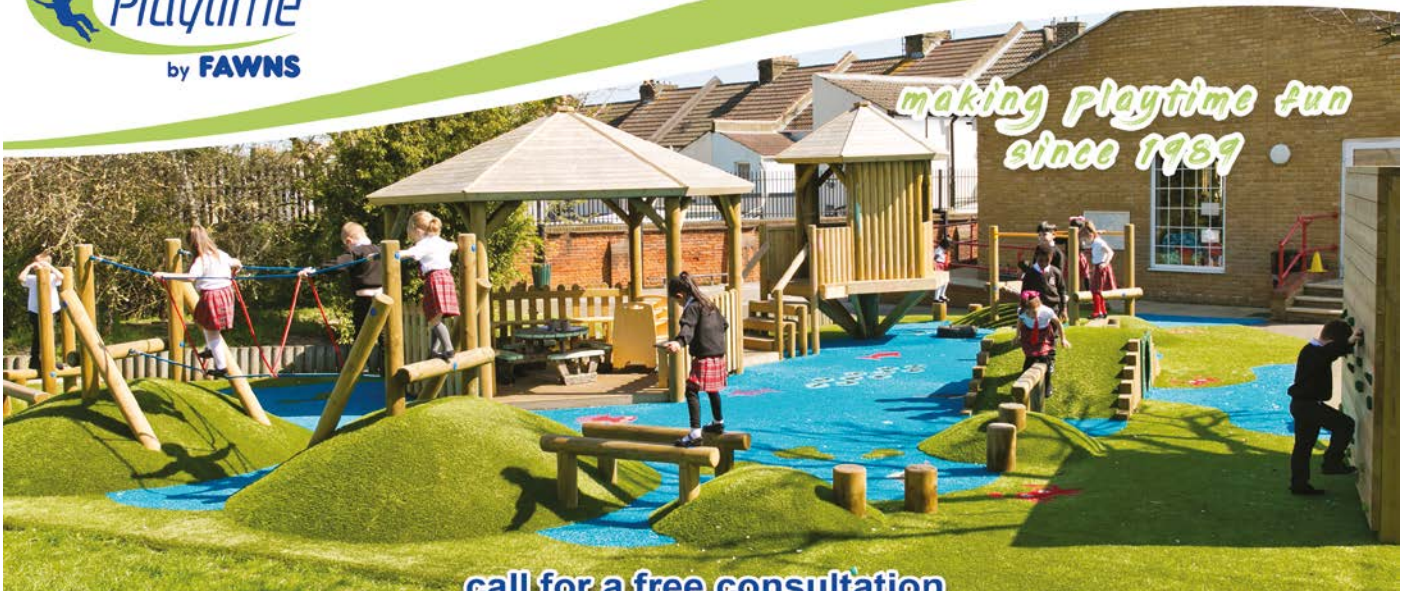
Recently retired Scottish international footballer, with 72 caps. Currently Glasgow City midfielder. Screening of an intimate interview between St. Margaret's pupils and Judy Murray, Scottish tennis coach.

10th June

LOUISE MACDONALD, BRIANA PEGADO

Louise, Chief Executive of Young Scot and Briana, Creative Director for Fringe of Colour, and Chair of YWCA Scotland.

Tickets can be booked in advance at www.stmargaretsevents.com



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Awards celebrate successes in a difficult year for all

After a challenging year the Independent Schools Association (ISA) celebrated the successes of its Members' schools with the ISA Awards 2020. Outstanding local community involvement, sustainability and environmental education and outstanding provision for learning support are just some of the areas of excellence celebrated at the virtual awards ceremony.

The ISA Awards celebrate the breadth of excellence and innovation across the independent sector, and recognise the hard work of Headteachers and their staff. This past year has been unprecedented for all, but one thing that has remained is the dedication and hard work from ISA Members and their schools to push on and continue to offer an excellent education to all the children in their care.

This was evident from the high standard of entries received, which were as strong as ever.

ISA Senior School of the Year was awarded to Adcote School for Girls in Shropshire. To be ISA Senior School of the Year, applicants must demonstrate how the school makes a positive difference to the educational outcomes of the children in its care. Adcote's efforts over the past few years to take on board the wishes of parents, self-reflect, put changes in place and then measure the results so clearly, gave them the edge. The systems put in place have had a positive impact in many ways, including

personal growth, as well as academic success.

ISA Junior School of the Year went to St Christopher's School in Epsom. The winner of this prestigious award must demonstrate the clear cause-and-effect between decisions made by the school and the exceptional outcomes achieved. The sparkling creativity of all teaching staff and the Headteacher shone through at St Christopher's, with innovative approaches to lockdown, community engagement, specialist art and music, and much more.

The Stamford Endowed Schools have formally pledged their commitment to supporting current and former members of the Armed Forces.

Principal, Will Phelan, has signed the Armed Forces Covenant, which demonstrates the Schools' commitment to fair treatment for those who serve, or have served, in the Armed Forces.

The Covenant supports serving personnel, service leavers, veterans, and their families, and ensures that they are treated with fairness and respect in the communities, economy, and society that they serve.

The signing of the Covenant marks recognition of the longstanding relationship between the Stamford Schools and the Armed Forces. Forces families make up a third of the boarding community at Stamford, with Forces parents serving across the UK and internationally, including a large number from nearby RAF bases Wittering, Waddington, Molesworth and Alconbury.

The Schools' Combined Cadet Force (CCF) started in 1916 and is one of the largest voluntary contingents in the UK, with almost 250 students from Years 10 to 13 enrolled across Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force sections. Students meet weekly to engage in a range of challenging educational activities aimed to develop their personal responsibility, leadership, and self-discipline. Stamford's CCF has a symbiotic relationship with the local town, offering a strong representational presence at events such as the annual Remembrance Parade.

Principal, Mr Will Phelan, pictured, said: "I am delighted to have signed the Armed Forces Covenant on behalf of the Stamford Endowed Schools. We have always been wholly committed to supporting the Armed Forces in every way that we can, and the Covenant is a fitting way to demonstrate that commitment. We are very proud of our longstanding relationship with the Armed Forces, and all of us benefit from the contribution that Armed Forces bases and families make to our local community".

The winners of the other ISA Awards 2020 were:

- ISA Award for Outstanding Sport in a Small School: St David's College, Llandudno
- ISA Award for Outstanding Sport in a Large School: LVS Ascot
- ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in Performing Arts: Duke of Kent School, Ewhurst
- ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in Fine Arts: MPW College London
- ISA Award for Outstanding Provision for Learning Support: LVS Hassocks
- ISA Award for Outstanding Local Community Involvement: Leighton Park School, Reading
- ISA Award for Outstanding International Involvement: Essendene Lodge School, Caterham
- ISA Award for Outstanding STEAM Provision: St Faith's Prep School, Canterbury
- ISA Award for Sustainability and Environmental Education: Kingsley School, Bideford
- ISA Award for Excellence in Pupil Personal Development: Cardiff Sixth Form
- ISA Award for Innovation in Pupil Voice: DLD College London
- ISA Award Marketing Initiative of the Year: Caversham Prep School, Reading

Pictured is Natasha Coccia, Leighton Park's Assistant Head Outreach and Partnerships with pupils from Farley Hill School at a sustainable product development workshop. Other 'Local Community Involvement' projects included funding and making PPE during the early stages of the Covid pandemic; Year 10 Community Action Service volunteers working on a living town museum for the residents of nearby Whitley; plus a host of educational, practical and financial support initiatives.

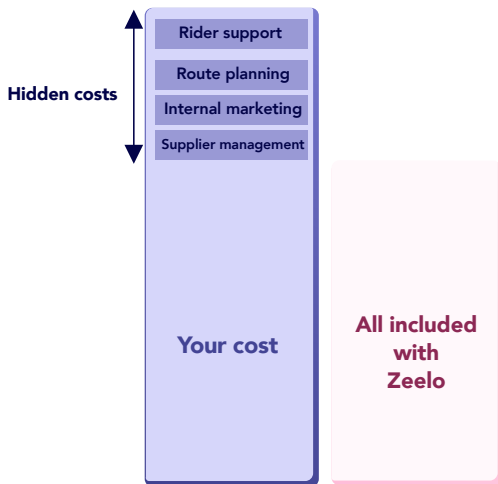
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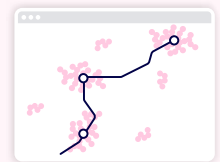
Booking platforms



Live tracking



24/7 support



Route optimisation



CHANGING FACES... CHANGING PLACES...



Lockers Park School, Hertfordshire, Deputy Head, Mr Gavin Taylor, has been promoted to Headmaster and will take over the helm from September 2021.

He joined Lockers Park in 2007. In his 13 years, Mr Taylor has immersed himself in a range of roles spanning Form Teacher, Head of Sport and Head of Boarding through to Head of Pastoral and Deputy Head, the latter a role he has held for the last six years.



Mr James Thomas is to be the new Headmaster of Sutton Valence School, Kent, from September 2021. Mr Thomas will succeed Bruce Grindlay, who departs at the end of this academic year after 12 years.

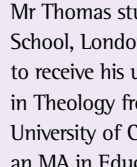
from the University of London and also the National Professional Qualification for Headship.

In his early career he was a Head of Department (Theology and Philosophy) at both Dulwich College and Wellington College, where he was also in charge of Oxford and Cambridge applications. He then became the Director of Studies at Harrow International School Hong Kong before moving to the British School in Tokyo in August 2014 where he is currently Head of the Senior School.



Albyn School, Aberdeen, has announced the appointment of its new Headmaster, Stefan Horsman.

Stefan attended the University of Cambridge for his PGCE in Secondary Education (geography) after achieving a degree in Geography from the University of Oxford, and is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. He was Head of Geography at Cheadle Hulme School before moving to Robert Gordon's College where he was Deputy Head.



Mr Thomas studied at St Paul's School, London, and then went on to receive his undergraduate degree in Theology from Trinity Hall, University of Cambridge. He holds an MA in Educational Leadership

Currently Deputy Head of Senior School at Robert Gordon's College, Stefan will become Head of Albyn School in April.

followed by a Masters and PhD at the UCL Institute of Education. Michael taught at Halliford School in Shepperton and St Edward's School, Oxford, before joining Harrow in 2013 as Head of Politics. He subsequently became Academic and Universities Director before taking up his appointment as Director of Studies in 2019 with overall responsibility for all academic matters at Harrow.



The 14th Warden of St Edward's, Oxford, will be Alastair Chimside, currently Deputy Head at Harrow. He will take up the role in September 2021.

Alastair was brought up in Oxford and attended the Dragon, winning a Scholarship to Eton where he later taught. He took a Congratulatory First in Classics and Modern Languages at Merton College, Oxford, where he also won a Lightweight Rowing Half Blue.



Hereford Cathedral School has announced that Dr Michael Gray will succeed Paul Smith as Headmaster in September.

Dr Gray, who is currently Director of Studies at Harrow School, graduated from King's College London with a First in History, after which he completed a PGCE,

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These have been difficult times for all and much praise has, quite rightly, been afforded to those that have helped steer the country through some testing days... key workers across the NHS, teaching, retail, public transport. This page pays tribute to an often forgotten sector – school support staff whose work has assumed a demanding extra dimension through the pandemic...

Schools' unsung heroes

'It's quite simple – without cleaners, catering staff, maintenance workers and caretakers, no school can open,' says Ian Clarke, Head of Estates at Bolton School.

"Whilst the media kept reporting on schools being closed, the reality is that up to two hundred support and teaching staff were on site at Bolton School every day during lockdown, along with nearly 300 young people. Like all schools we were open to the children of key workers and for vulnerable girls and boys. Our support staff has stepped up to the plate and met every demand with, as far as possible, a smile on our faces. Yes, there have been moments of crisis and wobbles but, overall, our staff have been outstanding throughout the pandemic.

"Whenever we have people in our buildings, it does not really matter

if they are 100 or 1000 in number, there are still things that have to be done to ensure that we have followed specific guidance and regulations, for example treating water to control Legionella, following fire regulations such as weekly testing and the monitoring of all such systems."

Ian is convinced that school support staff deserve to be inoculated as a priority. "The sooner we can get the job the better; my frontline staff are in daily proximity to children", he said.

"Our staff are on the front-line each and every day. Our cleaners are going around each school continuously and they regularly come into contact with the bodily fluids of children, when they clean toilets, wipe handrails, window sills and door knobs, and empty bins. Our catering staff are face to face with the pupils each day as we

continue to provide a full menu which is prepared in-house and distributed around the campus.

"At Bolton School we don't feel like unsung heroes but I do hear a lot of stories anecdotally of caretakers being run ragged and given no thanks or breaks. We have been lucky in that we have been well supported by governors and our senior leadership teams as well as being backed by all the School's employees."

Last month (February) Ian and his team were gearing up for the full return to school. In one busy week they upgraded the testing centre from one which served key workers/staff during lockdown to one which could accommodate the full return. "Various school staff have been trained – teaching, academic support staff and Central Services support staff – to deliver testing", said Ian. "We scaled this

up and tested 1800 girls and boys over the three days prior to school opening on March 8".

In order to accommodate the large scale test centre within the leisure complex and sports hall Ian's team has had to reconfigure one way systems and make socially distanced waiting areas as well as introduce extra sanitising stations. Such a centre has also greatly increased the demand on support staff to keep the facility running behind the scenes. The estates staff have also been required to undertake significantly longer working hours to not only prepare such facilities but to also resource car parks during which they also safely handed out NHS registration cards and barcodes which are needed to register ahead of each test.

Meet the Foggers!

The Facilities Assistants at St Peter's School, York, have named themselves 'The Foggers', in honour of their newly acquired role which they have been performing since the start of last term.

The Facilities Assistants work in all corners of the School, from Boarding Houses to broom cupboards, to create a safe and secure learning environment for staff and pupils.

Since September, they have added 'fogging' to their list of duties. This involves spraying an atomised spray of antiviral disinfectant into various spaces across the site from classrooms and meeting rooms to corridors and dining halls.

The Foggers have primarily been working out of school hours, on weekends and evenings, to ensure that all spaces are thoroughly disinfected. Occasionally, though,

they have been asked to drop everything and do some fogging to ensure the smooth running of the school.

Fogging is carried out in addition to the cleaning done by the school's housekeeping team and provides an extra layer of antiviral protection.

The team of Foggers includes Jack 'The Machine' Hopwood, Gary 'The Legend' Marshall, Mick 'The Bandit' Hagan and Dave 'The Handyman' Matterson.

Mr Richard Blanchard, Estates Manager, said: "Like Ninjas, the Foggers go about their duties often unnoticed. They have been doing an amazing job and we are incredibly grateful for everything they do."

Mr Jeremy Walker, Head Master of St Peter's School, said: "Our

Facilities Assistants are remarkable people and, along with so many others on the support staff, have been working tirelessly to keep everyone safe at St Peter's.

There is a tremendous sense of camaraderie and excellent good humour among them all and I am delighted to pay tribute to our fantastic Foggers!"





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Learning in an outdoor environment

Education thought-leaders have long championed the benefits of learning in an outdoor environment and recent events have only served to bring the notion to a far greater audience. David Attenborough's Blue Planet served as a stark reminder that future generations can act now to make a difference, instilling a respect for outdoors and the natural world. Likewise, the coronavirus pandemic has increased the public's respect for fresh air and time outside, with people spending more time outdoors for both exercising and socialising.

Similarly, the pandemic also raised many questions among educators with regards to space, where schools running with reduced class numbers were forced to generate new 'classrooms' almost overnight. Many schools soon became awash with white plastic tents to provide a safe environment amid the requirement for social distancing. While these filled a need and met a brief, they are a far cry from the desired setting of most independent school, where educators seek to create a suitable environment for education,

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alongside social development and mental wellbeing.

As the nation looks forward to a post-COVID landscape, the general public is looking to spend more time outside, and parents and teachers are no exception to this. Schools nationwide are looking at their footprint and working with specialists to ensure that they maximise year-round use of their outside space. One such firm is Fordingbridge plc; a West Sussex based construction contractor, specialising in canopies and covered walkways. "We have long worked with educators to help them increase the use of their outside space, and it is clear that the situation has hit home for many teachers," explains Fraser Dixon, Business Development Manager at the firm. "Our regular installations cover a multitude of situations, whether it be an enclosed courtyard to create an additional dining space, or covering a MUGA for weather-protected sport, but the need among teachers for taking their lessons outside has been very clear."

"Operating completely in-house, from design through to manufacture and installation, we

work very closely with schools, both directly, and through architects and contractors to deliver our structures. This gives us full scope on the varied requirements of the school community across the UK," Fraser continues. "Enhancing pupil experience by creating a solid and aesthetic learning environment is not simply restrained to the fabric of the building, but rather extended outside. The visual value of our timber and steel canopies are, of course, a supplementary benefit, with the main emphasis on practical performance.

Enhancing school space to provide rain, snow and UV protection are the primary objectives we work to, and this collaborative approach ensures that any project to provide opportunities for outside learning is delivered successfully and within the brief."

Outside learning, be it for sports or academia, is fully obtainable and covers discovery, experimentation, connecting to the natural world and engaging in environmental activities. And with the UK weather, providing an area of cover is certainly a worthy consideration.



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Profile

In conversation with Lisa McDonald

Schools and University Attended:

Craigholme School for Girls,
Glasgow, Aberdeen University
(LLB Hons) and Cambridge
University (PGCE)

First job:

Legal Trainee, Mourant du Feu &
Jeune, Jersey

First management job:

2009 Samares School,
Head of Lower KS2

First job in education:

2004 Teacher, Rouge Bouillon
School, Jersey

Appointed to current job:

September 2020

Favourite piece of music:

90s pop!

Favourite food:

Any type of Italian

Favourite drink:

Champagne

Favourite holiday destination:

Cyprus

Favourite leisure pastime:

Going to the gym/training

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

Line of Duty

Suggested epitaph:

Always be kind

Q Your early teaching experience was eight years in Jersey, a sleepy Channel Island which you then exchanged for the frenetic pace of Manhattan. How did you prepare for such a massive change in lifestyle? Can you pinpoint a couple of aspects which worked out as you expected, and a couple more which most surprised you?

A I actually lived in Jersey for 14 years, 11 of which were spent teaching. As a Glaswegian though, I would class myself as a city girl at heart and there is much about the grit and feistiness of Glasgow that is mirrored in New York. I knew that I would eventually gravitate back to city life and so, although different in many ways, I felt very much at home in Manhattan. It's only really on reflection that I realise what a big move it was. At the time, however, I took it in my stride and settled very quickly both personally and professionally. Having started my legal career in Jersey in a large international law firm, although island life was generally serene, my professional life was probably just as intense as it was in New York.

Life in general in Manhattan was pretty much as I expected, although I don't think I ever came to terms with the bold and assertive way in which New Yorkers approach their daily lives. I am a massive believer in kindness and compassion when dealing with people, and it's what I aim to instil in our pupils, without exception. That wasn't always my experience in New York and, culturally speaking, that probably took me by surprise.

Q The British International School of New York serves a diverse set of pupils from 3 – 16, using the English National Curriculum within the framework of the International Baccalaureate (IB). Can you describe how this twin-track approach works in practice?

A As a British international school, it was important to retain the rigour and structure of the ENC within which outcomes for pupils are ambitious and clear. The IB is a framework that provided scope to incorporate the knowledge and skills of the ENC whilst retaining an innovative and diverse approach to teaching, that ensures that pupils are encouraged to drive their own learning and where critical thinking and problem solving are a fundamental part of the curriculum. The opportunity to develop a global perspective and become more culturally aware are probably two

of the biggest benefits of an IB education, along with the focus on personal development and a very intentional approach to character education.

As educators, we constantly strive to hold in balance the teaching of subject specific knowledge and skills and the development of character attributes that prepare children for life beyond formal education. The IB gives teachers and schools the tools to be able to do that authentically and effectively.

In essence, one is able to achieve all of the learning outcomes of the ENC but they are planned and delivered in a format that encourages pupils to inquire and discuss broader questions that challenge their thinking and enable them to make connections across subjects.

Q Another major upheaval for you last year, swapping the Big Apple for a school set in 48 acres of Hertfordshire countryside, and the responsibilities of prep school headship amid the tribulations of a pandemic. How did your time in the US prepare you for your current job? Did it change your view of the UK's education system?

A It's wonderful to live and work surrounded by fresh air and greenery and it's a change of scene that I am very content with!

I certainly didn't have any idea what lay ahead when I visited Edge Grove in January 2020 post appointment and my first year of headship has certainly presented unforeseen challenges in the current circumstances.

In making the transition from Deputy to Head, you have to consider whether you have the knowledge and experience to assume a completely different professional identity in moving away from the day to day operational aspects of leadership to focus on the broader strategic leadership of the school and business. It's exciting to be able to have reached a point in your career where you can widen your sphere of influence and impact on the whole school community.

At BISNY, I was lucky enough to develop a great working relationship with the Head, Jason Morrow. Jason is former Head of Norwich High School for Girls and is a forward thinking and influential leader. What that relationship has taught me is that the very best leaders coach and develop their staff by leading from the front and by example. Through working with such a brilliant

Lisa McDonald has been head of Edge Grove School, Hertfordshire, since last August. She was previously Deputy Head of the British International School of New York.



mentor and watching and learning how to think strategically and courageously to solve problems and how to lead and manage people with integrity and balance, even in the toughest circumstances, I have been very well equipped to deal with the demands of my first year.

Working in an international school has taught me the importance of cultural awareness and instilling in our children an ability to have a broader perspective on the world they're living in. Above all, it has cemented my belief that a sharp and engaging curriculum, breadth of opportunity for all children at school and a focus on personal development make for a compelling and academically rigorous education and, above all cultivates intellectually curious, well rounded and kind individuals.

Q The well-being and mental health of both pupils and staff have been brought into sharp focus by the pressures of remote schooling. What is your approach to monitoring and intervention?

A *The key for me in terms of wellbeing and personal development is to know the children well and to have the structures and systems in place to set them up for success before issues arise, both at school and during remote learning; being passive isn't an option.*

Our whole school wellbeing programme Flourish, has a weekly focus and challenge, which helps to keep pupil support at the centre of the home learning agenda. Our weekly parent workshops provide advice and family support on a variety of topics.

At Edge Grove, strong relationships exist between the pupils and their class teachers or form tutors. During remote learning, pupils and teachers are regularly interacting in live lessons and each day begins with a morning check-in and pastoral discussion. These regular opportunities to connect are essential for teachers to touch base with pupils and identify any issues that arise.

PSHEE teaching continues weekly for all pupils and our Head of Wellbeing also provides 1:1 and group coaching intervention for any pupils who would benefit.

Q The development of 'character' is one of the cornerstones of your approach to education. What do you mean by this, and how do you achieve it?

A *Education must be about the whole child and we have a responsibility to not only develop our pupils' academic knowledge and skills but to also equip them to face the challenges of the future. There are skills and character attributes that are essential to success in life and opportunities to explore and learn these should permeate school life.*

Children should be taught to be principled, to reflect, to be kind and caring, to be open minded and balanced, but these must be discussed and modelled at school so that pupils begin to act them as well as talk about them.

At Edge Grove, a set of key behaviours for learning are incorporated into school life. By actively teaching the children about these and by using the same language consistently throughout all phases of the school, pupils understand and begin to embody these important traits.

Opportunities for pupil leadership and voice are important for personal development too and help children to develop a sense of agency and responsibility as they move through the school. Helping children to learn through service in the community or by taking action is also a key feature of the Edge Grove Baccalaureate in the Upper School.

For me, education is the whole package; academic ambition and rigour, coupled with breadth of opportunity for strong personal development.

Q The Education Policy Institute researched the qualification-levels of early-years staff in a wide variety of settings in 2018, and found a very mixed picture. Overall qualification levels were found to be disappointingly low, given the importance of Early Years. What is your view on the best way to lift the level of Early Years provision across the country to benchmark standards?

A *I will always say that it is the quality of teaching and not initiatives or programmes that make a difference to outcomes for children.*

It is a truth, (not necessarily universally acknowledged either), that the Early Years curriculum demands highly skilled staff with a strong understanding of child development. Play is young children's work but fostering an Early Years environment where children remain engaged and actively learn through play in the

absence of an adult, is no mean feat. Early Years staff must have an acute understanding, not only of how young children move through the key stages of development, but of how they can tailor their provision to provoke, challenge and extend children through play.

As an Early Years advisory teacher, all too often you come across settings where the continuous provision for play based learning is not designed to challenge children or develop basic maths or literacy skills but rather, it is a series of table top holding activities to keep children occupied until the teacher is available. A deep understanding of how areas for learning aid skill development is crucial. If you were a three year old, would you want to use the sand tray for digging, moulding, developing language through imaginary play with your friends, or would you want to use a sieve to scoop out some plastic letters to make three letter words?

Finland is considered a superpower in early education and, contrary to popular belief, it's not because children don't start formal school until they are seven. It's because Early Years teachers must go through rigorous training to develop a deeper understanding of early childhood development.

Q Growth mindset – the theory that intelligence and learning can be developed and improved – has gained traction in educational circles in recent years. How do you seek to instil such a mindset in your staff and how do you monitor its effect on pupils?

A *I'm glad you asked that question because I don't have an answer! Firstly, you have to believe in the theory of a growth mindset and you have to have one yourself! The hardest thing in terms of staff training is coaching staff out of using language like 'low ability' or 'weak' and that's very difficult to do because we ourselves have grown up to be taught that 'we were no good at Maths at school' or we 'weren't sporty'. If that has been your own school experience, then the likelihood is that you will impart that to the pupils that you teach.*

I often hear teachers say, 'I teach the low ability set but the children don't know that.' My response to that is, of course they do! If you are approaching a group of children that you know as 'low ability' then it is very hard for that not to have an impact on your ambition for them.

Continued >

Profile In conversation with Lisa McDonald (continued)

My point is, because many teachers unwittingly work with a fixed mindset themselves, the key to change has to start by unpicking that and finding ways to alter the language that we use. Fundamental to it all is a genuine belief that all children are capable of achieving great things.

Q You were educated at Craigholme School for Girls in Glasgow, now part of Kelvinside Academy. Did you keep up with your old school as an alumnus, and, if so, in what way? How can schools best encourage their former pupils to make a contribution, whether financial or otherwise?

A *I was incredibly disappointed to hear that Craigholme was closing its doors as a standalone school. I had a very rich and happy school experience and I know that my education there from the age of eight was instrumental in setting me up for future success. It's probably why I believe that*

character education and personal development are lynchpins of a good education.

I am still in touch with my former Headmistress and Head of Junior School via social media and there is also a former pupil group which enables us to reminisce and share news.

Keeping in touch with former pupils is a really important part of school life and at Edge Grove our Development Manager works tirelessly to make connections and keep in touch with alumni. I recently had a wonderful online vintage tea party with some former pupils from the 1940s and 50s. It's such a delightful way to retain the school's heritage by connecting former and current pupils. We all lead such busy lives but being proactive in engagement with them is so worthwhile.

Q Who or what inspired you to become a teacher? If you hadn't gone into education, what else would you have chosen to do?

A *I have always wanted to teach as far back as I care to remember and I would always call myself a teacher first and foremost – not a Head or a manager or anything else. I wouldn't say anyone in particular inspired me to become a teacher but that it was just a calling really.*

When I went to university I didn't think I was good enough to become a teacher and so I did a law degree and began training as a Jersey Advocate. Even throughout my first degree I voluntarily went to a primary school every week to help out and I also did weekly voluntary work with a little boy who was severely autistic and needed structured play sessions in a sensory environment.

If I hadn't plucked up the courage to leave the law behind and pursue the PGCE I probably would have remained an offshore litigation lawyer. I may have been richer in material terms but a lot less so in terms of career satisfaction!

Mars competition win

Robotics – talents of the future

The second year of the popular School Robot Competition challenged teams of UK school children to design a robot to explore the surface of Mars using their innovating augmented reality app. Team 'OM2020' from Bede's Prep School in East Sussex won two LEGO EV3 systems and a robot masterclass for their performance in the terrain challenge. Peter Barclay, Head of Computing at the school, tells the story...



I recall the joy of playing with Transformers toys as a child, and imagining man and machine coexisting. Fast forward and the future where robots are among us is gradually becoming a reality. Perseverance has landed on Mars and robots are now supporting many industries; you can even purchase a robotic vacuum cleaner from a high-street store!

During the summer term of 2020, with the country in lockdown and schools closed, we delivered a remote learning programme at Bede's Prep that encouraged pupils to take an interest in robotic design. The School Robot Competition, run by Twinkl and the UK Robotics and Autonomous Systems Network (RAS*) was active at the time and gave an opportunity to test pupils' engineering potential.

Here, there came the chance to learn about the work of scientists

controlling semi-autonomous robots on the surface of other worlds. After exploring the tools for creating robot designs, by choosing the most efficient combination of components from a selection of wheels, motors, sensors and other parts, pupils programmed and tested their designs in a simulated Martian environment. The reality of sending a machine so far away and the cost of tiny mistakes became apparent, but the ability to reset and try again kept the pupils motivated. The news of NASA's successful Mars landing has caused great excitement and Year 8 pupils have volunteered to join the remote soil analysis team for the rover!

Two of our pupils designed rovers that caught the eyes of competition judges from robotic research institutions. The school subsequently won a tour of a research lab, which we look forward to undertaking when circumstances permit. The school was also

awarded robotics kits, which will continue to help our pupils explore this discipline. One of the pupils went on to submit his robot design as part of a Design and Technology scholarship application.

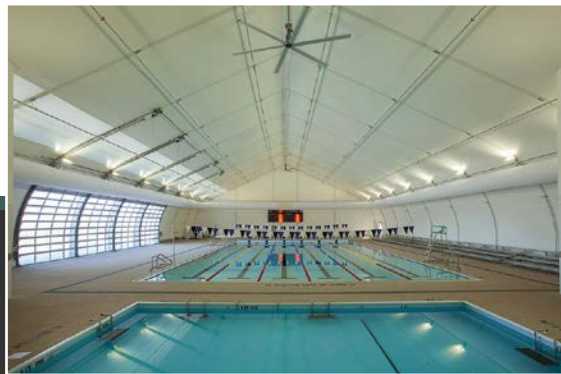
As a matter of course, pupils study control systems in their Computing lessons and the topic is constantly evolving; robotics has become a significant focus within it. Organisations such as Boston Dynamics continue to develop robotic solutions that combine engineering and computational thinking, and whose advances inspire our young learners to imagine their potential future world. In our lessons now, we look at the Atlas® range of humanoid robots; this amalgamation of electricity and hydraulics can run, jump, and perform manoeuvres that match or exceed what the human body is capable of. The introduction of Lego WeDo has enabled broad and creative access

to all pupils. Those pupils arguing against the robot revolution cite how robots may take employment opportunities away from people and emphasize the concerns of machines becoming intelligent. This triggers one of the most interesting discussions; current machines are not capable of feeling emotion – is this a good or a bad thing? We find pupils are fascinated by such ethical debates.

Bede's pupils continue to be keen to learn more about robotics, and will often ask to discuss the latest developments of Boston Dynamics. As we continue to prepare pupils for jobs that might not yet exist, I believe many individuals have been inspired to take forward their interest and pursue further study in this area, and into the related field of artificial intelligence. One day, the pupils might have influence within these disciplines that impacts us all.

* UK Robotics and Autonomous Systems (RAS) Network was established in March 2015 with the mission to provide academic leadership in RAS, expand collaboration with industry and integrate and coordinate activities at eight Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) funded RAS capital facilities, four Centres of Doctoral Training (CDTs) and with, currently, 30 partner universities across the UK. The UK Government identified RAS as one of the Eight Great Technologies that will play a significant role to improved international competitiveness, productivity and economic growth.

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Flexible Building Design for Changing Environments

By Robert McKinley, BB&C Architects Limited

Over the past year we have been living in unprecedented times, which have brought substantial changes to the ways we work, educate and live. The enforced need for flexibility has brought many challenges, but also opportunities to revisit the status quo and reflect on better ways of doing things.

As we move into a post-Covid world, this article reflects on ideas for how to design flexibility into school buildings without compromising the quality of the experience for pupils and teachers. The specific pressures of the pandemic will hopefully soon be behind us, but the opportunities for good flexible design will remain.

Design Considerations for Great Flexible Spaces

At the heart of a great space is the need for it to function correctly. It does not matter how nice it looks, great the view nor how sophisticated the equipment within, if the space cannot be easily used for its purpose. It is important to define right at the start of a building project how you want it to work. But how does this fit with the idea of flexibility? By considering all the potential requirements as a whole, your designers can then coordinate these and make sure that even the most demanding requirements are met.

For instance, a music practice room will need better acoustics than a meeting room, but often the cost of integrating these higher requirements into the building fabric is minimal if done as part of the main project work. For next to no extra cost, you now have a meeting room that can also be used for music practice, because flexibility was considered early on.

Equally important is the relationship between neighbouring spaces. By widening a narrow circulation corridor, a space for art display or small group work is created from almost nothing.

Moveable partitions, which allow spaces to be divided or opened up, can also be a great asset to maximise flexibility. Of course, for any space to increase in size its neighbour has to reduce, so coordination of adjacent functions is key. Remember that moving partitions take time and people to adjust; careful consideration is required to avoid the partition becoming just an expensive wall.

Small details can affect how flexible a space can be. Chairs and tables that stack efficiently will allow a classroom to become a large clear space without having to have the items transported and stored elsewhere.

Our school clients have commented on the challenge of funding administration facilities, particularly when seen as at the expense of money for teaching spaces. The potential for homeworking to continue may encourage the flexible design solutions that could be used for administration or teaching. Perhaps there is even an opportunity for a more permanent repurposing, releasing existing admin building stock for teaching or front of house functions.

At the other end of the scale, having a school-wide building masterplan can be a great tool for efficient and flexible use of the building stock. The masterplan

is a living document that gives a valuable oversight of functions and interrelations. It often highlights inefficiencies of use that are not obvious 'on the ground', and allows for strategic decisions to be quickly modelled, tested and implemented. This minimises temporary, short-term and abortive works in favour of long-term adaptability to suit ever changing demands and needs.

Replacing and Enhancing: Great Hall, The Leys School

Our brief was to replace this secondary school's existing theatre with a much larger performing arts centre incorporating a second studio theatre, drama teaching department, dance studio and an extension to the adjacent science block adding three new labs. This required efficient spatial planning, fitting nearly three and half times the amount of usable floor area into a building footprint only 1.75 times bigger than the original.

Even with this increase in spatial efficiency, the brief necessitated multi-use and flexibility. Most significantly for the main theatre space to move from whole school assemblies of over 600 to full performance mode with moveable raked seating relocated to give 330 fully tiered seats in the stalls and balcony. Closing an acoustic screen creates space for an enlarged foyer and the adjacent student coffee shop is transformed into



a box office and bar. The foyer space can also function as separate teaching or meeting space during the day.

Elsewhere in the building circulation space is enlarged and arranged to become lesson breakout space, the circle foyer space doubles up as an art gallery and the science labs are laid out to allow a seamless transition from practical to theory teaching spaces.

Making Something out of Nothing: STEAM Hub, St Faith's School

Instead of constructing a completely brand new building, our design solution repurposed a largely unused gap between the existing science, technology and art (the A in STEAM) departments.

At its simplest, the project added a glazed roof to this void and enclosed it at either end, creating an internal atrium space that can be used for gathering, teaching and social functions.

The classrooms are accessed direct from the atrium, enabling the existing internal corridors to be absorbed into the class spaces and further increasing the space available for teaching. Lessons can spill out into this huge volume; great for expansive science experiments and technology projects.

Both case studies demonstrate the value of allowing time for reflection on building functions to maximise the potential to deliver high quality, flexible and hard-working spaces to enable your teachers and pupils to flourish.



Great Hall, The Leys School

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Merger announced

Charterhouse and Edgeborough School, Surrey, have announced that Edgeborough will join the Charterhouse family in September 2021 as the two charities merge to create a co-educational prep and senior school offer.



Welcoming Edgeborough into the family, Dr Alex Peterken, Headmaster of Charterhouse said:

“Under the leadership of Dan Thornburn, Edgeborough is enjoying significant success and momentum, with record pupil numbers and growing interest in admissions. At the same time, Charterhouse is currently undergoing the most exciting transformation you will find in any independent school in the country, and we are delighted that Edgeborough can be part of that journey.

“For parents seeking a joined-up prep and senior school education for their child, we believe our offer will be exceptional; rooted in an academic yet all-round curriculum, with a real breadth of choice and

delivered in beautiful, inspiring grounds and facilities.”



Dan Thornburn, Headmaster of Edgeborough, said:

“This merger will see Edgeborough

joining with one of the foremost senior schools in the country, with the overriding aim of providing a truly exceptional educational offering, unparalleled both in the local area and beyond. Building on the excellent all-round education on offer at each school, coming together will further enrich the experience for all pupils.

“I am proud of everything we have achieved at Edgeborough in recent years, and this exciting development will now help inject further energy, immense educational history and additional expertise into our onward journey. It is the most wonderful opportunity for Edgeborough to move onwards to the next level.”

Whilst a steady stream of Edgeborough pupils already move



to Charterhouse at thirteen and thrive there, there will be no expectation following the merger that an Edgeborough pupil will join Charterhouse, and those wishing to apply will participate in the usual admissions process, just like any other applicant. Similarly, Charterhouse will continue to recruit pupils from the same wide range of schools as today.

A single Governing Body will have responsibility for both schools, with three current Edgeborough Governors joining that body. Dan Thornburn will remain as Headmaster of Edgeborough, and Alex Peterken will continue to be Headmaster of Charterhouse with overall executive responsibility for both schools. Both schools will retain their current identity, name, ethos, values, badge and uniform, as well as their day-to-day operational autonomy.

The merger will take effect from the start of the 2021/2022 academic year.

Founded in 1611, Charterhouse moved from London to its current 250-acre site in Godalming, Surrey in 1872. The Charterhouse curriculum follows the normal path to (I)GCSEs in Year 11, followed by a choice of A Levels, an EPQ and a choice of elective subjects or the IB Diploma Programme in the Sixth Form. Girls first joined Charterhouse in the Sixth Form in 1971, and the School welcomes the first Year 9 girls in September 2021.

Founded in 1906, Edgeborough has been at its Frensham Place home since 1939. Current pupils number 355. (Edgeborough's key entry points are at Nursery, Pre-Prep and Year 3). It has been coeducational since 1992.

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Valentine's initiative raises funds for orphanage

An initiative launched by musicians at King's Ely to spread love and positivity during lockdown has raised more than £1,400 for an orphanage in India.

King's Ely's award-winning boys' a cappella group, The King's Barbers, shine all year round, however Valentine's Day and the month of February is a particular highlight for them, as they spread cheer around school by singing to people in return for small donations, raising hundreds of pounds for good causes.

This year, due to the current circumstances, the Barbers sadly were not able to serenade members of the King's Ely community

in person. Determined to still celebrate the month of romance and to raise funds for their linked charity, the Bethesda Life Centre Boys' Orphanage in Goa, the boys decided to sing to people virtually instead and the 'Barbers' Valentine's eCard' was launched.

The Barbers united virtually to create audio and video to accompany a wonderful arrangement of John Legend's 'All of Me' by Year 13 Barber, Jamie Layfield. People were then able to send the video via the eCard to someone they love or care for around Valentine's Day in return for a minimum £2 donation. The initiative was hugely popular, attracting attention from as far



as California! To date, it has raised more than £1,400 for the orphanage.

Peter North, Founder and Director of The King's Barbers and Head of Vocal Studies at King's Ely, said: "There is no doubt that the Barbers' Valentine's celebrations this year exceeded our expectations by a long way! We had set ourselves a target of raising £500 for the orphanage but at the final tally we will be able to transfer over £1,400 with gift aid. This is an amazing amount and the Barbers would like to thank everyone who contributed so generously. My thanks go also to the Barbers themselves, who

helped create the video that we included in the eCard. This was a joint effort with many boys contributing both audio and video for the brilliant arrangement that Jamie Layfield made of 'All of Me.' Throughout this strange time it has been important to me that we have tried to create opportunity out of adversity and I am really proud of what we have achieved together." The Barbers, who were recently crowned National Youth a Cappella Champions, have been supporting the Bethesda Life Centre since 2019 after they visited the charity's orphanage for boys during their tour to India that year.



Pictured: The King's Barbers pre-lockdown and online

'Lockdown: The Musical'

Students at Brentwood School, Essex, have come together to create an ambitious and unique pandemic production. 'Lockdown: The Musical' is a never-been-done-before project written entirely in lockdown by two teachers at the school - and performed entirely by students in lockdown.

'Lockdown: The Musical' celebrates the story of Neo and Chloe, a young couple forced apart as a result of the national lockdown as teenagers everywhere navigate a new world full of challenges. Being a teenager in lockdown has not been easy for many students, especially when the government has banned kissing! However, as hard it may be, the teens know

that deep down the rules need to be followed. 'Lockdown: The Musical' is a seven song, 40-minute-long lighthearted insight into a teenage perspective of Covid-19 and reminds us that, although we can't be in the same room, we can still make special memories together.

This latest and most ambitious project from Brentwood School has been created by Matthew Bulmer, the Director of Performing Arts, and Florian Cooper, Director of Music. It is performed by eight members of the school's Upper Sixth who were unable to perform in the annual School Musical in December, which was cancelled as a result of the global pandemic. The impressive project was

produced and performed in just six weeks entirely under lockdown restrictions.

Mr Bulmer said: 'We all felt upset for our Upper Sixth students when the Winter Musical was cancelled this year. It is the highlight of many of our students' seven-year stint at the school - especially those who have given everything to the Performing Arts during that time. Mr Cooper and I made the decision to write something special for these dedicated and talented individuals in January and a few weeks later here we are.'

The Brentwood School Performing Arts Faculty has been a national leader in lockdown with well over 70,000 international YouTube views, more than 5000 individual online performance submissions

and over 100 virtually staged events. Highlights have included a Les Misérables Spoof video, weekly chamber concerts, full choral evensong, a 180-student production of Bugsy Malone and the school won the 2020 Shakespeare Schools Festival.



Pictured: Could it be Boris in 'Lockdown - the Musical'?

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLkVH0QMpBHwuP1YMCq2Q0uKz21eYWsUSBS>

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Drama thrives through pandemic

Drama at Dauntsey's School, Wiltshire, continued to thrive in spite of the restrictions imposed by the Covid 19 pandemic. The School's Drama department found creative ways of continuing to involve pupils in Drama, whether they were at home due to lockdown, or in school with social distancing measures in place. Last term, when pupils and staff were in school, Dauntsey's staged its first socially distanced drama production, *Chatroom*, a play by Enda Walsh. A powerful depiction of modern-day isolation and the power of technology, the plot depicts five young people who meet on the internet and encourage each other's bad behaviour. The cast required was small, enabling social distancing on-stage, while a team of pupils from Second Form through to the Upper Sixth were responsible for stage design, lighting and sound. Casting two 'bubbles' meant that

pupils had to be socially distanced at all times, while the audience configuration had to ensure seating was 'bubbled' by year group and by House. In spite of several rehearsals being conducted via Microsoft Teams, the end result saw the cast cultivate relatable and three-dimensional characters, each of them learning a large number of lines in a short timescale. Following this success, the Drama Department released its first binaural audio performance entitled *The Crossing*. Binaural is a method of recording sound that uses two microphones, arranged to create a three-dimensional stereo sound sensation of actually being in the room with the performers. The production was devised and produced by twenty Sixth Formers, in response to a true story about human trafficking. *The Crossing* was created whilst adhering to social distancing guidelines. As a means of extending its drama



offering, Dauntsey's has launched LAMDA (London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts) and more than 40 pupils have opted for on-line lessons with first examinations scheduled for the Summer. Chris Walker, Head of Drama, Dauntsey's said: "The performing arts are part of the fabric of life at Dauntsey's and we have all

missed being able to run our usual programme of creating and performing Drama through the pandemic. Pupils and staff have been committed to delivering performances, in spite of the many obstacles we face and I am immensely proud of the two productions we have pulled together under very difficult circumstances".

Livestream dance and drama lessons



During the lockdown, the Downe House, Berkshire, Drama and Dance Department livestreamed dance lessons and recorded drama lessons for both Infant and Junior pupils at prep schools and local primary schools. In the first week, over 110 boys and girls from seven local primary schools and fifteen prep schools across the UK joined the livestreamed lessons. The dance lessons were taught by Miss Olivia Ward, pictured, the Head of Extra Curricular Dance who said, 'I am absolutely delighted to be running such an exciting outreach opportunity for so many children who may not currently be able to access extra-curricular

dance lessons. Each workshop is designed to get everyone dancing along to fun, upbeat music from the comfort of their own homes. Parents, guardians and siblings are also encouraged to join in, so the workshops can also act as a fun family activity which everyone can participate in!' On the drama front, the Drama Scholars at Downe House created a series of four pre-recorded Drama lessons, two for the Infant age group and two for Juniors. If any primary or prep schools would like to join in the Dance and Drama programme for the second half of term, please email boxoffice@downehouse.net

30th virtual music concert

St Peter's 8-13, Yorkshire celebrated their 30th Virtualosity Concert recently. The Virtualosity concert series was first launched in March 2020, to give pupils at St Peter's 8-13 the opportunity to perform in front of an audience at home. The concerts proved so popular that they continued in the autumn term and have become a weekly highlight for pupils and parents. The concerts are streamed via Zoom every Friday lunchtime, and since the concert series began there have been 359 solos, 175 different pupil soloists, 10 staff solos, 18 different instruments, 7 parent appearances, 117 performers in ensembles and 18 ensembles. 750 minutes of live music have been performed over Zoom or sent out on YouTube, with a combined total of 1,687 YouTube views. Holly Craven, Director of Music at St Peter's 8-13, said: "When the first lockdown was announced, it seemed vital to us to provide something that allowed live performances, but

also (perhaps more importantly) a way for members of the wider school community to come together. "Each week we see staff, parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles 'zooming' in, and it is so wonderful to think that for those 30 minutes, the miles disappear, and we are attending a concert together. My thanks to our amazing team of instrumental and vocal teachers and to the children for concerts that have been jam packed with enthusiastic, talented, expressive music." Andy Falconer, Head of St Peter's 8-13, said: "It's hard to believe that Mrs Craven came up with this idea at the start of the first lockdown, and here we are 359 performances later! I've been astounded at the way the musical life of the school has managed to continue both remotely and also last term within year group bubbles. This has allowed the children the opportunity to continue playing in ensembles as well as performing in front of friends, family and staff."

Competition launches to showcase young people's art to world leaders at COP26 – still time to enter!

An art competition for young people across the UK has launched, with the winners having their artwork displayed at the COP26 Climate Change conference this year in Glasgow.

The Creative Earth competition is part of a UK Government initiative, Together for our Planet,

and launched in collaboration with the WWF to encourage young people to use the power of art to capture their hopes and dreams for the planet in the future.

Creative Earth artwork entries will be judged by a celebrity panel and COP26 President Alok

Sharma in Spring 2021. Special prizes will be awarded for the best artwork in each age group 8 years and under; 9-12 years; 13-16 years. Judges will also select the best pieces to be displayed at the COP26 summit in November this year.

Alok Sharma, COP26 President said: "Across the world, young people are leading the call for climate action and we want to make sure this is properly recognised at COP26 in Glasgow. That is why I hope young people from across the country will seize this opportunity to showcase their vision for a greener future."

The Together For Our Planet campaign aims to work with businesses, civil society groups, schools and the public across the UK to help build awareness around the importance of tackling climate change in the run up to the COP26.

How To Take Part

- To enter the Creative Earth competition, visit the competition website to download the circle template.
- Entrants can use the template in whatever way they choose; either print the template out and draw directly onto it, use computer software to create a graphic or draw the circle onto an A4 sheet of paper.
- Whether it is green forests and garden cities, clear skies and wind turbines, or oceans teeming with life, children are being invited to paint, draw or design a piece of art that depicts how they would like our planet to look in the future.
- All entries must be submitted, along with a completed entry form and a competition form signed by a parent or guardian, before 11.50pm on Monday 5th April 2021.



<https://together-for-our-planet.ukcop26.org/creative-earth>



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BUILDING WORKS IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

Building works at school premises can take on many forms, from maintenance and refurbishment of buildings to extensions and new buildings. The maintenance works and some refurbishment works may be carried out by inhouse teams, whereas with extensions and new builds, most schools will employ contractors to complete them.

With works being carried out on site there is an increased risk of damage to property or injury to persons and you have duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure a safe working environment. You also have responsibilities under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015).

Risk assessments and sharing information

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 reinforce the 1974 Act and places explicit responsibilities on employers; the main duty being to undertake risk assessments to identify potential hazards to employee health and safety and anyone who may be affected by their work activity.

Employees, including temporary employees and contractors, must be provided with all necessary safety information in an understandable format. Where employers are sharing premises with another employer, such as when contractors are on site, it is necessary for the employers to co-operate and co-ordinate health and safety activities. The risk assessments and preventative measures should be shared and agreed between the employers.

For schools, it is important that safeguarding risk assessments are included. The safeguarding measures likely to be considered will include the following:

- **Segregate** – to avoid contact between contractors and pupils
- **Supervise** – to supervise any contact that does take place with a member of staff or a suitably vetted volunteer
- **Code of conduct** – to require contractors to observe a code of conduct
- **Regulate Access** – to regulate access to the premises
- **Checks** – to undertake checks where appropriate

Fire risks

Fire risks are significantly increased when hot works are undertaken and so these works need particular scrutiny. Hot works can involve several activities such as plumbing with the use of heat guns and blow torches, roofing activities using torches and bitumen burners, and grinding and cutting processes or use of flame cutting tools.

Under section 2 and 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 controlling the hot works activity is not for the contractor alone, as the responsibility is shared by the school.

At the very least, all schools should have in place a hot works permit system. This document will ensure that contractors (or your inhouse maintenance team) obtain permission from an authorised person before starting work and fire prevention precautions are taken.

Building Works Contracts

The JCT Minor Building Works Contract is often used as the basis of the agreement between the school and the building contractor for smaller works. Although the JCT do not set a limit, the works are typically less than £500,000. The 2016 agreement is the latest issue. The agreement includes reference to insurance, and it is important to check who is responsible for the insurances for the property whilst under construction. In addition, who is responsible for insuring the existing structure, if the works are an extension or refurbishment programme. The clauses are:

- **Clause 5.4A** – Works insurance by Contractor in Joint Names
- **Clause 5.4B** – Works and existing structures insurance by Employer in Joint Names
- **Clause 5.4C** – Works and existing structures insurance by other means

For larger works the JCT Intermediate or JCT standard Building Contracts may be used or the JCT Design and Build Contract. These all include insurance provisions, and it is wise to seek your broker's input regarding the insurances you require.

Joint Code of Practice

The Joint Code of Practice on the protection from Fire on Construction Sites and Buildings Undergoing Renovation was first introduced in 1992 and is now in its ninth addition (2015). As its name suggests, the objective of the Code is the prevention of fire on construction sites. The code covers activities carried out prior to and during the procurement, construction, and design process.

For large projects that exceed £2.5m compliance with the joint code of practice is a requirement of insurance companies. In circumstances where fire risk is considered high, this threshold can be reduced.

Useful link

HSE explanation of responsibilities under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015):

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm/2015/commercial-clients.htm>



Have you considered a modular eco-building to add facilities at your school?

TG Escapes bespoke timber framed buildings are used for a myriad of purposes including canteens, offices, sports facilities, studios and chapels, as well as classrooms and early years provision.

They range in size from single room buildings up to two story multi classroom blocks accommodating hundreds of students. The buildings include:

- Best in class active ventilation to maintain healthy air circulation
- Energy efficient technology to reduce running costs
- Biophilic design connecting to nature for improved well-being
- Offsite construction minimising disruption cost and risk
- Tree planting program engaging students in sustainability

“Working with TG Escapes was a very positive experience.”

David Leen, Bursar
Holy Cross Prep School

Each building is a bespoke design by Metropolis Architects completed in a variety of finishes including timber, composite cladding or render in a range of colours, and brick slips. The fast modular process uses offsite construction to minimise time and disruption on site, ensuring educational continuity and cost certainty. Smaller buildings can be completed on site in as little as 6 weeks and larger buildings can cost just £1500 per m².

Every project starts with a FREE site visit and building design. The

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service is turnkey which means one all-inclusive price including:

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Energy-efficient technology can deliver a building that is net-zero in operation. Solar energy, sun pipes living roofs and smart lighting are available.

The eco-friendly designs enhance well-being by following biophilic design principles:

- incorporate natural elements
- provide easy access to the outdoors
- use materials and textures that reflect those in nature
- maximise penetration of, and exposure to natural light
- provide a healthy level of interior air quality
- provide views of the natural world outside

“The facility is a vast improvement on our previous canteen and also the space can be used outside service times.”

Matt Devereux, Facilities Manager
St Bernard’s School

TG Escapes also plant trees on behalf of school customers. The project has three aims:



- To engage students in the challenges facing the planet and increase their awareness of the need for sustainable living
- To help support schools in their Rights Respecting Schools agenda by supporting farmers and their families in Uganda
- To offset a proportion of a school’s carbon emissions - each tree will absorb 250Kg of CO₂ over its lifetime

Each tree that is planted under the EcoMatcher scheme is recorded by an app which logs the location

and date of planting and includes a picture of both the tree and the farmer taking care of it. Students will be able to virtually travel to their trees using Treetracker, an app and web application utilising amazing satellite maps, allowing them to see the trees and even ‘chat’ to them.

TG Escapes have built over 700 Eco Buildings in 12 years, are members of Construction Line Gold, partners with the Institute of School Business Leadership, and customers score 4.9 out of 5, based on 154 reviews.



Are independent schools managing their risks effectively?

Faith Kitchen - Heritage & Education Director at Ecclesiastical Insurance discusses the challenges educational establishments face when managing their risks.

The education sector is constantly under strain from new challenges and threats which go beyond just managing the day-to-day running of an educational establishment. Protecting property, assets, staff and students is key to providing education for students. Preserving reputation, protecting staff and students from cyber threats and managing their mental health and wellbeing is essential for longevity.

With so many risks, how does an educational establishment protect themselves?

The risk landscape is constantly changing especially with the impact of COVID-19 which has turned the education sector upside down. So it is vital to keep up-to-date with

the potential impact of all types of risk, at all levels, so educational establishments can manage their risks. But trying to find resources and tools can be both challenging and time consuming.

So at Ecclesiastical we have created the Hub for Education, an online resource that places our risk expertise and key risk information all in one place, and where independent schools can access relevant and reliable risk guidance.

As one of the leading insurers of schools in the UK¹ our commitment to support schools with insurance solutions spans more than 65 years. We understand the challenges independent schools find themselves in when trying to identify, mitigate and manage their risks.

In 2020, Ecclesiastical worked with independent and state schools as part of a panel to help create the Education Risk Barometer. This report highlighted that 79 percent of teachers agree that risk management is key to creating a safe environment².

Explore the Hub for Education to identify and manage both strategic and operational risks to build resilience today and prepare for the challenges of tomorrow. The hub provides risk guidance, insights and self-assessment tools along with guidance and templates to help manage risks at a strategic level.

To join the Hub visit: www.ecclesiastical.com/ISM to sign-up, or contact your broker.



1. Named by brokers as the best provider of insurance for Charities, Education and Commercial Heritage for the last 13 years running. Ecclesiastical FWD broker opinion surveys 2007 to 2020.
2. Ecclesiastical Education Risk Barometer 2020

Prep school expands to GCSE

Copthorne Prep School, Sussex – featured in recent snow as the background cover image on this issue – has announced that pupils starting Year 7 in September 2021 will have the chance to be the school's first-ever GCSE students in its 120-year history.

Currently a Nursery, Pre-Prep and Prep school for children from 2-13, Copthorne will expand year on year from September to offer an all-through education right up to Year 11. Copthorne's first GCSE exams will be in 2026.

Headmaster Chris Jones, pictured, said: "Copthorne is a school which prides itself on developing pupils' confidence, providing opportunity and realising pupils' potential. We are also a school that has continually adapted throughout our 120-year history to meet the changing needs of our parents.

"What parents tell us they need now is a quality, senior school alternative if moving on to one of the increasingly academically selective independent schools is not right for their child. As much as we celebrate the 50% of our pupils who move on with scholarships to these schools, we know that our other pupils have just as much potential to succeed given the right environment.

"By expanding our provision to offer GCSEs, Copthorne Senior School will provide an ambitious environment for pupils to move on to from our prep school, or into from other local primary schools. We are fortunate that most of our Department Heads are already secondary-school trained and have experience teaching up to GCSE level.

When they leave us at 16, pupils

will have an excellent set of qualifications that reflect their hard work. They will also have benefited from a wide range of other opportunities to develop their skills, talents and interests in a nurturing environment where their physical and mental wellbeing is as important as their academic results."

Copthorne Senior School will offer small class sizes, of no more than 20 pupils, where every pupil is well-known, supported and catered for. There will be a maximum of 200 pupils in the senior school at capacity.

Children currently in Year 6 who remain at Copthorne in September 2021 will have the choice to stay at Copthorne until Year 11, or will be supported for 13+ entry to other senior schools if that is their aim. From 2022, it is likely that



children who wish to join other independent schools will leave Copthorne at 11+, and those who remain will stay and take their GCSEs at Copthorne.

Senior school places for external candidates will be offered after a combination of formal assessment, interviews and groupwork with an emphasis on the potential of the whole child.

'Motivating young people to engage more regularly with acts of responsibility, kindness and community can foster a stronger sense of self-leadership'

Pupils as leaders - It is not all about wearing a badge

How can we help our youth to develop their leadership skills and behaviours? When pupils are given leadership roles in school they mature quicker. Yet, pupils perceive leadership as a relational process rather than solely involving someone in a formal badge-wearing position. To explore pupil leadership perceptions and its relationship to wellbeing and hope, sense of school membership and academic self-regulation, a research study was conducted at Sevenoaks School by Dr. Ceri Sims (Chartered Psychologist, Buckinghamshire New University) and Paul Thompson (Head of Geography, Sevenoaks School, Kent - pictured). The survey was completed by just under 250 pupils.



The key expectations were that higher levels of perceived leadership would predict a higher sense of belonging and internal self-regulation, which in turn predict higher levels of both hope and student wellbeing.

The results showed that experiencing formal leadership positions was associated with having more leadership identity and responsibility, as well as a stronger sense of school membership. However, of particular interest is that students who regarded themselves as someone who shows informal leadership behaviours, such as community service, mentoring, helping others and involvement in organising school events or activities, also had higher leadership identity, responsibility perceptions and an increased sense of school belonging. In fact, seeing oneself as a leader through everyday informal behaviours was more important than wearing a badge when it came to

feeling hopeful about the future.

Only those with higher formal leadership self-perceptions reported having higher levels of hope. The hope scale measured Snyder's hope theory (Snyder et al., 1991), whereby having high hope involves setting more goals, developing pathways to achieve them and having agency self-beliefs to motivate them to use those strategies to reach their goals.

Furthermore, leadership identity, perceived school membership, academic self-regulation and hope all predicted students' wellbeing. A high level of hope bears a strong relationship to wellbeing. Thus, encouraging pupils to develop their informal leadership identities and behaviours may be a key ingredient for increasing hope and improving wellbeing in young people at school. The findings suggest that formal roles might not be the key driver for student leadership and that building a leadership identity through

informal leadership behaviours may be just as important, if not more so, as being selected to wear a badge. Encouraging pupils to develop their goals and supporting them to develop strategies, the willpower and the confidence to achieve them could provide another route.

Motivating young people to engage more regularly with acts of responsibility, kindness and community can foster a stronger sense of self-leadership. Students with high hope typically are more optimistic, they focus on success rather than failure when pursuing goals and they perceive themselves as capable of solving problems and tend to experience more purpose in life. Moreover, secondary schools can find ways, perhaps through PSHE classes, to communicate the message that leadership is in everyone, by making use of everyday opportunities and informal leadership experiences.

This research has been published in *Innovate: Journal of the Institute of Teaching and Learning* (November 2020) and is accepted as a presentation at the European Congress of Positive Psychology taking place in Iceland in 2022.

The longer-term aim is to promote the understanding of these links between leadership self-beliefs, providing opportunities for everyday leadership and the important role this has for student wellbeing – pupils seeing themselves as independent self-regulators as well as connected to a bigger community within the school.

Moreover, if we can harness students' hope for the future, they are prepared to handle the many challenges and obstacles that life will throw at them and thus will more confidently continue to pursue their goals and ambitions in life.

More information on this study can be found in *Innovate*, the annual academic journal from the Institute for Teaching and Learning: www.sevenoaksschool.org/teachinglearning/research/innovate



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Game on

Investment in state-of-the-art tensioned membrane buildings has put the leading independent school, Millfield, at the forefront of school cricket and golf facilities.

Millfield School is the first school in the UK to install not one, but two ground-breaking tensioned membrane buildings from Paragon Structures, specialist providers to the sport and education sectors.

“When your school’s mission is to be a world leader for the development of children and offer them outstanding sporting opportunities, you need to take a step into the unknown and challenge what’s gone before. It was a gamble that’s certainly paid off,” says Neil Chapillon, Head of Estates at Millfield School.

The award-winning golf and cricket structures have been endorsed by leading cricket and golfing figures, including David Graveney MBE (former England Chairman of Selectors and current ECB National Performance Manager) and Sophie Keech (Women’s Professional Golfer), and facilitate year-round practice for pupils and the wider sporting community, including the English Cricket Board for its coaching and umpire courses.

Using patented technology, Paragon’s insulated tensioned membrane buildings are a viable solution for schools looking for a sustainable and cost-effective sports facility. The structures are significantly quicker to construct

than traditional sports buildings – both Millfield projects completed within just seven months – and considerably more cost-effective too, with up to 40 per cent cheaper capital costs.

With vast clear-span interiors, generous roof heights and translucent daylight panels that flood the space with natural light, they provide the ideal playing environment for both training and competitions.

The new Millfield Indoor Cricket Centre features PitchVision technology on three lanes, a 4G fielding area, three adaptable bowling and batting surfaces, as well as five nets and an expansive 22-metre run-up.

The John Graveney Golf Centre includes six practice bays with the opportunity to hit balls from the inside to outside. A further six practice bays, an 81sq m Huxley putting green and the use of the GC Quad Ball Monitor, allow players to have feedback on all shots, including putting.

Entirely bespoke, the sports buildings are made with environmentally-friendly materials including an aluminium frame, which is 100% recyclable. They use low carbon footprint materials

compared to steel or brick buildings, minimise waste to landfill due to reduced foundations and prefabrication, and result in low construction site traffic. They have also achieved a BREEAM rating of Excellent.

Meanwhile, superior insulation combined with the airtightness of the membrane design, which

is 10 times better than building regulations limits, create highly thermally efficient buildings to significantly reduce running costs.

“Paragon Structures has taken our golf and cricket facilities to the next level. I’m blown away by the results. Compared to traditional constructions, Paragon’s sprung structure solution was unbeatable; we essentially ended up with two new buildings for the price of one traditionally-built, all delivered in just seven months from start to finish,” says Chapillon.



Striking new build for 200-year-old school

Modular construction specialist Darwin Group has delivered a new pre-prep and nursery building for Eagle House School in Sandhurst, Berkshire.

A 535 sq. m development for Eagle House School, Berkshire, includes a brand-new wing for nursery and reception classes, as well as a complete refurbishment of the original building for Year 1 and Year 2.

The new build houses seven additional classrooms, a library, break-out teaching spaces, new toilets and a creative space.

The original main school building, first rented by Eagle House School in 1886, has red brickwork and large windows. Designers at modular construction specialist Darwin Group worked closely with the school to create a concept that blended the traditional and modern elements of both exteriors together.

The solution was to use stone cornices and a pitched tiled roof to tastefully mirror the original architecture of the main building. Eagle House School's new pre-prep

library also boasts large floor-to-ceiling windows, flooding the interior with natural daylight.

When the school delivered online education and looked after key workers' children at school during summer 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the programme of works was accelerated to take advantage of the opportunity to build whilst many fewer children were in school.

The development is the first part of a large renovation being delivered for Eagle House School, with work now underway on an extension, which will house a new music school due for completion this Spring. The space will be used for rehearsals, small performances and pre-prep group activities.

Darwin Group aims to create buildings that minimise environmental impact and is committed to minimising waste and consumption of resources. As a result, Eagle House School's new building has achieved a 'Very Good' BREEAM rating, meaning the school could save approximately 15.55% of its CO2 output.

Malcolm Young, Bursar at Eagle House School, said: "The staff and pupils absolutely love their new premises that are light, airy, spacious, well-appointed and fun to be in. We are thoroughly looking forward to showing prospective parents around in future as the new build greatly enhances our whole school."



£3m development scheme

A tiered music and drama amphitheatre, new spacious classrooms and changing facilities – just some of the features to be completed by the end of the school year at Hertfordshire's York House School.

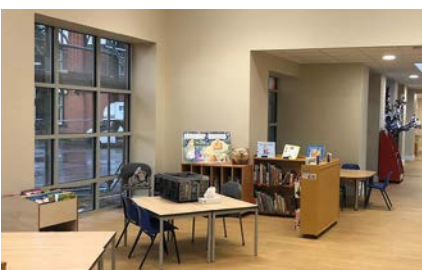
Having seen a steady growth in the numbers of pupils attending the school over the last few years, the state of the art new buildings will allow children to benefit from greater, high quality learning spaces and co-curricular opportunities, with cutting-edge music and drama facilities and the addition of a specialist English teaching room.

Jon Gray, Headmaster, pictured, said, "The school has been co-ed for approaching a decade and we now have well over 100 girls on site, so the four new changing rooms will be a welcome addition for all children. We are particularly excited about the tiered performance area, which we'll also use for house meetings and assemblies. The double height



music room is also a welcome feature as this will increase visibility of the subject itself and provide a light, airy and modern space to practice and perform in."

The project is currently running to schedule and is set to be completed by late summer 2021, with children benefiting from the new facilities from the start of the new academic year in September 2021.



State of the art senior school and Sixth Form building mark 25th anniversary

Fulham School, London, has unveiled its new Jane Emmett Building in Chesilton Road, London, hosting students from year nine and upwards.

Launched in the school's 25th anniversary year, the new facility is also set to cater for its first-ever Sixth Form provision from September 2021.



The building has been named after the founder of Fulham School, Jane Emmett, who is still actively involved in school life and sits as a Governor on the school's board.

The site offers a range of integrated facilities to provide the best environment for learning and personal development. The new features include lighting that gives optimum intensity levels for the classroom and colour schemes that instil a positive, calming and homely environment, as well as supporting alertness and creativity. There is also acoustic treatment in place to provide further clarity in the space, ergonomically designed furniture both inside and outside the classroom, and numerous areas

for independent study that offers a more mature style of learning for Years nine to 13.

Located in a residential street but close to the vibrant shops and cafes of Fulham Road, students will be able to use the surrounding amenities during lunch breaks and after school, as well as take advantage of the additional sports and exercise options available, such as rowing on the Thames, cycle studios, climbing walls and access to Fulham School's football and rugby fields.

Chris Cockerill, Head of Fulham Senior, pictured, said: "Every detail of Jane Emmett Building has been meticulously designed to create an elevated learning environment for



our students in years nine and above as they become more independent. Despite the challenges presented by opening a new school building in the middle of a pandemic, I'm extremely proud that when our students returned on the 8th March, they were able to jump straight back into physical learning in a new, state of the art facility".

The Digest



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Time for a Sea Shanty!



West Buckland School, Devon, music department is well known for producing outstanding musical productions and staff and pupils alike have all missed the glorious sound of choirs and orchestras practicing during lunch breaks and after school and the thrill of live performances.

To mark half-term, the school's music staff brought out their excellent version of the famous sea shanty, The Wellerman.

Pictured: (Top left) Nick Smith, Director of Music; (top right) Guy Monk, Head of EAL; (bottom left) Michael Bairstow, Head of Academic Music; (bottom right) Dominic Carter, Head of Prep Music

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Heads Hunted

**Among the upcoming head
and principal appointments:**

Lorenden Prep School

Kent

Sacred Heart School

Sussex

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

"The chance for games staff to work alongside such expert practitioners, is a form of CPD that is worth its weight in gold..."

Schools partner with Spurs

After months of lead-up with fears of the impact of COVID hanging over both the sporting and education sectors, the Mill Hill School Foundation launched a new partnership with Tottenham Hotspur. Tottenham Hotspur Global Football Development coaches now provide a bespoke coaching programme, to support the delivery of football throughout The Foundation. James Bedford, Head of Football Mill Hill School and The Mount, Mill Hill International reports..

The link was first explored by Lotte Goldthorpe, Director of Sport at our prep school, Belmont. After she had laid the groundwork for the partnership, we were able to increase the scope of the project to ensure it was a cross-foundation venture, with all footballers within our group of schools set to benefit. The idea that all schools within The Foundation can work closely together to provide pupils with a high-quality sporting experience and a clear, connected pathway from prep school to Sixth Form, was one of the key motivators throughout.

Having introduced football as a Core Sport at our senior school, Mill Hill School, less than four years ago, the partnership gives us an opportunity to further develop the sport, ensuring we are able to provide pupils with a positive, challenging and enjoyable experience of the game. It supplements our existing partnerships programme which spans across our other Core Sports, such as rugby, hockey, netball, and cricket, and includes Saracens Rugby, Middlesex Cricket and Hampstead & Westminster Hockey Club. We encourage all our pupils to take a multi-sports perspective and providing high-quality opportunities across our Core Sports is essential to facilitating that.

The Global Football Development Programme works with schools, colleges and universities, across a range of pupil ages in the UK and abroad. Their understanding of overseas markets and experience in delivering across nationalities and cultures is an asset, given the interest of our boarding pupils in football and the Premier League. Pupils at our international school, The Mount, Mill Hill International, will also have access to the programme through games sessions with the senior school.

It is important to us that this partnership reaches a range of pupils. We strive to run an inclusive games programme, with opportunities to participate and compete across the range of ages and abilities. Fundamental to the success of the partnership will be ensuring that the benefits reach all of our footballers, and not just those who are currently the most proficient.

In part, we hope this can be achieved by the impact of the partnership on our staff. The chance for our games staff to work alongside such expert practitioners, is a form of CPD that is worth its weight in gold. Through co-coaching games and training sessions, those members of our staff working with the coaches from Spurs will have a unique opportunity to experience some of the methods utilised at an elite club. Alongside more bespoke CPD opportunities afforded by the partnership, our staff can reflect on these experiences and identify how they might develop their own coaching and support in our environment. This represents a continual opportunity for progression that means our staff can develop their skillset to the same extent as the players.



Launching this partnership during a pandemic has required flexibility and understanding from all parties, and the ability to think on our feet. Prior to Christmas, we were preparing for a launch in January with pupils in school and out on the pitch. In a matter of days, these plans went out of the window and instead we set about forming a plan for live online sessions that pupils could access from home, regardless of the space or equipment available to them. Our experiences of online teaching from the past year have aided this, with a solid understanding of the technological requirements and methods for delivering a live activity to a large group of pupils. The use of projectors, cameras and big screens has meant we can deliver in real-time to pupils practising at home, whilst giving feedback to those relaying their live video back to us. Combined with the technical expertise and enthusiasm of the coaches from Spurs, this has enabled us to continue to deliver high-quality learning around individual skill, even whilst pupils have been confined to their homes during lockdown. These live lessons have certainly whetted the appetites of our pupils to get back on the pitch and to put what they have learned in the last few weeks into practice.

Two new acquisitions

Chatsworth Schools has announced the acquisition of Riverston School and Beech Hall School from The Riverston Group. The acquisitions take the number of schools and nurseries in the Chatsworth Schools family to fourteen.

Chatsworth has also appointed Professor Michael Lewis, Chairman of The Riverston Group as a Governor of Chatsworth Schools.

Riverston School is a London based small co-educational and non-selective School which celebrated its 90th anniversary in 2016. The School has become synonymous with its ability to support children with moderate learning needs in a caring environment and was acquired by the Lewis family in 1956. Riverston School has a Nursery and Early Years Department for children aged 9 months to 4 years and a Senior School for children aged 11 –19.

Beech Hall is a non-selective school for boys and girls aged 6 months to 16 years situated on a nineteen-acre site on the edge of the Peak District. The school provides a child-centered approach to education with a balanced focus on academic attainment, sporting opportunities, individual strengths and traditional values.

Expansion looms

Arnold House School, London, will expand their early years provision in September by launching a Reception class (4+) and a Pre-Reception class (3+), thus becoming an Independent School for boys aged 3 through to 13.

In order to facilitate this expansion, the Governors have acquired the freehold ownership of The Huxley Building, 38 Marlborough Place, just a few minutes' walk from the existing school site in Loudoun Road.

The Huxley Building (named after renowned biologist and educator Thomas Henry Huxley who lived there in the late 1800s) is a Victorian property dating from c.1840 which retains many features that are synonymous with Arnold House's existing school buildings. Having been previously utilised as a teacher training school, it is comprised of spacious classrooms, offices, a beautiful drawing room leading onto a mature garden and all the required facilities needed for early years education.

Making up for lost time



Wrekin School, Shropshire, head Tim Firth presents his Top Tips for students and staff as schools return to face-to-face teaching and seek to make up any lost ground...

1. Fred Egerton, Prefect, said in Assembly online last week: 'Ensure you are exactly where you wanted to be if the pandemic had not happened.' This is great advice. He told pupils to get out of their comfort zones and not use the pandemic as an excuse for being off the pace: very good, tough advice. We can externalise faults to an extent it's true that we are held back, but you must not make the mistake of thinking: it's out of my hands.

2. The next thing to bear in mind is that so many have been affected, so you are not suffering or failing alone. It is true that some pupils have been worse off than others across the world depending on their access to technology, their school culture, the extent to which unions have (quite wrongly in my view) stopped teachers teaching, but it was always thus: education has of course never been a level playing field. Exam grades are being adjusted so that pupils aren't disadvantaged; indeed, we all know most will be advantaged in not sitting exams. The Government has, and quite rightly, made the best of a bad job and ensured that if time

has been lost then there's less to make up.

3. Pupils have been disadvantaged not being in lessons with other pupils in the real world. The biggest single thing they can do to make up lost time is to read: read, read, read. Nearly all exams right up to A level, with the exceptions of Maths, Chemistry and Physics, are essentially a literacy test. Reading can be done alone and all summer. Reading almost anything, and plenty of it, will go a long way to improving a pupil's literacy and get them ready for Sept. '21.

4. Reading will also offer useful decompression away from those screens that too often hold bitesize information and mitigate against 'deep reading' so important when it comes to the depth of analysis it is imperative to practice if you want to score higher marks in exams, or, more importantly, think better.

5. Teachers should ask pupils to teach topics to the class, to ensure they are made active and recover from the potential passivity of being online and letting the teacher get on with it (which has been a real danger in lockdown). Having pupils

active, up there in front of the class will also socialise them faster (and alienation has been another danger of lockdown).

6. If we are worried about the need to catch pupils up over summer, then the army of recently retired teachers could be enlisted to take classes across the summer vacation. I suspect strongly that these folk would help out and for a very reasonable rate.

7. Speaking of concerns about pupils who haven't socialised together, schools should arrange more assemblies, tutor group and community activities than usual, and, again, some of these should be run by the pupils so their voice is heard and they practise interaction.

8. I would recommend debating as an exercise on return. It would serve three functions; make pupils active academically; get them working together and take place in front of big crowds (pupils have hidden away for a year) and lead to healthy, live arguments where safe spaces are not allowed and views are not 'no platformed'. The danger online is that pupils remain in echo chambers and click away for hours

unchallenged in a comfort zone.

9. Over summer, pupils should take an activity that sees them involved in teams: sport, theatre, music – anything to socialise. The real problem of the pandemic has not been pupils getting behind academically, but getting behind as people getting ready to leave home, which in essence is what school is for. They should travel, too, if at all possible, to get their confidence back for being out and about independently, whether this is going abroad or on a local bus, anything to become a bit independent.

10. Pupils have been starved of the chance to get work experience or a paid job. Getting hold of one or both of these opportunities would be the best way to quickly future proof themselves for employment. For the last few, and the next few, years grades in school exams and university degrees won't be nearly so helpful to employers as indicators of suitability and success in the workplace as paper rounds you held down at school whilst captaining sports teams or directing plays, or preferably both.



*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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