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The Independent Schools Magazine

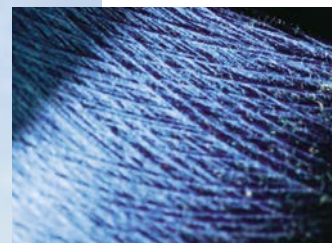


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In this issue...



Rescued farm animals bring comfort to children

Resident animals have become 'listening' companions for pupils at York House School, Hertfordshire, to help express emotions and anxieties outside of the classroom.

As mental health and wellbeing continues to be a top priority for children across the country, pupils at York House escaped back to nature to 'switch off' and spend more quality time with resident animals at the school. Home to horses, ponies, sheep, pigs, goats, pygmy goats and donkeys, the school's animals provided comfort and a calm haven of outdoor tranquillity for the children before the third-lockdown was imposed.

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

Jon Gray, Headmaster, said: "The school's smallholding has become important in promoting positive thinking and encouraging children to talk about their feelings."

Cover background

Fine dining – and more

The new dining hall at London's Ibstock Place School is so much more than a place to eat.

An architect discusses the thinking behind the innovative design... page 35

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Is Your School Mentioned?

Schools featured in this issue include:

ACS International School; Bickley Park School; Bilton Grange School; Burgess Hill Girls; Chetham's; Crown House Preparatory School; Dean Close St. John's School; Denstone College; Ellesmere College; Hampshire School Chelsea; Horris Hill School; Ibstock Place School; King Edward VI School; King's High School; Lady Eleanor Holles School; Malvern College; Marlborough College; New Hall School; Plymouth College; Prince's Gardens Preparatory School; Queen's College; Rossall School; Royal School; Salisbury Cathedral School; Sevenoaks School; Sherborne Prep School; Shoreham College; St. Mary's Music School; St. Mary's School; Stamford High School; Thorngrove School; Warwick School; Windlesham House School; York House School

"Remote teaching will positively impact our face-to-face delivery of lessons"

"I don't think I would be alone in saying that the past year has truly tested my teaching skills" says Lucy Hanham, Deputy Head Academic, at Thorngrove School, in Berkshire...



Technology has come to play a huge role in my daily teaching life, and that of my colleagues. It has certainly called for adaptability, flexibility and ingenuity.

Careful and considerate timetabling has been vital to the success of our remote provision. Asking children, and adults, to be live online can be challenging and tiring for all involved, so giving sufficient breaks and manageable teaching blocks has been imperative. On average, Thorngroves can expect between three and four hours of

live lessons per day, with form times built around this to allow for social interaction. Hour-long lessons allow for immersion in a task, with breaks between allowing time away from the screen. In the spring lockdown, this allowed for time outside in the good weather, but with darker days and poorer weather, encouraging the children to take time out has been a little more challenging. The introduction of Forest Schools onto our remote timetable will hopefully redress the balance, allowing for more time away from the computer screen.

A key point to ponder when delivering live lessons via remote methods is to consider how to gather children's responses and check understanding. Although we may have cameras on, we may not always be able to see the children and gauge their understanding from facial expressions and body language. Also, some children may be reluctant to speak on a Teams call. A great method, aside from using the chat function, is to make use of Padlets. This nifty little tool allows all children to pin their thoughts or ideas on digital 'post-its' – it is high speed and very interactive, not to mention visually appealing. Our children love it, as they can all share at the same time and see each other's responses too. This prevents the rot setting in, as all children engage simultaneously and it allows a quick teacher response. Misunderstandings are quick to see.

Firefly (our virtual learning environment) has played an integral role in delivering our remote learning curriculum. Teachers can create resource pages for lessons, which allows for all content, such as presentations, videos and worksheets, to be stored in one place. Creating tasks from these resource pages allows children to upload work and send questions and comments to their teachers. All work and feedback are stored digitally in the mark book function. A glance at my mark book allows me to track who hasn't been handing in work, the marks a child has been getting for work and any feedback given. Progress can easily be tracked and monitored. Not only has this made parents' evening feedback much easier to handle, but the digital trail can be held on record over the child's time at the school. This will,

in time, create an invaluable store of information.

Delivering lessons remotely is not strictly what I came into teaching for – I much prefer delivering face-to-face lessons and I know that I am not just speaking for myself. However, I much prefer being able to interact with my pupils online than not at all. It has meant getting creative and delivering content differently to allow full engagement. For example, I have found that pre-recording the more complicated parts of a lesson is very popular, allowing pupils to review the content at their own speed. I also feel that having a clear timetable of lessons, where children can still see their teachers and friends is crucial to maintaining a routine and mental health. Many of my students have said that having the routine and knowing what is happening has really helped them in these uncertain times. Routine and interaction are important parts of any remote lesson.

The Covid-19 pandemic has certainly thrown down various challenges and has called on teachers to use all of their ingenuity to maintain pupil progress and engagement. I do think that it will impact on the way that we deliver lessons and here at Thorngrove, it has, without doubt, proven the value of technology. It has forced many of us to think a little more creatively, such as how we gather feedback from the children. I look forward to the day when we can return to the classroom, but I know that this remote teaching period will positively impact our face-to-face delivery of lessons. Every cloud has a silver lining.

300 laptops donated to state primary schools

ACS International Schools has donated 300 brand new laptops to 20 partner state primary schools in and around Cobham, Surrey, to support local children who do not have access to technology at home. The donation was made as part of ACS's continued commitment to supporting its community and advancing education. Through this initiative, 300 more children will be able to learn safely and securely at home during the Covid-19 lockdown.

All 300 laptops were delivered during January, with each school receiving 15 laptops which they can issue to children who do not have a laptop or device to learn from at home. ACS also provides support to ensure children are able to use them effectively for their learning.

ACS, which has three UK school campuses in Cobham, Egham and Hillingdon, became a registered charity in September 2018 with a mission to advance education. As part of this mission, ACS regularly works in

partnership with local state and independent schools, higher education institutions, corporate partners and communities to share facilities, resources and educational expertise, ensuring young people across the region have access to the highest quality education and learning experiences.

Graeme Lawrie, ACS's Partnerships Director, comments: "Speaking with many of our partner schools over the past couple of weeks, it is abundantly clear that there is the need for support with additional resources. Teachers are juggling the delivery of remote learning, while also supporting children who, without access to technology at home, are allowed to come into school. During these challenging times it is essential that we do what we can to ensure the continued learning of children in our community – we hope that the laptops will help students with their learning and development, while also easing the load for some of our partner teachers too."

'Education shouldn't be defined as a game of winners and losers'

The new rules of competition: resilience over results

'Competition brings out the best in us!' We've heard it in schools, in the workplace and on the sportsfield. But it's a myth that needs dispelling, says Dr Cath Bishop, author of 'The Long Win', Olympian, former diplomat and organisational consultant...



Dr Cath Bishop

Dr Cath Bishop is an Olympian, former diplomat and business coach. She competed in rowing at 3 Olympic Games, winning World Championships gold in 2003 and Olympic silver in Athens 2004. As a diplomat for the British Foreign Office for 12 years, Cath specialized in policy and negotiations on conflict issues, with postings to Bosnia and Iraq.

Cath now works as a business consultant, leadership coach and author, and teaches on Executive Education programmes at the Judge Business School, Cambridge University and is a Visiting Professor at Surrey Business School. Cath speaks at events globally on topics of leadership, high performing teams and cultural change.

Her first book 'The Long Win: the search for a better way to succeed', published October 2020, was described by the Financial Times as 'a deep and rewarding exploration of human motivation in sport, politics, business and our personal lives.'

www.cathbishop.com

Our obsession with competition, winning and rankings is holding us back from exploring our potential and building resilience to manage a complex, uncertain world.

What's going wrong? We have often been taught that competition drives performance and is a natural force in each of us. Well that's a half-truth at best. Competition can often drive us to take short cuts, prioritising short-term wins over long-term sustainable gains. It can induce us to sabotage our peers if we see them as opponents rather than colleagues; and if we think our success depends on their failure. Our colleagues and peers offer a rich source of learning, challenge and support – all essential qualities for building long-term resilience – if only we were open to cooperation with them rather than competition against them. It's worth remembering that the original meaning of competition is based on the Latin word 'competere' which actually means 'to strive together': no mention of beating, attacking and destroying others, but a basis of cooperation and common cause.

US educational academic Alfie Kohn is a firm advocate of 'cooperative learning' which he defines as 'working together to accomplish shared goals'. How students interact is commonly a neglected or at best secondary aspect of schooling. Yet it is critical to how students learn and how they feel about school, each other and themselves. How

pupils learn to cooperate and interact also sets expectations for adult life – do you expect to succeed alone? To be assessed always individually? To be compared and ranked alongside your peers? Or are you developing skills of teamworking, appreciating different perspectives and welcoming diversity?

Given the number of leadership courses where I see leaders struggling to build effective teams and better cross-company collaboration, and requesting sessions on 'communicating with your team' or 'how to have difficult conversations', it seems clear that lifelong benefits would result from learning like this earlier on in life.

The view that 'we're wired to compete' clashes with findings of multiple anthropologists that it is our capability to cooperate in large numbers, communicate through sophisticated language and connect through ideas and stories which defined the first humans. Not the use of tools, brain size or aggression. It is connection that creates resilience, not isolation. Issues of the future require us to be resilient and able to manage complex issues that have no 'right' answers for us to mark our thinking against on a summary sheet.

Whether it's social, economic or environmental challenges of inequality, poverty or climate change, leaders now and in the

future need resilience to manage uncertainty and complexity and find new solutions to the issues of our time. Resilience research across diverse areas such as grief and bereavement management, trauma studies and mental health, and experiences of the military and elite athletes all highlights one key characteristic: flexibility. Learning to flex comes in many forms but requires support and the opportunity to fail. Competition can get in the way of this deeper learning from adversity, from experience and from failure. Competition can distort our lens away from viewing life as an ongoing continuum of growth and development and mislead us to see the world through short-term results and rankings. Even in elite sport, the ultimate world of winning and losing, sports psychologists and coaches now realise that athletes need to focus on the ongoing process of constant improvement, learning from losing and building a network of meaningful relationships, rather than simply chasing rankings and medals, if they are to optimise performance in a sustainable way.

Education shouldn't be defined as a game of winners and losers, emphasising conformity and compliance, and striving to measure extraordinary diversity in narrow results. Education is an infinite game, requiring a 'Long Win' approach, a constant learning

mindset and a focus on relationships as we learn. That would help us to develop resilient leaders ready to manage a world we can't yet imagine, doing jobs we haven't yet heard of, working collaboratively to find solutions to complex problems for which no single politician, scientist or expert has the answer.

State-of-the-art Innovation Centre

Marlborough College, Wiltshire, is nearing completion on its new, state-of-the-art Innovation Centre.

Building started in October 2019 and is set for completion in March. Set over two levels, 1000m² of cutting-edge teaching and exhibition space will provide an inspirational setting for pupils to test and display their ideas. Generous floor to floor heights offer opportunities for the construction of large-scale prototypes, promoting new and exciting ways of exploring

ideas, unconstrained by standard classroom sizes.

Bill Roe, Director of Capital Projects at Marlborough College, said: "Science, Technology and Innovation are deservedly at the top of the educational agenda in the UK and globally, and Marlborough has a desire to be at the forefront of this educational movement, playing our part in equipping the next generation of young people with the skills, creativity and passion to engage in these three crucial areas knowledgeably and with ambition.



The build is by Brymor Construction Ltd.

"We do not know what the employment of tomorrow will look like in what might be called 'The Fourth Industrial Revolution', but Marlborough is poised to adapt, to invest and to be ready to approach

STEM Education in a forward-thinking and innovative manner which best equips our pupils and those from our partner schools for the challenges and expectations of the future."

Redefining physical education

The balance between preparing pupils to lead a healthy, active lifestyle whilst instilling a lifelong love of sport and physical activity is an important responsibility which can often be overlooked when developing a sporting programme based on fixtures and sporting prowess, suggests Huw Thomas, of Sherborne Prep School, Dorset...



As schools we need to redefine physical education, we must think about how we use the time we have with our children to have a sustainable impact on their physical wellbeing. We believe that we have made a fundamental shift in approach by seeking to prepare our children for the increased expectation and stress that they will come under both physically and mentally as they move on to their senior schools. As a progressive and supportive initiative, at Sherborne Prep we introduced a Fundamental Movement Systems sporting programme.

Every one of us possesses different patterns of movement which underpin everyday actions from walking and bending to complex skill-based sports. I passionately believe that the shift of focus to fundamental movement patterns, personalised for each pupil, would allow them to access the full sporting curriculum whilst fulfilling our promise as a School - to provide access to a broad, balanced, and varied sporting programme.

The underlying rationale for this programme was my belief that our role as a School went beyond the parameters of providing the environment for developing character and the right approach to learning through competitive and recreational sporting opportunities for our pupils. Whilst these are important – our pupils do access superb sporting provision and achieve excellent results at national level – we believe that we have a duty to provide more than simply a sporting experience for our pupils. As a department, our aspiration was to provide our pupils with the fundamental movement patterns to be able to move efficiently and correctly whilst simultaneously building their gross motor skills.

By implementing the Fundamental Motor Skills programme, which is based on a carefully planned screening process, we produce a

personalised set of exercises and movement flows for each child that includes breathing protocols.

We were confident that if we developed core movement patterns, balance, stability and the ability to move efficiently, we would achieve our goal. Pupil programmes are connected to posture, breathing and the wider benefits of physical wellness in the classroom; the concomitant benefits include a positive impact upon their well-being. We have achieved this by adapting our PE curriculum to incorporate these movement flows and by focussing on Gymnastics and Karate. The long term benefits are key to this programme and we are confident that they will be better prepared for the increased physical stress and load on the body as our children move on to Senior school.

Teaming up with FMS UK, implementing their videos to train our staff and ensure a consistency in our delivery, we were conscious that all our sessions had to be high quality, meaningful, exciting and enjoyable for pupils. Parent engagement was key; communicating the unique shape of our sporting provision and reporting sensitively and regularly was important to the success of the project. Through recording progress and engaging in two-way, age-appropriate conversations with pupils including during lockdown, we have ensured that the programme was adapted to suit online, 'in School live lessons', and blended learning. No easy task!

We have seen a visible difference in the functional movement of our pupils with a tangible focus on physical and mental wellbeing of our pupils. We saw a staggering 90% improvement in pupils from screen 1 results after only the first six-month block of activity. Furthermore our Learning Support department has confirmed change in pupils with additional needs including increased concentration

with form teachers and parents noting improvements in posture, functional skills and a renewed sense of purpose.

We were able to carry out a screen in school at the end of last term in order to maintain the programme. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, during lockdown, all parents and pupils have been given access to extra/additional online resources for physical movement and breathing that can be carried out remotely. Welcomed by parents, staff and pupils, we used the lessons to effectively connect children at home and online through blended learning. We also provided staff with access to the programme and many have been screened reporting

improved wellbeing and functional movement, the importance of which has increased when viewed through the optic of lockdown.

The impact of COVID is not insignificant: We are preparing our pupils for the unknown, so developing good movement habits and preserving the movement health of our young people has never been more of a priority. We believe this starts at school.

As an FMS pilot school, Sherborne Prep is now involved with a Cardiff Metropolitan University research programme to study the movement of Pre-Prep children.

Flag goes to Antarctica

A Year 7 student from Stamford High School, Lincolnshire, has won a flag designing competition, meaning her flag travelled to Antarctica with a Scientist late last year.

Students from across Year 7 at SHS entered their designs for an Antarctic flag in a competition organised by the British Antarctic Survey. A finalist was selected per form group, based on design and how well they adhered to the given brief. Lola Butler was selected as the School's overall winner. Lola's design includes one penguin for each country that has signed the Antarctic Treaty, and her flag travelled with researcher Alexandra Dodds to Bird Island Landing Bay, in Antarctica, on the 28th November.

Runners up in the competition were Annabel Anslow, Holly Haynes and Matilda Hind, who also received certificates and merits in their Geography lessons

Mr M Smith, Head of Geography at Stamford High School, said:



"We decided to enter the national Antarctica Day Flag competition run by the British Antarctic Survey as it is designed to create awareness towards why it is important for us to protect one of the Earth's last natural wildernesses. Antarctica is the fifth largest continent of the world at 14 million km² and is covered in a permanent continental ice sheet".

At the heart of the vacc pack

Independent schools have offered their facilities to assist in the roll-out of Covid-19 vaccines. Two such schools feature in this tribute to the huge nationwide effort, along with a music and needlework teacher who stepped up to the plate and trained as a vaccinator...

Swapping embroidery needles for vaccination needles!

The Head of Music and Textiles, at The Royal School, Surrey, Miss Jo Hart, has become a volunteer vaccinator to assist the NHS with the huge task of rolling out the newly approved vaccines.

Miss Hart is more used to handling embroidery needles, having trained at The Royal School of Needlework – a serious hobby she has pursued for many years. However, she is now swapping her embroidery needles for vaccination needles, as the country looks on in hope that the roll out of the vaccination will

Q: Who or what inspired you to get involved as a volunteer first-aidier with St. John Ambulance originally? What service do you usually provide? What has been your most interesting assignment to date?

A: *From a young age, I had a keen interest in medicine and did consider a career in the health service, but instead, followed my passion for Music. As a teacher, I have completed numerous First Aid training courses and felt that the skills I learnt every few years were largely wasted, as I never really got to put them into practice. It was after one such course that I started to research about the work of St. John Ambulance in our local community and decided to apply to join as a volunteer.*

Before the pandemic, my role with St. John involved providing First Aid at events. This could be anything from a small country fete, to larger events like the London Marathon and Wimbledon Tennis Championships. Sadly, all events were cancelled during the pandemic and as a St. John volunteer, I was subsequently asked to support the NHS at this difficult time. Since the first lock down in March 2020, I have been carrying out a wide range of tasks – the skills I have

return some sort of normality to our lives.

An Advanced First Aider with St. John Ambulance, Miss Hart has been volunteering in her spare time throughout the pandemic. Miss Hart is one of many St. John Ambulance volunteers who have been called upon to help with the vaccination programme.

Her first shift was at Epsom Racecourse, after which she found time to talk to ISM about her experience...

learnt in St John have enabled me to provide help where it is needed most, including in hospitals, moving ambulances to London and COVID-19 testing.

My volunteer work with St. John has been so varied that it is hard to pick a favourite assignment, but my support with the fight against Covid-19 is probably one of the highlights of my work with the charity so far.

Q: How did you hear about the need for volunteers on the covid mass-vaccination programme? What extra training did you have to undergo?

A: *St. John are great about keeping all of their volunteers informed about new opportunities, so when the opportunity came to apply to train for the vaccination programme, I did not hesitate to sign up. I have undertaken rigorous training to learn about the different vaccines and understand how to administer them to the general public.*

Q: How did your first duty at Epsom go? How did you find the organisation generally? Were you satisfied that you were kept as safe as possible with adequate provision of PPE, social distancing etc? How many people were vaccinated that



day, and how many of them did you perform? What was the reaction of the public to you as a volunteer? What were your feelings when you got home after the experience?

A: *Volunteering at Epsom has been an amazing experience. It has been fantastic to work with people from the NHS and there has been a real sense of community spirit. Being part of the process gives me hope that we can all slowly start to return to some sense of normality. The reaction from the general public has been incredibly positive and the work I have done has made me feel very proud to be part of the organisation.*

Q: Teaching can be a tough, draining profession. So can first-aiding. How do you cope physically and mentally with both? What are your other interests outside these challenges?

A: *People often ask me how I find*

the time to volunteer, alongside holding down a career as a Head of Music. In truth, it is not always easy, but I am the sort of person who likes to do something proactive in my spare time. I am also a great believer that we should never stop learning and by doing something completely different from my day job, I hope that I am able to inspire my pupils to see the lifelong learning opportunities that exist beyond the classroom.

In addition to my volunteering with St. John Ambulance, I also have a great passion for hand embroidery and have been studying part-time at the Royal School of Needlework at Hampton Court, for the last eight years. The intricate nature of the embroidery work allows me to completely switch off from day-to-day life and it is a privilege to study in a palace which has so much history!



With the recent roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccine, Plymouth College are supporting and working with the St John Ambulance Service by providing their Prep School site, located at The Millfields, to train volunteers over five weekends in the administering of the COVID-19 vaccinations.

The vacancy of the Prep School site has meant that St John Ambulance are able to safely use the facility for the training of all volunteers to safely administer the COVID-19 vaccine and roll-out to people living in Plymouth.

Jo Hayward, Head (pictured above), said: "We are pleased to be able to support the St John Ambulance in their work as part of the roll-out of the Covid-19 Mass Vaccination Programme, and will do all we can to assist in facilitating the delivery of the vaccine to the people of Plymouth where needed going forwards."

Training centre

King Edward VI School, located in the heart of Southampton, Hampshire, has become a vaccine training centre for the St John Ambulance. King Edward's is providing its facilities for the use of St John Ambulance, as they train hundreds of volunteers to carry out vaccinations in Southampton and surrounding areas.

Head Neal Parker (pictured right), said "We were contacted by a former King Edward VI School student who works for Savills property agents, who had been asked to locate 16 large venues across the UK to act as hosts for St John Ambulance as they looked to train over 30,000 vaccinators in just two months as part of the fight against COVID-19. Southampton had been identified as a key location. We were delighted to offer our facilities and site for no charge for at least the next ten weekends.

Within a couple of days a site visit had established that we did indeed have the space and facilities needed to be a

vaccinator training centre, and by the following weekend we had hundreds of volunteers busily training at the School. I came in to School on the first weekend, and it was lovely to chat to the trainers and volunteers, just to check that they were happy that they had everything they needed. Apart from one slight glitch on the first day – when the police came calling to check whether we had an illegal gathering taking place, but were swiftly reassured – the entire process has been seamless and smooth.

Savills have been utterly professional; the St John Ambulance are a delight to work with, and we are honoured to be asked to play our own small part in helping the community and country through this terrible pandemic. Throughout the pandemic we, like so many schools, have asked ourselves repeatedly what we can do to help. During the first lockdown we used our D&T resources to produce PPE for local healthcare providers, and set up a shopping



delivery service for vulnerable community members. Now we can once again try to help through the vaccination training, and by volunteering to act as a hub for vaccinations if needed."

"We all know that getting the vaccine out to those in need most is a tremendous logistical exercise. It needs huge numbers of trained volunteers to carry out the vaccinations, at an unprecedented scale and speed. St John Ambulance will be playing a critical role in this endeavour and we are delighted to offer our assistance."

What does 2020 + U = ? Starting strong in 2021 begins now

A jar, 3 words, a window with a pen are all you need to take the first step. Are you ready to get started?

Pick one or do all three- it really is up to you. But, whatever you do please take time with no distractions to complete – your future self will thank you for it.

1. Get a jar and be creative

If you can't find a jar, pick a box that closes. Get some paper and split into 12, more if you like. Write down 12 things that you want to experience or do in 2021. Fold them up and put them in. Set the dates that you will pick one on your phone and watch the magic happen.

2. Pick three words to guide you for the year

What three words do you want to use to guide your thinking and actions for 2021?

You are enough.

This helps my wellbeing and confidence.

Be kind inside.

This reminds me to be kind to myself when things go wrong or stress levels are high.

Permission to X.

From one educator to another, thank you for all that you do. I hope that these ideas help you in these interesting times.

No this is not because I am a maths teacher, I learned this a long time ago that you need to give yourself permission sometimes to stop, rest, think or maybe scream! Silently scream of course.

3. Create an action

Take a moment to reflect what you need to do more or less of to be the best version of yourself? Just pick one thing in each box and start today.

| | |
|---------|---------|
| MORE OF | LESS OF |
| START | STOP |

Written by Tracy Shand at Simply Boarding

Do teachers' leadership styles affect student perceptions of their own performance?

Previous research in higher education and industry has shown a strong association between employer leadership style and student/employee perceptions of their own productivity, motivation and mental wellbeing. These associations have been shown to be positive when leadership behaviours are perceived to be inclusive. But can the same be said of school students and teachers? Sevenoaks School, Kent, with Professor Gloria Moss undertook to find out by studying mathematics teaching...

To enable comparison with HE and industry studies conducted by Moss (Moss et al 2016; Moss 2019), a modified validated survey instrument was used, an anonymous online multiple-choice questionnaire that students completed at the start of lessons or as homework.

Student participation was designed on an opt-out basis, with data collection occurring from March to August 2019. The survey consisted of four demographic questions on gender, nationality, year group and ethnicity, 34 questions on students' perceptions of mathematics teachers' leadership characteristics, and 12 questions on students' perceptions of their own productivity, wellbeing and

motivation, with students' responses plotted against a Likert scale.

In total, 721 students completed the questionnaire (66.1% response rate).

The results show that the more inclusive are teachers' leadership styles, the better students perceived their performance.

Additional analyses also revealed the association between inclusive leadership (IL) and the three components of performance identified in the industry and HE studies – namely, productivity, wellbeing, and motivation.

Overall, a strong, statistically-significant positive association was found between mathematics

teachers' degree of inclusiveness and student performance. This correlation did not differ by gender or by nationality. However, the strength of the association decreased significantly with students' advancing age, indicating increased student self-motivation, resilience and ability to act as independent learners.

It is hoped that this large-scale empirical study, the first examining IL in schools, can provide a template for further quantitative school-based studies on IL. Indeed, the establishment of such evidence-based, research-led teaching strategies is a key goal of the Institute of Teaching and Learning at Sevenoaks School.



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

Table 1: Competences underpinning the concept of inclusive leadership in secondary education

| Competence | Description |
|------------------------------|---|
| Individualised consideration | Teachers showing individual interest and offering one-to-one support for students |
| Idealised influence | Teachers having admirable qualities that students want to identify with |
| Inspirational motivation | Providing an appealing vision that inspires students |
| Intellectual stimulation | Encouraging students to develop their ideas and be challenged |
| Unqualified acceptance | Being inclusive in considering students |
| Empathy | Putting oneself mentally and emotionally in the student's place |
| Listening | Actively listening to students |
| Persuasion | Being able to influence students |
| Confidence building | Providing students with opportunities and recognition |
| Growth | Encouraging students to reach their full potential |
| Foresight | Having the ability to anticipate events and where they might lead |
| Conceptualisation | Having a vision about possibilities and articulating that vision to students |
| Awareness | Being fully open and aware of environmental cues |
| Stewardship | Articulating the belief that the school's legacy is to contribute to society |
| Healing | Helping students cope with any burdens |

Table 2: Correlation coefficients of the association between student performance (and its components of productivity, wellbeing and motivation) and mathematics teachers' inclusive leadership score, stratified by gender, nationality, year group and ethnicity

| | | Performance | Productivity | Wellbeing |
|-------------|---------------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|
| Gender | Male | 0.81 | 0.71 | 0.73 |
| | Female | 0.82 | 0.73 | 0.77 |
| Nationality | Non-British | 0.81 | 0.72 | 0.71 |
| | British | 0.82 | 0.73 | 0.76 |
| Year Group | Lower School | 0.87 | 0.80 | 0.84 |
| | Middle School | 0.80 | 0.73 | 0.74 |
| | Upper School | 0.77 | 0.66 | 0.69 |
| Ethnicity | White | 0.82 | 0.72 | 0.75 |
| | Black/Black British | 0.89 | 0.74 | 0.82 |
| | Asian/Asian British | 0.76 | 0.73 | 0.68 |
| | Mixed | 0.83 | 0.75 | 0.78 |

References:

Moss, G. (2019), *Inclusive Leadership*, Routledge, Abingdon
Moss, G., Sims, C., David, A and Dodd, I. (2016), *Inclusive leadership ...driving performance through diversity*, London: Employers Network on Equality and Inclusion (enei)

Seventh international campus

Malvern College International has announced the opening of its seventh international campus in Leysin, Switzerland. This is the first British-branded boarding school in Switzerland and comes with an array of sports and recreational facilities for its pupils.

Operating in partnership with Feydey International, Malvern College Switzerland will offer a bespoke international curriculum for an initial cohort of students due to arrive at the school from September. Entry will be into either Year 10 or Year 12, with additional options for students looking for a pre-IGCSE course in Year 9 or a University Preparation course in Year 13.

The College has a small maximum capacity, currently with 150 spaces, allowing for a highly personalised educational approach. Classes will largely take place in one of three buildings on the campus – the Swiss Alpine Centre, which serves as the main base for school operations. Here pupils will have access to newly refurbished classrooms, common

rooms and other amenities including self-contained living quarters for staff.

The school's boarding accommodation is fully en-suite, with spectacular mountain views from every room; pupils will be accommodated in rooms of 2 or 3 beds, depending on preference, age and availability.

Based in Leysin, in the Swiss Alps, the school will benefit from excellent on-site facilities including a 200-seat auditorium, as well as making the most of the world-class sporting facilities in and around the local area. This includes everything from a year-round ice hockey/curling rink and the largest snow tubing park in Europe, to outside beach volleyball courts and an Olympic

sized swimming pool. There is also an equestrian centre, climbing walls, over 100km of pistes across two resorts and The World Cycling Centre which includes pump tracks, indoor tracks and international training centre – as well as regular fitness centre facilities.

Keith Metcalfe, Headmaster of Malvern College, UK, said: "We are delighted to be opening what we believe to be the first British-branded boarding school in Switzerland, and to have the opportunity to do so in such an iconic and beautiful location. This is a very exciting development for the Malvern Family of Schools, and we look forward very much to welcoming our first pupils to Leysin in a few months' time."

The College has appointed Dr Tim Jefferis as the Founding Headmaster of MCS. Dr Jefferis comes from Harrow International School Bangkok, where he spent three years in post as Second Master. Prior to moving to Thailand, he was Deputy Head (Academic) at Oswestry School and before that, a housemaster at Uppingham School, where he also ran the Geography Department for several years.

In addition to Malvern College Switzerland, MCI also has three campuses in Hong Kong, two in mainland China and one in Egypt. In the UK, the Malvern Family includes two preparatory schools, The Downs Malvern and Abberley Hall School, and in total the group now educates over 4000 students around the world.



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Why stay in the Teachers' Pension Scheme?

With fee-paying schools rapidly deserting the TPS, pensions lawyer Jeremy Harris looks at the reasons for this trend and alternatives to the scheme.



Nearly 200 independent schools, about one-fifth of all private schools that participate in the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS), have withdrawn from the scheme since contribution rates under the TPS shot up by 43% in September 2019.

Two-thirds of those withdrawals took place before the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic arrived in the UK and piled further pressure on independent schools' finances, thanks to the closure of schools from 23 March 2020 until the end of the last academic year.

Employer contribution rates under the TPS increased from 16.48% of salary to 23.68% as a result of the 2016 TPS actuarial valuation. The 2020 valuation is currently in progress, with the results expected in 2022/3. Many schools are worried that employer contribution rates will be significantly increased again.

Whereas the government has provided funding to state schools and further education colleges to meet this increase, the independent sector has been required to meet the cost itself.

Employers that participate in the TPS have no control over contribution rates, while the benefits are relatively generous inflation-proofed defined benefit in character. The Government Actuary's Department sets the

actuarial assumptions that determine the pace at which scheme benefits are funded.

As an unfunded, pay-as-you-go scheme, there is no investment growth to offset against the employers' obligation to meet the balance of the cost of the scheme benefits.

Meeting teachers' expectations

From a financial point of view, it is relatively easy for employers to leave the TPS. There is no termination debt that falls on the employer on withdrawing and there is no obligation on independent schools to match the benefits of the TPS through other pension arrangements.

The main constraint on leaving the TPS is employee relations. Independent schools are torn between the need to stay competitive in terms of fees and attracting and retaining high-quality staff.

Fee-paying schools that withdraw from the TPS generally provide defined contribution (DC) pension arrangements in its place. There would be little point establishing a new defined benefit pension scheme that would allow the school to set the pace of funding but still expose it to open-ended pension contribution obligations and costs arising from increasing life expectancy and low interest rates.

There is a risk that DC pension schemes will be regarded as less generous by staff, though the extent to which that is the case will depend on contribution rates. In some circumstances, strike action by disaffected staff may result from withdrawing or preparing to withdraw from the TPS.

On the other hand, providing DC pension benefits may be seen as achieving greater parity of pension terms between teaching and support staff, who are generally already in DC pension arrangements.

A potential half-way house that some schools have considered is to seek to remain in the TPS on the basis that teaching staff meet part of the required increase in contributions and/or that the TPS continues to apply, but on the basis of reduced pensionable pay (through a contractual agreement) or in return for agreed pay cuts.

Where an independent school withdraws from the TPS and offers a new DC pension arrangement instead, the increasing governance costs surrounding DC occupational pension schemes (arising from legislation and stringent Pensions Regulator guidance on matters such as DC trustee chairs' governance statements) means the choice for schools is effectively between a contract-based group personal pension scheme, and a DC master trust.

Such arrangements will save costs in terms of management time and administration expenses, as compared with a stand-alone DC occupational scheme.

The latest Pensions Regulator guidance on DC pension schemes directs smaller stand-alone DC schemes towards winding up and transferring to larger, well-run schemes.

The automatic enrolment legislation, and the time limits for employers' compliance with it, mean schools should line up new DC pension arrangements well before withdrawing from the TPS. This includes selecting the pension provider, designing the new contribution structure and arranging life cover and income protection cover for teaching staff.

Practical considerations and the employer's implied duty of good faith mean schools proposing to withdraw from the TPS should first consult teaching staff and their representatives (if any) before proceeding.

Schools should establish at the outset, before any consultation, whether they have flexibility in their employment contracts to impose such a change on their teaching staff without their agreement.

This may affect how the proposed change is presented to staff and how it is eventually implemented.

This article was authored by Jeremy Harris, pensions partner at Fieldfisher. 0161 200 1789 Jeremy.Harris@fieldfisher.com



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Outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk



Bridge the gap between qualified Chinese teachers and independent schools

With over 1.2 billion people speaking Chinese worldwide, it is one of the world's biggest languages. If Mandarin Chinese language is not a student's native language, then it's time to learn it! YAN Chinese Academy offers independent schools bespoke Mandarin online courses that are created according to a school's academic requirements and student needs. The Academy also offers students a one-to-one option...

Learning Mandarin is the best way to make sure that you know, understand, and communicate proficiently in one of the most spoken languages globally. Tap into the world of opportunities that wait for you as you surpass the language barrier.

Now, if you're wondering how exactly can learning Chinese, a non-European language, benefit you, then read on to find out. You will be amazed at how this language in your arsenal can help you progress through life at all stages of life.

Take a look:

A window to Their Culture and History

Learning Mandarin Chinese as a second language is exciting for students because it opens up a window into its ancient culture and history. Chinese has a history dating back more than two thousand years. This is very exciting and appealing for children. Languages are the bedrock of cultural heritage. Thus, learning Mandarin Chinese offers students rich and unique insight into its history and ways of thinking.

Deepen Personal Growth

The Chinese culture is amongst the most intricately blended and eye-opening cultures in the world. They have numerous traditions, customs, and language characters to learn. Hence, when students learn Mandarin, not only do they learn the language, but they also learn the Chinese way of life. It may be surprising to you how different life can be. All these experiences and language skills help deepen students' personal growth and development.

Better Future Work Prospects

As per the British Council report, it recognised Mandarin Chinese as one of the top ten languages for the future. Mandarin Chinese is the predominant language in the world today. Therefore, the shortage of Mandarin language speakers in the UK is one reason young British are lagging. Moreover, to ensure better future work prospects, students must learn the language and compete successfully with an edge.

As China's economy is growing overwhelmingly, this growth has increased the need to learn their language. Companies that want to become global leaders need professionals who can communicate and understand Mandarin Chinese. Imagine the world of opportunities it can open for those Europeans who speak Mandarin proficiently.

Useful in Business

It is another crucial reason to learn Chinese as a second language. As China's influence and economy continue to boost and grow, so does the importance of Mandarin language skills for businesses operating in the UK. As the United Kingdom strives to increase its competitiveness to facilitate Chinese companies' investment in British goods and services, companies need to have staff members seamlessly speak the Mandarin language. This can be a massive advantage as it can boost inward investment by Chinese companies, otherwise barred by cultural difficulties and language barriers.

When doing business with Chinese people, business owners need to make sure that they have command over the Mandarin language. Otherwise, it will be difficult to understand the deal and agreements without translators.

Understanding the Deep-Rooted Problem—Why is the UK Still Struggling with Europeans to Enrol in Mandarin Chinese Classes and Master the Language?

Knowing that Mandarin Chinese is one of the top ten languages for the future, there are still relatively few A-level participants and professionals enrolling in this language compared to other languages like French and German. The problem is not that the students and professionals lack the willingness to learn the language; it's mostly because many private schools in the UK don't have access to qualified Chinese teachers. This is where we come into the picture. At YAN Chinese Academy, we bridge the gap between qualified Chinese teachers and independent schools.

Advantages of YAN Chinese Academy

| YAN Chinese Academy | Other Chinese Schools |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| QTS Teacher Academic Training Team | No Teacher Academic Training |
| 4-8 Students small group size | 10+ Students big group size |
| Exclusive Design Teaching Syllabus | Old School Teaching Approach |
| Efficient and Enrichment Courses | Lengthy and Tedious Courses |
| Student-Teacher ratio of 1:2 | Student-Teacher ratio of 1:1 |
| After Class Private tutorial | N.A. |
| YCA Member Centre | N.A. |
| Learning Satisfaction Guaranteed | N.A. |

YAN Chinese Academy – What Sets Us Apart?

Here are some of the top reasons why students and independent schools prefer YAN Chinese Academy for Mandarin Chinese languages learning courses.

10 Years of Hands-on Industry Experience

Providing high-quality Chinese education in the UK for more than a decade, we are an online Chinese Education brand affiliated with Zerone Education & Training Ltd. We are strongly committed to teaching Mandarin Chinese languages and cultural promotion. We can provide UK schools with highly qualified and well-trained Chinese teaching professionals. Our wealth of experience and expertise enables us to provide you with quality learning, all much needed to understand and master the language.

First-Class Teacher Training

If you have a degree in education and a passion for learning and teaching the Chinese language, enrol with us. We offer the Chinese Teacher Training Programme (CTTP) to GCSE and A-level teachers for UK independent schools. After going through our strict selection process, you will

enrol in our programme as a trainee and undergo rigorous first-class teacher training. This training combines practical and theoretical classes offered by our experienced and professional teachers and professors.

This is an excellent way for teachers to learn Chinese and then teach non-Asian students the language while tapping lucrative opportunities to grow and earn as a skilled linguistic expert.

Similarly, independent schools can make sure that they have onboard well-trained linguistic teachers to teach students and train them for future success.

Customised Online Courses for Students

We also offer customised online courses by our experienced Mandarin teachers.

We have one-on-one courses for students too. The course is designed according to the student's learning style and requirements—allowing them to learn at their own pace.

Schools can also introduce Mandarin online courses that we create according to the school's academic requirements and student needs.

For more information about Yan Chinese Academy and how we can help you succeed and master the Mandarin Chinese Languages please visit [yanchineseacademy.com](https://www.yanchineseacademy.com) <https://www.yanchineseacademy.com/find-your-courses>. Let's make success happen together. Learning Mandarin Chinese helps ensure that the future holds lucrative opportunities for you to grow and excel.

Boosting admissions amidst pandemic restrictions

Schools have been faced with many hurdles surrounding the pandemic, not least the challenges of boosting admissions at a time when parents cannot visit the school, says Ben Evans, Headmaster at Windlesham House School, Sussex...



The impact of COVID on independent schools has been wide ranging. Schools have had to adapt to online learning for all pupils and now, to a system of blended learning. The success, or otherwise, of how well schools have implemented the new technology has been instrumental in their continued success and in the levels of interest from prospective parents. School reputations now firmly rest on the quality of remote learning provision.

It would be true to say that many independent schools have seen increased demand from prospective parents – many of whom were less than impressed with last term's remote learning at their schools or those that are worried about their children's continued progress, should there be further lockdowns in the future. For less urban schools, they are seeing parents who want to move out of London and other cities, either permanently relocating to the countryside or considering a boarding school for their children. There are definitely large numbers of families who are re-evaluating their lifestyle choices due to the pandemic.

Increased demand has led schools to consider how they can facilitate parent and pupil visits safely whilst still observing the Government guidelines during the pandemic. External visits have been popular where social distancing can be observed and where there is no footfall within building, or areas used by the children. However, during both lockdowns, this term and last, no parent visits have been possible, and this has undoubtedly impacted on future admissions.

Schools can no longer rely on traditional marketing

It is likely that parents will still want to follow up on the enquiries and it is becoming apparent, that with so many changes to routines and procedures since COVID hit, there is a new normal when it comes to choosing schools for prospective parents. They are willing to take risks and are registering and accepting places without actually visiting schools, having to rely on videos, Zoom calls and word of mouth to make their choices and firm up their decisions.

Of course, schools are having to completely rethink their admissions processes and are looking for more creative and innovative ways to not only market their schools, but also to manage the application and admissions process. It is no longer possible to rely on advertising and marketing our schools as we have previously done, and the traditional open day, always such a crucial way of attracting new parents to schools, has not been possible for the last two terms. Rather than simply attracting people to schools, schools now need to reach out to prospective parents in new and exciting ways.

Virtual open days are now very much the norm. Polished videos including messages from the Head, children happily learning and playing, wide angled shots of expansive playing fields and Astro courts and interviews with pupils and staff – these elements are every marketing officer's dream but do they really sell the unique ethos and atmosphere of a school? Are each of these videos any different from the next for a prospective parent exploring the independent market for the first time? We all know that there is never a substitute for a personal visit where parents can soak up the daily atmosphere of a school, see children naturally at work and chat informally with the Head and other members of staff. It is only then that parents can sense the passion of the teachers and true happiness of the children.

Personalised bespoke tours matter

Rather than hosting yet another virtual open day, it can be so much more effective to give parents the opportunity for an individual tour albeit remotely. A good chat with the Head over Zoom in their study, followed by a personalised and bespoke tour of the school (for their children's age group and interests) with the aid of an iPad, good bandwidth and wide-reaching WiFi is most definitely more beneficial for schools and parents. It has to be the 'next best thing' and is certainly the most effective way of ensuring parents really see the school and understand and sense its unique atmosphere. After all, whilst facilities and location are important, it is usually atmosphere and culture

which sell schools to the most discerning parents.

In addition to bespoke, Head-led virtual visits and tours, an interactive website is a must. This allows parents to explore the school at their leisure and get a good understanding for what the site, resources and education all have to offer. To be truly interactive, not only does it need to include photos and videos, but also natural and almost 'amateur' videos of the children themselves explaining what is special about the school. Not scripted nor polished, the videos should be simple and informative allowing the children, always our best ambassadors, to sell the school. Parents always want to hear it from the horse's mouth and like to visualise their children in the setting; will they flourish and how will they develop? Seeing articulate, interested, curious and confident children talking about their school will give prospective parents the confidence that their own children will also develop in this way.

Prospective parents will undoubtedly be impressed with how schools have managed to provide a high-quality remote learning provision during the recent lockdowns and this will demonstrate the professionalism of the school. However, it would be fair to say that even the most mediocre school back in March, will now be at the top of their game in the remote learning stakes. What is it that will set your school apart from the competition? An effective blended learning provision ensuring that either staff or pupil absence does not impact negatively on learning is essential, and this must be demonstrable.

Assess and mitigate risks to stand out

Parents are also wanting to see evidence of strong community cohesion and how the school is ensuring that their pupils' mental health and wellbeing are being supported during such challenging times. It is also a huge concern to parents that their children are now behind academically and will not reach their full potential in forthcoming public exams. Schools need to be able to explain how they accurately measure pupil progress and what measures they have in place to fill any gaps and

to ensure accelerated progress and sustained attainment.

Parents want to know that their children are safe at school during the pandemic but also receiving the best possible education. This means a full curriculum covering all subjects and a good mix of specialist and class-based lessons. Many parents, after a full term of home learning, are far more involved in their children's learning and have a greater sense of ownership than ever before. For many, they delivered the learning themselves or saw teachers providing online lessons, this has meant they have a heightened sense of what provides a good education and first-hand experience of doing it.

Ethos and culture - marketing now focuses on the things that matter

Parents are looking for high quality teaching and learning, purposeful feedback and regular communication from schools on their child's progress with targets for further improvement. Whilst this was the case before the summer lockdown, it is far more important to them now.

Having missed a whole term of school life, sport, collaborative learning, the creative arts and the community spirit, parents are looking for schools to be on top of their game and ensuring they make up for lost time. In fairness, who can argue with them?

It has been an intensely challenging and difficult time for schools but as with all things, there are positives to be had from the pandemic. It has forced schools to look at their marketing with flair, creativity and innovation. Rather than relying on glossy prospectuses and polished videos, marketing is now focused on the things that matter – the ethos and culture of schools, pupil voice and heartfelt messages from Heads about the school's DNA. All schools have had to readjust and refine their offering, assess their priorities and go back to basics without the gloss – a quality education in which the children are nurtured, known as individuals and making demonstrable progress in a creative and innovative environment.

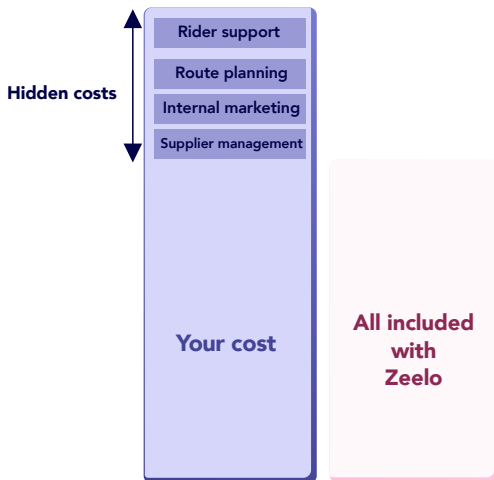
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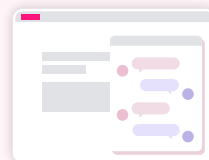
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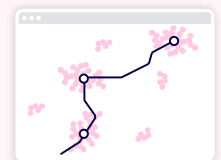
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Live tracking



24/7 support



Route optimisation



Scheme to support students' mental health

Students at Ellesmere College, Shropshire, have launched a mental health support scheme that focuses on helping students recognise what is detrimental to their health and wellbeing and how to access support.

Mental Health at Ellesmere Support System (MHES) is a student led initiative by year 13 student Elin Jones and Alex Murphy, Director of Rugby at the College supported by a team of sixth formers.

Mr Murphy said: "The scheme is up and running and raising awareness about general mental health and well being for students as well as the problems associated with the tighter restrictions students are facing during these unprecedented times of Covid.

"People often find it difficult to identify and discuss things which are worrying them but it's good to talk – and that is one of the most

Pictured: Elin Jones and Alex Murphy

important messages we need to get across.

"One of the other problems that young people experience is knowing where to go when dealing with these difficult thoughts and emotions."

The idea behind the scheme was put forward by Elin and Sixth Formers who felt that as well as supporting students with their overall mental health and wellbeing, it was also a safety net system in place to avoid a potentially bad situation from becoming much worse.

Mr Murphy said students would have a number of options of where to go in the support structure, one of which is a student support team providing an approachable source of guidance which acts as a stepping stone between pupils and staff.

He added: "It's not difficult to understand the risks to mental



health – something which can creep up on you without being aware of it, which is what prompted the launch of the scheme.

"We have been living with Coronavirus for many months and there doesn't look like being an end to it any time soon. It means having to adhere to rules which can have a debilitating effect on health and wellbeing.

"Problems can arise in several ways, including anxiety, stress and depression so we must do everything

we can to safeguard the health of our students. The support system will monitor, help and advise while raising awareness of the risks to people who are having to deal with everyday issues as well as the increased isolation we are all facing at this time.

"Training students places them in the ideal position to understand the problems and issues faced by their fellow students and offer guidance in helping them seek help and support in maintaining health and welfare."

A whole-school approach to wellbeing and mental health

Advertorial Feature

Thrive® was established more than 25 years ago to provide the tools, skills and insights needed to help children and young people become more emotionally resilient.

Thrive training helps professionals to understand what healthy child development looks like in terms of behaviour and learning, and to be able to recognise what a child or young person's more worrying behaviour may be communicating. Thrive training will enable staff to develop whole-class curriculum plans that underpin right-time development, as well as providing targeted interventions for individual pupils identified as needing additional support.

Krista Gayton, from King Henry VIII Preparatory School, describes the difference that Thrive has made to the school, "I have had parents come into the Thrive room who are amazed when I show them the social and emotional activities that we offer here. There are parents that would sign up to the school purely because of Thrive".

The Approach consists of Thrive-Online®, an assessment and

monitoring tool, and training for adults working with young people. Thrive training focuses on the emotional needs of different age groups informed by neuroscience and attachment research, as well as child development studies and research into risk and resilience factors. At its heart is the understanding that all children's behaviour represents communication of their needs. If these needs are recognised and met, children will be able to flourish and learn.

As a result of introducing the Thrive Approach, feedback from children at King Henry VIII Preparatory School has shown that it has made a real difference to their emotional health. In 2020, the school was shortlisted in the Wellbeing category of the TES Independent Schools Awards for its work with the Thrive Approach and other initiatives. To find out about introducing Thrive to your school, visit www.thriveapproach.com

Braintastic!

Advertorial Feature

Recently launched Braintastic! sparks a love of science in students and challenges the perception of what a scientist looks like. Running workshops and shows for schools, both virtually and in real life, Braintastic! offers an engaging way to educate young people on how their brains work.

Ginny Smith, scientist, presenter, writer, and founder of Braintastic!, wants to bring her love of neuroscience to everyone. Ginny explains, "I am passionate about science and want to inspire young people. I love the curiosity of kids – they ask brilliant questions and encouraging that curiosity is a huge part of Braintastic!. Creating engaging ways of helping to educate them whilst also having fun, means they learn more easily."

With a range of shows and workshops on offer to suit all ages, show titles include: Hack Your Brain and Mastering Memory. Braintastic! works closely with schools to ensure the content delivered is appropriate

to the audience and will exceed expectations. Workshops can be tailored to a school's specific requirements and there are also supplementary offerings like activity packs to extend learning.

Currently, Braintastic! have free resources to help teachers during lockdown, including lesson plans. Find these on the website: www.braintasticscience.com.

With Science Week coming in March, Braintastic! could offer your school something different to entertain students. With the huge focus on mental health this year, there's never been a better time to challenge the myths around our brains and for children to get familiar with neuroscience.



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Profile

In conversation with Dr Pamela Edmonds

Married:

Single. I have two wonderful daughters aged 24 and 31

Schools and University Attended:

University of London and University of Bath

First job:

Barclays Bank processing customer payments.

First management job:

Head of Maths, Queen's College, Palma

First job in education:

Teacher of Maths and PE, Maylands Girls' Comprehensive School, Havering

Appointed to current job:

August 2018

Favourite piece of music:

Serenade for Strings in E Major, Dvorak and I Feel Good, James Brown

Favourite food: Thai

Favourite drink: Red Wine

Favourite holiday destination:

Maldives

Favourite leisure pastime:

Jogging, squash and playing duplicate Bridge

Favourite TV or radio programme/series:

The Bridge

Suggested epitaph:

Had a great life but I knew if I waited long enough something like this would happen

Q You have taught in schools as far flung as Singapore, Japan, Thailand and Spain. How does this global experience impact on how you run your London school today?

A One of the advantages of teaching overseas is the experience one develops of other educational systems, the opportunity to develop a global perspective and the sharing of best practice from around the world. When local and international families apply for a place for their child at The Hampshire School Chelsea, I understand their high expectations and know what excellence looks like for them. Drawing on that knowledge, the teaching, learning, assessment and communication at our school is personalised to maximise pupils' outcomes. Meaningful intercultural dialogue and engagement in the school community fosters cultural understanding and a global awareness. We have implemented a Singaporean style mastery approach to teaching mathematics and measure our academic results against international standards as well as national state and independent data in the UK. My experience as a lead reviewer of governance for AGBIS and as a trained EQI Team Inspector for ISI, further ensures that I keep abreast of what constitutes outstanding practice in education. Furthermore, I share that expertise through tailored staff development and CPD.

Q Back in the 1990's you wrote a Masters thesis comparing the curricula in Japan, Hong Kong, and the UK. Although things will have moved in some ways since then, what did your research tell you about the differing parental attitudes to children's education in the three territories? Do you find that you need to take a variety of approaches in your dealing with international parents now?

A All parents want the best education for their child. My thesis on the merits of national curricula, acknowledged the high standards of results in Asia, and evidence of the potential risk to a loss of creativity, high achievement, and the wellbeing of pupils, with a move to a centralised system. As an independent school we have the freedom to be innovative and are able to supplement the National Curriculum to provide a well-rounded, personalised education for all which is rigorous, creative and has a very strong partnership with parents. Our weekly timetabled Pupil Voice and Wellbeing Time, where pupils discuss and debate topical

issues, encourages collaboration, the sharing of their views, thoughts, questions and concerns; this has placed us ahead of the curve regarding pupils driving change for which we have been nominated for an ISA Award this academic year. The Hampshire School Chelsea challenges all pupils beyond age related expectations which is highly valued by all parents, including our international families.

Q The Hampshire School Chelsea, approaching its 100th anniversary, makes a point of preparing children for life in a global world. Working abroad will have provided you with a unique insight into the value of this. Would you advise young teachers today to advance their careers by spending some years overseas, as you did? If yes, what would you tell them are the key benefits in so doing?

A I always recommend staff challenge themselves and, whether it be in the UK or overseas, to seek out opportunities to expand their experience of teaching and learning underpinned by theoretical study to root decisions. I was fortunate to work in outstanding, forward-thinking schools. That experience broadened my horizons of what management and leadership looks like and how in an international context, or a London Prep school with international families, it is important to have a thorough understanding of how people communicate and work together in a global context. Since learning is the central concern of the teaching profession, teachers need to have a vocabulary for critical discussion of pedagogy and the best way to achieve that expertise is to learn from the best practice around the world.

Q Your school has its roots in the performing arts. It now offers 3-13 year olds what is described as a holistic approach to co-education, with the arts in balance with STEM subjects. How do you ensure this 'holistic balance' works in practice?

A The heritage of The Hampshire School Chelsea dates from 1928 with the Hampshire acting dynasty who are the founders of the school. Today we embrace that strength and focus on music and the performing arts for the love of learning in those creative pursuits but also the transferable skills and proven impact on outcomes in the core subjects such as English and maths. We have ballet, drama and art taught by specialist teachers across the

Pamela Edmonds has been head of The Hampshire School Chelsea, London, since 2018. She was previously Head of St Cedd's School.



school, including Nursery. Interdisciplinary work is definitely at the centre of our approach with the exceptionally well qualified staff setting the bar high in terms of achievement; the school is well known for its art exhibitions and national awards. We value the balance of the arts with the core subjects as they both provide the opportunity for the children to have high self-esteem, develop public speaking skills and have a broad range of interests.

Q You are known to favour the right of pupils to be heard and drive change. Are you a fan of pupil-reviews of staff? How do you monitor what really goes on in the classroom? Do you still teach?

A We give each and every pupil the conviction that their voice is heard and acted upon, that they are valued as individuals, and that they can really transform their school community. We have adopted a multi-faceted approach to promoting participation through a series of initiatives, underpinned by the recognition of diversity, equality, and respect for the rights of all. There are clear roles and structures in place across the school to capture the views of all pupils on a wide range of issues relating to school improvement. We run six pupil-lead Development Groups which give an opportunity for the children to develop the skills needed to become more active citizens. Monitoring of learning is continuous with regular drop-ins to lessons, pupil and parent surveys and a Parent Voice Committee that meets half termly. I accept any opportunity to teach, whether it be to cover a maths class, take a maths club, hear the children read in Early Years, or coach a sport.

Q The Year 8 fees at The Hampshire School Chelsea are currently £6,475 per term. Do you have or plan to have any bursaries or scholarships which can widen access? Does the school participate in any Independent State School Partnerships, or otherwise get involved with the local community?

A The Hampshire School Chelsea has recently joined with School Home Support (SHS) charity to support primary schools and is currently working with a local school to provide resources and share knowledge and experience. We value partnerships with our parents, local and wider

community, and learn from those enterprises. All pupils have talents and are celebrated and recognised for their skills and accomplishments. A hardship fund exists for families who qualify for financial support with fees.

Q By any measure, the last twelve months have been challenging ones for staff. Programmes for reducing staff stress levels are higher on the agenda than they were. What steps have you taken to address this issue?

A The last 12 months have presented challenges as well as opportunities for our nation and our Growth Mindset approach and the school's Core Values have helped manage the safety of the community and demands on families during the pandemic. With great speed and success, we implemented a virtual learning programme which is highly valued by parents and pupils. The timetables have been modified to include a consistent one-hour lunch to facilitate a break from computer screens, staff have the option to select a free take-away meal each week prepared by our caterers, the school minibuses provide a door-to-door service for all staff so that they can avoid public transport, staff are given a time to work from home, and are supported with virtual resources and IT training. The weekly 'Staff Shouts' to thank individuals for their efforts is valued by colleagues. The twice weekly Lateral Testing regime, wearing of masks, 'podding' of critical workers' children, social distancing and regular sanitising of hands, ensure that school is a safe haven for all.

Q Jane Prescott, head at Portsmouth High School, said recently that - far from being snowflakes - the overwhelming majority of pupils had 'coped admirably' with the difficulties, upsets, and disturbances forced on them, their families and their schooling by Covid-19. Do you share that view? How have you sought to spot and assist the minority who are not coping so well?

A Our children have been remarkable in the way that they have embraced online learning. Our blended learning provision with pre-recorded lessons and access to Google Classroom resources facilitates continued education no matter where our children are in the world. The pupils' progress has continued at a pace and I put their success

down to highly effective communication between staff, pupils and parents facilitated through regular virtual meetings. Assessments have been administered remotely and we have not diminished any of our educational provision with 'live' lessons and continued support for the children transitioning to senior school. Regular presentations to parents and virtual Parents' Evenings', keep our community up to date with decisions from Early Years to 13+. Critical workers' children and pupils, for whom remote learning is a challenge, are physically in school for lessons.

Q If you could turn the clock back twelve months, and prepare for the pandemic with the wisdom of hindsight, what if anything would you have done differently?

A The school has successfully delivered a continued education and is keeping the community safe. The challenges have been in supporting all families whatever their circumstances to manage working from home while their children access online lessons. Learning from Lockdown 1, we now have a support network for parents who may need some steering in managing their work ethic while caring for their children during lockdown.

Q There is said to be a shortage of senior staff prepared to take the step up to headship. If you met such a person, competent and ready for a top job but hesitating over the responsibilities and pressures involved, what would you say to encourage them to 'go for it'?

A I encourage career progression and provide opportunities for professional development, coaching and mentorship. Staff are told to go for it and I have many who are ready for the next step in their careers. I share daily decisions with the SLT and offer an insight into the daily experience of a Head by allowing colleagues to shadow me. That said, I am not sure any training prepares one for the diversity of the role of headship - but it is the best job in the world!

Design contest produces cost-effective new theatre facility

When Horris Hill School decided to invest in a new purpose-built theatre for their rural campus in Berkshire they chose to run a competition to attract the best architect who could design a most impressive facility within the modest budget befitting a school with 130 pupils.

Q: What gave you the idea to run a competition for architects? What brief did you provide? Who judged the competition entries, and what factors did they take into account when reaching their decision?

A: A project team had been formed consisting of senior leadership and governors, with specific expertise brought onto the board for this. We were a demanding group, as we wanted something complicated, in a fully specced theatre, on a very tight budget, sympathetically designed for its surroundings but also unashamedly modern. Overriding all of this, however, was our aim of working with an architect who understood the school and could see the theatre as part of the whole site and how it would be seen by staff and boys. I wanted to feel I was employing a new member of staff rather than outsourcing to a consultant. Jonathan Tuckey Design very quickly established themselves as

The outcome was a sustainable building which provides a 160-seat auditorium, an outdoor amphitheatre, and space for pupils to congregate, delivered on time and for less than £1.75m all in. The winning architects - Jonathan Tuckey Design - specified an engineered wood structural system clad with wood fibre panels.

The David Brownlow Theatre - named after the principal benefactor - affords access to all aspects of theatre practice

the right team: not only were their design ideas very exciting but they were immediately interested in the ethos of the school and how we met our educational aims. Anybody who asks to have their lunch with 130 prep school boys must be interested in the ethos of the school!

Q: Major four-year projects like this rarely run entirely smoothly. Were there any particular hurdles which had to be overcome along the way?

A: Any major project has hurdles to overcome, both expected and unexpected. For the theatre, we had established the principle that all costs would be covered by fundraising, not the school, so we had to make sure that our fundraising activities were ahead of the design and construction programme at all times; given the relentless nature of a capital project and the inevitable ebb and flow of fundraising, we didn't always sleep

- performance, production and design - and embeds these into the culture of the school.

Outside teaching hours, the new theatre will open up to the wider community through local theatre clubs and groups.

Head Giles Tollit (pictured right) said: "It is a fabulous building, and it has already significantly enhanced the quality of the education we are providing - not just the drama, but also lectures. Prior to lockdown staff were beginning to explore

easy! Unexpected issues that we had to overcome were a change in project manager, in the school Bursar, and the small matter of a global pandemic! Covid slowed us down but ultimately did not derail the project. A grand opening event in the summer would not have been possible in any case, so to have the theatre finished, landscaped and tested for the start of the new academic year was a perfect outcome. With critical materials being brought in from overseas, we also had Brexit in the back of our minds.

Q: You have plans to open up the building for community use out of school hours. How will you address the practical considerations of security, booking systems, publicity, insurances, and so on? Do you anticipate needing extra staff? Will it dovetail with outreach programmes undertaken by Horris Hill?

A: The David Brownlow Theatre is a community resource built at Horris Hill, and categorically not for the use of Horris Hill exclusively. In fact we very much intend to have the theatre used during school hours and will have a dedicated theatre manager in place who will maintain a year-round programme of events and group usage that will make the theatre a cultural hub for as broad a community as possible. This aim was in the DNA of the project from the start, so we have the infrastructure and usage plans already established; from parking to noise pollution to interval drinks



the technical capabilities and the standard of the in-house lectures was rising every day. One event saw the top three years spellbound by a great lecture on - of all things - West Side Story, that weaved video, music and stills, as well as the member of staff speaking on stage, with two boys in the technical box working the buttons - utterly brilliant."

More from Mr Tollit in this Q&A feature...



venues, all has been worked out for a variety of usages.

Q: You have ended up with a unique building which offers all you sought at considerably lower cost than some larger schools have spent to get a similar facility. With the benefit of your experience, what advice would you offer to heads thinking of commissioning their own new theatre auditorium?

A: The project team is critical, and we were right to spend valuable time finding the architect that understood our needs and who was excited about an ambitious project on a tight budget. The in-house team, project managing from the Bursar and support from my head of fundraising, was phenomenal. The demands of running such a project must be factored in, as running a school doesn't stop! It was very important to me to be clear about what we were building. Most spaces in school, perhaps especially at prep school, are multi-functional and I was determined to resist this for such a key building: I had to say no to retractable seating and a collapsible stage more times than I could count!



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There's more to music than meets the ear

'Music makes the brain grow'...

...says Susie Lamb, Head of Music, Salisbury Cathedral School, Wiltshire



Have you heard about the school in special measures that chose to increase the amount of music in the

curriculum instead of pursuing extra academic studies? It's a happy tale that ends with a 'Good' Ofsted rating and the school, which serves a deprived and densely populated community, being in the top 10% of schools nationally for positive pupil progress.

Look back to 2010 and the Feversham Primary Academy in Bradford was in special measures, struggling to find and keep pupils and battling low staff morale. The Head refers to the decision to tackle the problem with music, drama and arts as 'brave' and 'a big risk'. A risk worth taking it turns out as not only have results improved across the school but so has attendance which now sits at 98%. In fact, attendance rose steadily as the amount of music taught in the school increased. All pupils now have about 6 hours of music a week and a minimum of two hours.

I'm not surprised the pupils at Feversham Primary Academy progressed so much. Music makes you feel better, whether it's your favourite pop song on the radio or playing a piece on the piano. I always say: you don't sing when you're sad, and happy children learn better.

The Feversham Academy story acts as a wonderful reminder that the beautiful music that beats in the heart of our school is much more valuable to our children's development than we often appreciate. Here at SCS, we learn spellings with song, times tables with rhythm and generally ensure music is for everyone every day. And why do we do that? Obviously, it makes learning fun, but it's also well proven that the more music the better when it comes to improving academics.

In essence, music makes your brain grow. Neuroscientists around the world have proven this across

many research papers investigating different age groups and the over-arching conclusion is that continued exposure to music improves cognitive abilities. Whilst the positive effect of musical education is occasionally hyped – the so-called 'Mozart' effect – it is equally physically proven by neurological measurements such as MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) or EEG (electroencephalography).

Starting with our youngest children, aged between 3 and 6, research has shown that taking early music classes leads to an increase in vocabulary, pre-reading skills and singing ability beyond what could be attributed to normal development. Furthermore, a correlation between singing ability and language skills has also been highlighted. All great news for the enthusiastic participants of our Bright Beginnings toddler group.

Neuroscientists at the University of Southern California (USC) also concluded that music instruction appears to accelerate brain development in young children. What's more this was particularly in the areas of the brain responsible for processing sound, language development, speech perception and reading skills.

Studies with slightly older children, of primary school age, bear similar conclusions. For example, The University of Amsterdam conducted a longitudinal study of 147 primary aged children over two and a half years. The goal was to examine whether structured music lessons can affect executive subfunctions of the brain that may underlie academic achievement. The results positively proved the children who received music lessons had significant cognitive improvements compared to all other children in the study.

A more recent study (results published Oct 2020) targeting older children, aged 10-13 in Chile, also reports that learning to play a musical instrument is good for the brain. Working with 40 children, the neuroscientists introduced musical instrument lessons, plus at

least two hours practise each week and regular time spent playing in an orchestra or ensemble, to half the children. The other half had no musical training outside of the school curriculum. In the final assessments the musically trained children had better attention and memory recall. They also had greater activation in the brain regions related to attention control and auditory encoding which are executive brain functions known to be associated with improved reading, higher resilience, greater creativity and a better quality of life.

A lot of our children participate in music – singing or instrumental lessons – before school meaning their brains are fired up and very receptive to learning. Every pupil has at least one timetabled class music lesson each week, around 90% learn an instrument (or two), all regularly sing within other subject lessons like French and Science as well as in chapel and our two weekly assemblies. We usually run 20 ensembles and we've managed to keep at least one ensemble per bubble in our pared back COVID-safe timetable. It's fair to say we breathe music in this school.

Obviously, the benefits of learning an instrument go beyond academic improvements. The pupils at SCS also build self-confidence through a programme of regular informal concerts that celebrate all levels of musical accomplishments. We recognise the effort and the bravery behind every performance, be it a grade 8 masterpiece or Twinkle Twinkle Little Star. Friendships are also born and strengthened in the fun environment of our choirs and ensembles. And, the very best outcome in my mind, is that music is for life not just for childhood.

So, next time you hear a school choir singing, or the beat of a drum lesson, trumpets blaring or violin scales floating across the skies, take a minute to remember we are all building our brains as well as learning a life skill, having fun and being mindful...

World Cup dancers

The New Hall School, Essex, Dance Department will be representing England in the 2021 Dance World Cup.

The Dance World Cup (DWC) is the biggest dance competition in the world with over 6000 dancers from 54 Countries. It is the greatest all genre dance competition for dancers aged 4 years to 25 years. The judges have chosen Year 7 student Lois Dennison and Year 9 student Darcie Meechan to compete with their Tap Duet called 'Sing, Sing, Sing' (pictured), choreographed by Sarah Molina, Head of Dance at New Hall School.

Bosco Chiu, former Deputy Head Boy and 2020 alumnus, was chosen to compete with his lyrical solo which was choreographed by teacher Laura Bouckley, and former New Hall student and teacher Darcie Playle was chosen to compete in the under 25s category with a piece which she has choreographed.

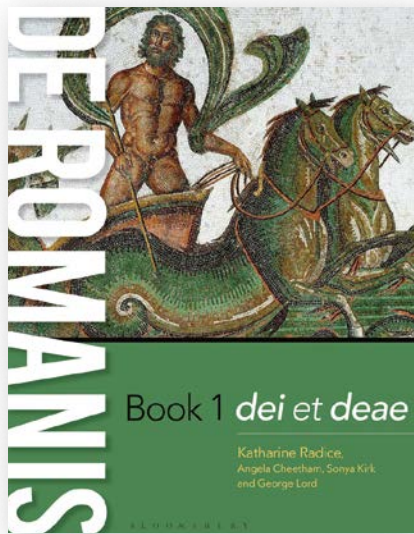
The Dance World Cup UK organised an official Qualifier Heat for Team England, Team Scotland, Team Wales and Team Northern Ireland by video audition. A panel of trained DWC Judges selected the dancers who will compete in DWC in Burgos, Spain in July 2021. Patrons for Team England are Arlene Phillips CBE, Wayne Sleep CBE, Debbie Moore CBE and Laurretta Summerscales, Principal Ballerina.



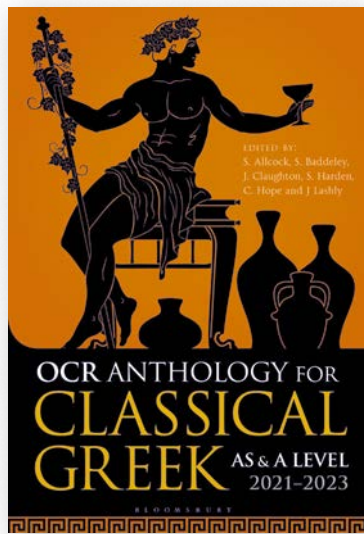
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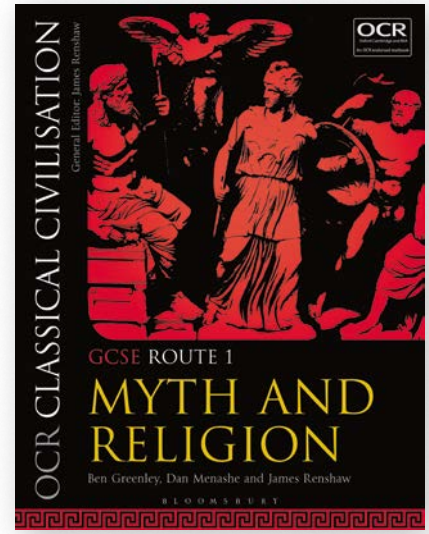
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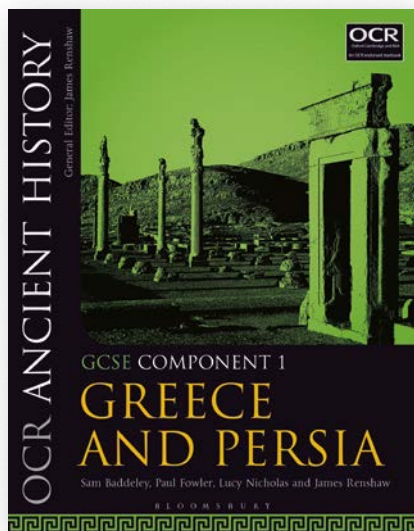
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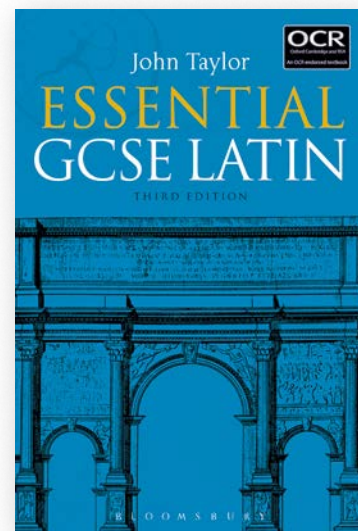
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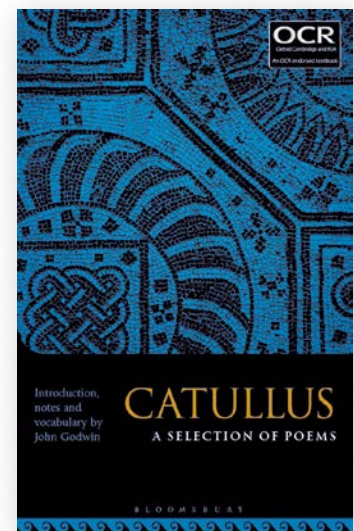
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Starring on Facebook!

Nine-year-old Burgess Hill Girls, Sussex, pupil Leyla Jukes is pictured playing the piano in a new Facebook advertisement.

Called 'More Together' the video shows how, despite the various lockdowns in 2020, communities have been able to come together on the Facebook platform. Leyla is pictured playing piano at the start of the advertisement with her image projected onto a giant wall in Los Angeles. Piano is one of the key activities that Leyla has been

able to keep enjoying over the last few months. She has been playing since the age of five and during lockdown has been continuing her lessons with her Burgess Hill Girls teacher via Zoom. She also plays the recorder and next would like to learn the guitar.

Music has been a wonderful distraction for Leyla during the previous and current lockdowns. "I never get bored during the lockdown as there is lots of time for me to play the piano. Luckily, there

are lots of apps with new music to learn. I like learning to play songs by my favourite singers Billie Eilish and Dermot Kennedy."

Burgess Hill Girls Head of Pre-Prep & Prep Heather Cavanagh is delighted for Leyla: "The lockdown is particularly hard for younger girls as I know they miss seeing and playing with their friends. It is fantastic to see Leyla embracing the new opportunities lockdown can bring and to see her piano playing skills being recognised."



Zoomtunes! Free virtual singing class launched

While singing lessons are on hold and any communal singing banned to prevent any spread of the coronavirus, Edinburgh-based St Mary's Music School has taken to Zoom to keep everyone on song.

This month (February) sees the launch of Zoomtunes, a new virtual singing class for 6 to 8-year-olds, led by the school's expert vocal coach, Libby Crabtree.

Free to everyone who registers, Zoomtunes runs every Friday afternoon from 2pm to 2.30pm with Libby leading the virtual ensemble of young voices through a range of songs from folk, musical theatre and pop.

The 30 minute sessions will start with some vocal warm ups and games to get the voice going and help the children master good techniques. Words will be onscreen and with the mics on mute, every child can sing out with confidence.

A recording artist and freelance musician, Libby has 20-years' experience as both a teacher and performer on London's West End and concert stages around the world. She said: "Singing with others on Zoom is surprisingly, wonderfully communal. A bit like everyone getting around the piano. And the benefits are huge. It really lifts the spirits,

and everyone looks forward to the next session. Even those who are nervous to start with find moments of brightness through the online sessions."

Having worked at St Mary's Music School, teaching its choristers for the past three years, Libby is excited about the impact Zoomtunes can have. She added: "I want to be the Joe Wicks of singing! I would love to see loads of children experiencing the joy of singing and with Zoomtunes, in just 30 minutes, we're going to be doing the kind of tunes that everyone can be singing around the house or humming to themselves for days afterwards!"

Dr Kenneth Taylor, headteacher at St Mary's Music School said: "Singing is such a positive activity for adults and children. It can have a hugely positive impact on wellbeing. Over the past few months, the school has worked hard to establish the right digital platforms and the best approaches to virtual teaching. Zoomtunes is a way of sharing that experience with as wide an audience as possible."

Zoomtunes is the latest online music class offered by St Mary's Music School, which is also running free sessions for instrumentalists.

More details can be found on the school's website (www.stmarysmusicschool.co.uk)

Classics and the importance of otherness

What time, if any, does Latin deserve on the Key Stage 3 timetable? What exactly is its claim to a school's resources, or the headspace of pupils? Is it a Humanities subject? An 'Ancient Foreign Language'? Something else? How does it evolve as pupils begin to read texts in the original, from GCSE onwards? And what about all the Key Stage 3 pupils who don't go on to GCSE? What's the pay-off for all their effort and engagement? The instrumental value of learning Latin – access to the high art of Horace and co. – is small consolation to ab initio Latinists because the vast majority will never reach the level where they can read Pliny in the bath before breakfast. So what makes it worth their while?

It's the intrinsic, cognitive value of taking on an inflected language. It's

By Dominic Jones, Head of Classics at King Edward's School, Birmingham
de Romanis is available from Bloomsbury at bloomsbury.com/deromanis

the unique 'otherness' of working with a language conceptually alien from our own. It's the process of manipulating and maybe mastering a complex but highly structured system of thought-code. The other 'otherness' of Classics – the mystique of ancient civilizations – is part of the package, of course. But if the lesson-by-lesson experience of Key Stage 3 Classics is largely linguistic, then that experience needs to be an end in itself.

Like most ab initio Latinists in the UK, I started out on the Cambridge Latin Course (CLC). It's fast and fun and it gives the feeling of fluency by a method called 'comprehensible input': if you can grasp what's happening in the sentence or the story, you're succeeding – even if you can't explain each word's inflection. This method is great for the

early-course confidence of ab initio linguists, but it effaces the otherness of tackling an inflected language. And before long, pupils are left confused or disenchanted by the partiality of the picture. It shouldn't take over a year for pupils to learn that Latin has neuter nouns.

This year we moved to Bloomsbury's new course, *de Romanis*. Where the CLC borrows the methodology of modern language learning, *de Romanis* meets Latin on its own terms. It accounts for the otherness of Latin by teaching concepts like conjugation and the perfect stem system. Instead of reading Latin like French, or reading primarily for content, *de Romanis* reads Latin slowly and carefully – more like doing Maths than doing MFL.

Sounds dry? Our Year 7 don't think so, for two reasons. First, they enjoy deciphering a code whose scruples and logic they can actually articulate. Second, the course comes with meaty chunks of civilization, presenting real Roman sources for pupil-led, active analysis. Gone are the Britannica-esque dollops of cold content. Lessons feel like a combination of English, History and Maths. It's a diet varied enough to engage the full aptitude range but without compromising the integrity of reading Latin as an inflected language.

The otherness of Latin, its unique cognitive crunch, produces the kind of thorough but flexible thinking our world needs. Just ask the PM, or J.K. Rowling, or Tom Hiddleston, or Martha Kearney, or Mark Zuckerberg.

New structure demands 'absolute trust'

One school, two Principals -

Chetham's, the specialist music school in Manchester, was founded as a charitable school in 1653 and educated the poor boys of the district for 400 years before becoming a co-educational music school in 1969. Until now it's been led by a sole Headteacher. Following the retirement of Alun Jones in 2020 the Governors made the bold decision to appoint a new 'double act', a duo to lead the School into the next part of its future.

The Joint Principals, Nicola Smith and Tom Redmond who started in September 2020, are one of only a small number of Joint/ Shared/ 'Co' School leaders in the UK...

Chetham's 328 students, boarding and day, share the school grounds with the oldest academic library in the English-speaking world and The Stoller Hall – Manchester's finest medium sized Concert Hall.

The magnitude of the role for one person to lead singularly would require someone to have a comprehensive understanding of education, boarding, specialist music education, the heritage sector and the cultural sector plus boundless energy and limitless time!

Tom and Nicola have had very different career paths, Nicola in the secondary maintained sector and Tom in the media and arts. Tom was a member of the Hallé for thirteen years before relinquishing his position to focus on his work in broadcasting and music education. He's been a regular presenter on BBC Radio 3 since 2011 and still advises many of the orchestras in the UK on their education and family programs. Nicola started her career in education twenty years ago in Salford teaching Drama, Music and Media. She has been a Senior Leader in three contrasting Schools for the last sixteen years, with seven years as Deputy Head or Vice Principal. Nicola was the Vice Principal at Chetham's and Tom was the Director of Music – both were the natural successors for the 'top job'.

Nicola says 'It is the fact that Tom and I get on so well, he is an expert in his field and I in mine that made it such an appealing proposition'. They took their proposal to the governors who put them through the rigorous selection process and made the brave decision to do something

new, untried and untested. Tom said 'Two heads are usually better than one, we are accountable to the students, parents and governors – but most of all to each other'. There are some shared tasks but a clear division of labour, Nicola taking on the typical Headteacher role, and Tom leading the Artistic and Creative.

The appeal for governors was that there would be stability in the process of leadership change, there would be a strengthening of the ethos and values, continued growth as a modern Independent School and a unity of purpose across the whole organisation.

The shared role would be almost impossible without absolute trust between the two Principals. Tom says, 'Nicola and I hit it off pretty much straight away when I joined the school in 2019. We faced a number of challenges together (even pre covid!) and it was immediately apparent that we shared a similar outlook on life and education. Our skill sets complement one another but importantly there's no rivalry or desire to encroach on one another's areas of responsibility. We'll pull each other up on various issues and we're able to bounce ideas around together, but ultimately we each know where our responsibilities and strengths lie.'

The current situation around Covid has meant that the shared strategic vision of the school has had to be adjusted slightly to deal with the ever changing landscape of guidance and procedures that all schools have had to deal with. 'It's also given us scope to really review what's been achieved and see how we can develop



these new strengths to take the school in new, and previously unimaginable directions'.

Having now delivered tens of thousands of hours of online musical tuition, the potential to exploit technology to expand the reach of Chetham's is something that appeals to both Tom and Nicola. 'Chetham's was founded to provide education to those that needed it the most. The ethos of the school hasn't changed in 400 years, but our reach is far greater now than three local boroughs that the school originally served!

With shared leadership and a shared vision, we have the time to fulfill our daily responsibilities, but even more importantly we have time to breathe and to think way beyond the current situation.'

Many crave and seek positions of leadership, only to discover the loneliness of being at the head of an organisation. 'Shared leadership might not suit all egos, but the breadth of experience that it can bring to an organisation and the potential for growth and team development makes it a really exciting way to work'.

It's not all gloom when it comes to fundraising in the time of Covid

Jenny Blaiklock, Development Director of Lady Eleanor Holles School, Middlesex, says that despite the many hardships of lockdowns, virtual alumni events have been more successful than those they replaced..

We have had to postpone all our face-to-face get-togethers since March. But to our surprise the virtual replacements have been more successful, allowing alumnae from all around the world to join in.

For example, the school's annual Alumnae Lunch, which can usually only be attended by those with easy access to London, had to be cancelled. Undaunted, they decided to try to replicate the most important part of the day, which, of course, was allowing alumnae to chat with long-lost friends.

We set up 12 Zoom chat rooms across the age groups and even the class of 1945 were successfully helped through any technical glitches so they could join in. We managed to re-unite 10 people over the age of 85, who happily chatted away for about two-and-a-half hours! We doubled the number of attendees overall, and were delighted to welcome alumnae from all around the world. We received lovely emails saying how thrilled they had been to meet up again with long lost friends. With so many people in that age group having to self-

isolate and unable to see their loved ones, we may have really helped them to stave off loneliness – for an afternoon, at least.'

My advice to schools wanting to engage with their alumni community is 'be patient': in 2020, my school has seen a 22 percent year-on-year increase in the number of alumnae donations and a 50 percent growth in the number of legacies.

Our Holles Connect site looks really attractive and engaging. It's easy for us to upload interesting content, and for visitors to navigate, whether



Jenny Blaiklock

it's contact details of an old friend they've lost touch with, or if they're looking for a career mentor. We use ToucanTech software, which has played a key role in helping us develop this relationship. One of its key strengths is that the software is incredibly user friendly.

Eight ways to engage alumni during lockdown

Yes it's still lockdown, but that doesn't mean that alumni relations should be put on the back burner. In fact, with so many people stuck at home it's a great time to reach out and make connections.

Many alumni are willing to engage and want to hear from their former school, college or university but they aren't opening the annual correspondence posted through their letterbox, and they don't want to be asked for money if they haven't heard from your institution in years.

Engaging and managing former students online not only gives you an instant and regular response, but you can use all the data gathered through these activities to power future fundraising campaigns.

Fundraising specialist Kate Jillings suggests eight ways to help schools develop relationships with past students online:

1) Develop content around previous gatherings or reunions

Remind people of your upcoming events by posting a few snapshots and quotes from the previous event.

This is especially effective for events like reunions where alumni may only meet each other once a decade!

2) Make it shareable

The more you can personalise your content, the higher the chance of it being shared more widely! Sharing photos with your posts is an ideal way to spark fond memories and increases the likelihood of your post being shared between old classmates.

3) Use surveys to find out what your alumni are up to

Surveys are a great way to engage your former students, and also help to inform your communication strategy, because you can tailor your content to their sector, interests and location.

4) Highlight alumni achievements

An effective way to get people to log into a school's alumni website is to highlight an individual ex-student and their achievements, whether that is charity work or significant contributions to their field, through a news article or even a recorded interview. It is particularly effective

to add in the year they graduated – 'from the Class of 2020' – to any promotion of the content – those in the same year group will be interested to hear what their peers are up to!

5) Set up consent preference options

Set up different consent options for the different types of content you send to your alumni – for example, allow them to opt out of newsletters, but stay in touch to hear about event invitations. This way, you can avoid people opting out of your communications altogether, and you have a more engaged audience for the comms they want to receive.

6) Show them how their donation has had an impact

Particularly with those who have donated in the past but haven't engaged for a while, show them what their previous donation has been spent on. Try to tailor this as much as possible to what you know your alumni are interested in: a sports scholar would be thrilled to hear about a new stadium, but an alumni working in the arts sector



would be grateful to hear that the next generation will get significant funding for their arts curriculum.

7) Connect alumni to help further career prospects

Alumni will be much more engaged if they feel there is a chance they can benefit too, so connecting them with older alumni can open possibilities of jobs or mentoring will make them appreciate remaining in your alumni network and more likely to interact with future initiatives.

8) Encourage your alumni to generate content for you

From photo competitions to guest writing an article for your website, alumni are normally honoured to be asked to get involved, and it can provide you with tonnes of brilliant content that will be shared twice – once to your network and once to theirs! How's that for efficiency?

Kate Jillings is founder of community and fundraising software experts ToucanTech, which works with 200+ customers to organise all their development activity in a single system. www.toucantech.com

Teaching spaces transformed

Prince's Gardens Preparatory School, London, which opened in September in temporary accommodation, has moved this term to its permanent site – a £10m transformation of four six-storey Victorian townhouses.

The school features high-tech science labs and state-of-the-art STEAM spaces, as well as

an exceptional environment for children to grow in the arts, music, sport and drama. The school sits next to the world's greatest museums and institutions; access to these form an important part of the curriculum. The building embraces its historically significant features; following biophilic principles to bring the outdoors in: where natural light and plants



aid concentration and wellbeing; with interior design that is warm, modern, practical, yet beautiful and sympathetic. It's also the only central London preparatory school offering two acres of secure private gardens.

can't predict, we all need to be flexible. Our building and location provide us with incredible facilities, making it easy to deliver our curriculum, but as ever, it is the school community, which is at its heart."

Headmistress Alison Melrose said: "We have been working towards the launch of Prince's Gardens for several years and are very excited to be able to deliver our education to children in London, despite the challenges of the pandemic. Being adaptable is an important life skill. We work on it with the children, but it applies equally to our staff, and I am proud of the way everyone pulled together to make our opening an incredible success. In a future we



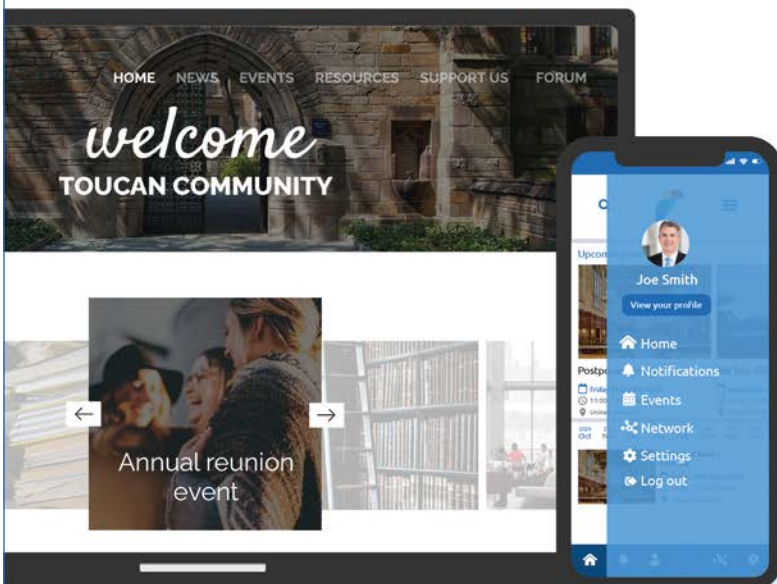
PGP is one of the Cognita Schools group. Pictures show the science lab, a classroom, and the building exterior.



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TG Escapes Eco-Buildings – a fast, cost effective way to enhance well-being when you need extra space

TG Escapes modular eco-buildings combine traditional materials with sophisticated technology to create standalone spaces with a difference. The innovative bespoke architect designed system means they can provide timber frame buildings to suit most locations and uses, in a variety of finishes including timber, composite cladding or render in a range of colours, and brick slips.

The buildings achieve A+ energy ratings with an air test of 5 or less and, with appropriate solar PV, can be net zero in operation.

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bring additional benefits to education day in, day out.

Weitzer Parkett, ProHolz Austria and partners undertook a research project called 'School Without Stress' to scientifically demonstrate the advantages of using timber within a classroom and its long-term benefits to students who study within them. They found that on average children in a timber classroom had 8600 less heart beats per day than those in a traditional building.

TG Escapes combine floor to ceiling windows and doors and covered decking areas for easy access to the outdoors. This enhances well-being and educational outcomes.

A study by A Sigman shows that children exposed to nature;



- scored higher on concentration and self-discipline
- showed improved awareness, reasoning and observational skills
- achieved better results in reading, writing, maths, science and social studies
- were better at working in teams
- exhibited improved behaviour overall.

TG Escapes conduct regular research amongst customers in education to understand how timber frame buildings perform. The feedback shows that these 'natural' buildings provide spaces which feel very different to other types of structures.

"The buildings provide a better-quality environment for staff and students."

Robert Mullen, Estates & Facilities Manager, Claremont Fan School

"Both children and staff love learning and working in the building due to the amount of natural light and space. Free

flow access to a covered deck is a huge advantage so that outdoor learning can take place in all weathers."

Sam Patel, Director of School Development, Bickley Park

"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.

"Working with TG Escapes was a very positive experience."

David Leen, Bursar, Holy Cross Prep School

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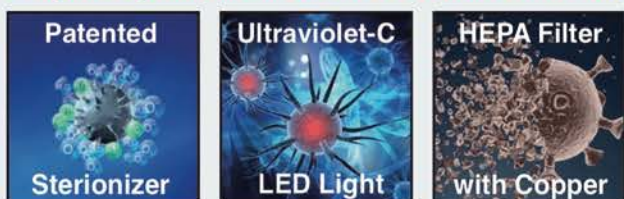


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"The air filtration system not only provides a significant line of defence against Covid but also dramatically reduces the impact of the polluted air that we are inevitably exposed to as an urban school."

Simon Gould, Headmaster of Hurlingham Primary School (43 units deployed to date)

Have you taken all "reasonable" steps to protect your Staff and Students?

With staff & students returning next month, the emphasis on employers providing "safe" working spaces will be paramount.

Risk Management

With thousands of "COVID-related" employee claims going to Court this year, employers need to reconsider what air quality measures are "prudent", what constitutes "diligent", "demonstrating foresight" and what represents a "reasonable level of professionalism" when seeking to operate a safe working environment?

With COVID-19, the Health & Safety at Work 1974 Act Sections 2 & 3 and The Management of Health and Safety at Work 1999 Regulation 3 need to be urgently re-visited and new consideration given to what can reasonably and practicably be expected of those responsible for the safety of others.



Reasonably Practical

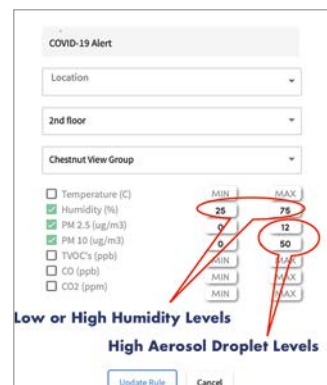
Firstly, what is "reasonably practical"? The last few months have firmly established that the virus is transmitted by airborne droplets that can remain in the air for more than 30 minutes, when there is absence of adequate ventilation or suitable air purification systems. Coming into 2021, new air disinfection products have been announced that are easy to install, at low cost and most importantly have undergone clinical trials, proving their efficacy against the COVID-19 virus. Is there any reason why schools should not be deploying these systems out of a professional duty of care?



Checking the effectiveness of air quality systems

Health & Safety at Work 1974 Section 2, Clause 6 requires a means for both the employer and employee to check the effectiveness of such measures. Very few air filter or disinfection systems have

an integrated ability to monitor and display air quality readings. Parameters such as Pm2.5 & Pm10 measure particulate levels in the air that correspond closely to the aerosol droplet sizes known to carry the coronavirus. VOC measures fumes and other volatile gas levels. CO2 and CO are well known for their effects. But what is perhaps less widely appreciated is that the SARS-2 coronavirus thrives at high and low humidity levels.



The Dashboard

The new Dashboard App now available in the UK, allows seven key indoor air quality parameters (Pm2.5, Pm10, VOC, CO, CO2, Humidity & Temperature) to be monitored in real-time and recorded in the cloud, to provide a full audit trail of the performance of every Air Filter system installed in a school. Furthermore customised 'alerts' can be created to send e-mail messages to staff and management to warn them, not just of high Pm2.5 & Pm10 levels, but also other situations which filter systems typically cannot rectify, such as high CO2 levels, where the only effective solution is to open windows or doors.

In summary, there is now no excuse for a school not providing air filtration/disinfection/monitoring systems to protect both their staff and students. Post pandemic there will no doubt be an enhanced awareness of the influence of air quality on student performance and health. On a commercial note, Insurance companies, in the near future, may offer reduced rates for those organisations pro-actively improving air quality inside their buildings, or even make such measures a condition precedent to insurance protection.

When stress becomes too much

The pandemic has brought with it an increase in pressure and stress on staff, who have to cope with their family difficulties at home as well as the tremendous disturbance to teaching which has demanded a dramatic change in approach and mindset. These strains can cause the onset or re-emergence of anorexia - the most life-threatening mental illness of all - and other difficulties such as burn out, addictions, or depression.

Therapist Michelle Scott from The Recovery Centre in London and Edinburgh who has worked with staff and pupils from independent schools, answers some essential questions heads and senior staff should be asking themselves regularly, and perhaps especially now...

Q: Staff often face bouts of strain - after all schools can be stressful places. What are the tell-tale signs that a member of staff is feeling under pressure beyond the level they can cope with?

A: *Firstly I would like to validate the enormous amount of anxiety and trauma that most of us have experienced during the last year. We have had threats to our health, lost our safe structures and our sense of control, as well as having to deal with isolation and disconnection. Teachers have had to completely transform their methods of teaching whilst simultaneously containing students anxieties and confusion. Humans are fantastic adapters and we have inbuilt mechanisms that help us to cope with even the most traumatic of situations. However, this mechanism is ideal for short bursts of action but not for long term use. If the external stress is constant, as with the current situation, we do not get a chance to stop, calm our nervous system and process our experience. In this constant state of anxiety we can start to feel helpless, hopeless and overwhelmed.*

Everyone is unique and so there are many different ways that excessive stress might show itself. Often a person will not be consciously aware that things have become too much for them as it has been a gradual process where they have been trying their best to plug the holes and stay afloat. If they do start to realise they are close to sinking, they are usually quite worn out by that point and less able to think rationally about how to get help. It can be hard to ask for help for reasons such as feeling ashamed or worried that they will lose their job. Commonly teaching staff will put their commitment to their students first and can tend to neglect their own self-care.

Most people will develop strategies, consciously and unconsciously, to cope with these stress factors. Already feeling overloaded, with no space to think they will tend to choose behaviours to soothe, avoid or escape from the anxiety and stress. This can include; addictions like alcohol or eating disorders (emotional eating has been common during lockdown), constant worry (worry can be our survival brain's way of trying to soothe anxiety by identifying every potential "threat" and finding "solutions"), perfectionism and OCD, overworking, overspending, withdrawing and isolating and becoming cynical or negative as a way to disconnect from caring.

A good starting point therefore would be to notice any changes in behaviour. Some examples might be; changes in work performance, uncustomary lateness or absences, forgetfulness, not joining in on social events or conversely

suddenly wanting to socialise more/drink alcohol more, working through break times, changes in mood such as anger, irritability, cynicism or loss of humour, changes in appearance such as less self care or weight loss or gain and physical symptoms such as repeated illnesses, headaches and fatigue. I would imagine that most staff will be exhibiting some of these signs as the pandemic shows no sign of abating. Creating an environment where it is safe to express emotions and which offers validation would be a great step for a healthy working team

At The Recovery Centre we teach people that their behaviours are helpful signposts to underlying feelings seeking expression and understanding. Many people's coping strategies involve trying to be perfect and achieving an unrealistic sense of control by disallowing difficult feelings or vulnerability. If their working environment encourages this through an over emphasis on success and results it can feel impossible to admit to not being able to cope. In this incredibly difficult time, it would be helpful if schools can keep staff wellbeing and mental health regularly on the agenda in staff meetings and if senior staff could be good role models for talking about this as well as offering real actionable support. Schools could offer positive alternatives for stress relief such as yoga, mindfulness, a couch to 5k challenge group, access to the school counsellor, a staff choir, social events and any opportunities to engage in self care.

Q: How can the subject best be tackled initially with such a person?

A: *I think the same principle would apply for students and staff. That being, from a place of non-judgement simply let them know that someone has noticed. At The Recovery Centre we repeatedly hear the same story from clients who have been struggling alone until their difficulties became too much. Looking back, as afraid, resistant or ashamed as they felt they were also longing for someone to notice. Often when behaviours seemed ignored they felt confused, uncared for and that they had no choice but to keep going.*

Ideally the person who will speak to the individual would have an established relationship already, willing to take any personal opinions about behaviours out of the discussions and staying open, curious and willing to listen.

Keep in mind that the person may feel ashamed and afraid of the consequences of what is happening for them. It may be the first time that they have spoken about it to anyone and so it is important to ensure that they know any

conversations will be in confidence, are coming from a place of concern and in the spirit of offering support. It would be helpful to have in mind before the conversation happens what support the school can offer and be ready to encourage the individual that this support is there to be utilised. Many people will find it a great relief to know that there are systems in place to help them, that they are not the only one struggling and that they are valued.

Q: At what stage should professional help be called in?

A: *Again everyone is unique and so will need different support. When I was working within Schools and Universities a good rule of thumb was to offer in-house support for the individual. If the difficulties are part of a bigger picture, which they often are, then I would encourage them to seek support for those with an appropriate professional. For example, if in discussion the person reveals that feeling low or anxious is impacting their life outside of school (e.g. a major life event such as a loss or divorce, or struggling with an eating disorder) I would suggest that they should have some more support.*

I found that for many staff it was helpful for them to know their employer cared about their wellbeing and would make adjustments for them such as reducing workload and allowing time off whilst they got help.

From a therapeutic standpoint it rarely works if an individual feels forced into getting help so it is important to foster a sense of personal choice. I would encourage a holistic discussion about what the person needs to feel they can get back on track.

Q: There is known to be a prevalence of eating disorders amongst sports staff, which can project unhelpful role models to fellow staff and pupils. Are there particular steps which should be taken by school managements to make this harmful influence less likely?

A: *I think that the risk of presenting an unhelpful role model is greater if the staff members are unaware or actively working on their own difficulties. Any initiatives that can therefore encourage an environment where it feels safe to discuss mental health difficulties within the staff team would be a great start. Perhaps inviting in ambassadors from organisations such as BEAT to share information and experience about eating disorders and exercise addiction. Also, a management structure which promotes the wellbeing of the staff and that open discussions can be possible.*

Having a school policy of promoting mental and physical wellbeing amongst the student population would be helpful. This would include addressing perceptions of body image and education about eating disorders, highlighting that EDs are about far more than simply wishing to have a certain body shape and that they can have a far reaching negative impact on their life.

Many young people will develop an eating disorder as a way to manage the anxieties and stress of adolescence. A large factor in these anxieties can be the fear of not being accepted and feelings of unworthiness. It is important therefore to educate staff about the powerful influence they can have by how much they emphasise the value of weight/food choices/attractiveness/success. Also, for staff to be trained in teaching students how to be aware of their anxieties, to encourage them to express themselves and learn skills to tackle these. Sports teachers can be ideally placed to promote body positivity and diversity and to broaden the focus from competition and comparison to self-appreciation.

It would be wise for schools to take an active role in advising on the types of nutritional advice that might be given by sports teachers so that they can ensure that it is based on sound scientific facts and not on personal beliefs or prejudices. It is vital that adolescents have a balanced diet that does not exclude food groups, and teachers can be great role models for promoting this. Social media can provide an echo chamber for food myths and often they will be based on the pursuit of thinness rather than a happy healthy body.

Children need help to interpret these sources of information. Better that we help children learn to nourish themselves holistically, mind, body and soul and therefore have a relationship with food that can be about pleasure and sociability as much as for energy and nutrition.

The language we use can have a negative impact and so it is important to think about the way we speak to students and each other. Words such as "fat", "greedy", "lazy" "failure" can be tempting to use in an old fashioned approach to shaming students or ourselves into making changes but feed into an already low self esteem. Similarly common messages such as "I ate too much I better work it off", "beach body ready" can sew the seeds of a negative relationship to food and body image and add to the deluge of similar messages that teens have to navigate on social media platforms. I would also recommend watching the Freddie Flintoff documentary to gain a great insight from a male perspective.

Q: Heads and senior staff themselves will not be immune from heading towards stress-related mental health problems. Is it possible to recognise this trend in oneself and take remedial action?

A: I would recommend making time to regularly have a self-MOT.

To assist this, make a compassionate and honest inventory of any behaviours you might tend towards to numb, soothe, avoid or escape from stress. As well as the behaviours I listed earlier, you might add some which indicates how you are coping (for example drinking more caffeine, bickering with loved ones, sleeping more or losing hours to your smart phone).



Also have a list of self-care activities that you know support your wellbeing such as exercise, reading, connecting with friends, cooking good food, tending your garden, being creative or learning something new.

Are you doing less of these?

Use the same principle of non-judgement towards yourself and understand that it is completely normal to use behaviours to help us to cope. The aim is not to berate yourself but to be aware, so that you can increase the self-care activities as an alternative to behaviours that will only compound the difficulty. Choosing to mindfully soothe or engage yourself is very different from mindlessly avoiding feeling.

Self-care activities are a great way to take action but it is important to also have space to simply feel and acknowledge that things are really difficult.

I would also strongly encourage senior staff to take the time to meet and support each other with space to express how they are feeling.

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Krista Gayton, King Henry VIII Preparatory School

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Happy heads feature in teachers' self-worth research

The wellbeing and mental health of teachers in England is similar to those in other professions and teachers are less likely to report feelings of 'low self-worth', according to research from academics at the UCL Institute of Education (IOE).

The paper, published in BERA's Review of Education and funded by the Nuffield Foundation, looked at data from more than 60,000 teachers in England collected over the last decade. The study, which is the first to compare the wellbeing of such a large number of teachers to other professional groups, found that teachers had similar levels of anxiety, unhappiness and life satisfaction to other professional groups.

Overall, the study found that 22% of secondary and 20% of primary teachers were unhappy, compared to figures of 21% and 23% for demographically similar individuals working in other professional jobs. Relatively few primary (5%) and secondary (7%) teachers had low levels of self-worth, compared to around 11% for other professional workers.

However Headteachers were found to be happier, have higher levels of life-satisfaction and were more likely to feel that their life is worthwhile than other occupational groups.

Co-author of the study, Professor John Jerrim from the UCL Social Research Institute added: "A myth seems to have emerged that teachers have worse mental health and lower levels of wellbeing than other groups. Our study provides clear, comprehensive evidence that this simply isn't true. On the whole, teachers have similar levels of wellbeing to other professional employees."

Dr Sam Sims, co-author from the UCL Centre of Education Policy and Equalising Opportunities (CEPEO) added: "We should be encouraging graduates into the teaching profession, and not lead them to believe becoming a teacher is bad for your mental health. Like all jobs, teaching has its challenges – but not the excessively bad picture we sometimes hear about."

Of the other professional groups included in the study, authors and writers, graphic designers, journalists and solicitors were found to be

amongst the most anxious and with the lowest levels of reported self-worth.

The researchers note that the data they used in the analysis was collected before the COVID-19 pandemic hit the UK. It is not yet known at a detailed level how this has affected the wellbeing of different occupational groups.

Cheryl Lloyd, Education Programme Head at the Nuffield Foundation said: "By helping us to better understand the well-being and mental health of teachers compared to other professions over the past decade, this research can inform how we talk about teaching as a career path. However, it remains important to identify the causes of work-related anxiety and to offer mental health support to existing and new school leaders and teachers. Indeed, as previous research from this project has shown, anxiety has increased amongst headteachers since lockdown."



Lioness roars in

Rossall School, Lancashire, has announced that Millie Bright, England Lioness and Chelsea defender, is to become the Ambassador for the School's brand new Girls' Elite Football Programme being launched this week, in partnership with League One football club, Fleetwood Town (FTFC).

Rossall School has enjoyed a collaborative partnership with FTFC since early 2017 when the boys' elite football programme was established. The success of this programme has been quite extraordinary, with membership of the programme growing from three pupils to nearly forty pupils, who are selected from over twenty countries internationally.



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More than fine dining...

School lunchtime is so much more than eating; it is an opportunity to come together, share ideas, share knowledge and regroup after a morning of work. It is a time when pupils develop social skills, build friendships and – hopefully – relax. The right environment will ensure pupils are both physically and mentally nourished and return to the classroom ready to learn.

A well designed dining hall is a huge asset – it is the heart of school social life, a space for events, a place to come together in celebration and a potentially valuable revenue stream. The public nature of these spaces demands – and indeed is worthy of – grandeur; they should be spaces that uplift and inspire, suggests architect Tom Waddicor who designed the new refectory at London's Ibstock Place School...

There is no shortage of evidence to support the case for lunchtimes offering something more than just fuel. The social and psychological benefit of shared meals is one which has stood the test of time and remains the focus of most of our celebrations spanning every religion and culture, but this need not be limited to special events. A 2017 study by the University of Oxford found that the more often people eat with others, the more likely they are to feel happy and satisfied with their lives. As we enter 2021 with many being forced to spend time apart, there is an opportunity to recalibrate and consider how we can make better use of our time together.

Interestingly, studies have shown that even modest changes to a school's dining environment can have a significant impact on pupils' learning. A 2011 study published in the European Journal of Clinical Nutrition, found that environmental interventions in secondary dining rooms (with a budget of just £2,000) resulted in pupils being 18% more likely to be 'on-task'

in the hour following lunch. This should provide encouragement to rethink lunchtimes as an easy win in supporting pupil's health and wellbeing.

In 2016, with some significant prescience, Ibstock Place School were concerned that their dining hall was too cramped for pupils to get the best out of their lunchtime. A time that should be about coming together and relaxing had become a pinch point, requiring military efficiency and intricate time tabling. In response, following a design competition, we were commissioned by the School to design a new Refectory to provide more space and allow pupils more time to enjoy their meal. The outcome of this process was a centrepiece building which celebrates communal life at Ibstock. Opening to pupils just over a year ago the school's foresight seems even more remarkable, with the generosity of the building and its relationship with outdoor space allowing the school to manage the myriad challenges of the past year with relative ease.

The new refectory is by any measure generous and provides the school with more than treble the space that they previously managed. The conjurer's trick was to deliver this on the footprint of the previous facility, carefully dodging the mature trees that surround the site and keeping a low and respectful presence to neighbouring buildings outside the site all of which resulted in a smooth and successful planning application. Included in the brief were capacious basement storerooms – unallocated by the school at the start of the project and an apparent luxury, they now heave with furniture removed from classrooms to support greater social distancing in classrooms.

Despite the extra capacity, the school has maintained their intake and the lunch period remains unchanged – so that pupils are afforded a more leisurely, convivial mealtime. This was also key to managing a more COVID-compliant approach to dining in 2020, but relied, too, on a fundamental shift in the way pupils queue and access the dining hall. Previously a sinuous line of students ran through the heart of the dining room, bringing with it a peculiar sense of anxiety for those seated

that they need to get a move on and free up their seat. By adding a cloister to the full length of the new building, the school was provided with a generous, sixty-metre-long, three-metre-wide covered walkway – sufficient to accommodate a full year group of pupils in all weather – even at two-metre spacings. The cloister also adds an established, collegiate quality to the campus; enables generous French doors to be left open for ventilation on rainy days; and cuts out the heat of summer sun from the west to avoid afternoon overheating.

A real challenge, especially for all-through schools is the wide range of needs that must be catered for in a communal space. For Ibstock, this meant meeting the needs of pre-prep children – who are experiencing some of their first meals away from the familiarity of home – up to sixth formers, who are ready to spread their wings and eager for the independence of University. We wanted the refectory to be able to cater to these differing needs without compromise and to provide opportunities for pupils to learn personal and social skills from their peers in a relaxed setting. Equally, the lunchtime experience needed to offer a positive for the school staff, such that their lunchtime can be a pleasure that they seek out, rather than a duty to be endured.

The response, therefore, was not to create a single dining hall, but a series of connected spaces. Whilst family service for pre-prep takes place in a multi-use space now known as the Great Hall, sixth formers can access the servery in an adjacent annex dubbed 'Small Hall' and then move upstairs to a dedicated galleried dining area. Similarly, staff can enjoy a quiet



conversation in bay-windowed booths in the Small Hall with views out to the garden in a moment of release but remaining connected to the student body. The duality of use – like any school – extends beyond the lunch period, with the Great Hall being used for assemblies, dance classes and parent briefings whilst the Small Hall serves morning tuck and afternoon tea.

In setting the brief for the project, the School were clear that this should be a building to inspire and uplift – a criteria which the impressive, vaulted ceilings achieve with an elegant grandeur, but the enjoyment of the space is equally about the small and intimate moments. Squirreled away at the top of the building is a sixth form study which offers older pupils a sanctuary with views out to Richmond Park. Throughout the building the use of wood, soft lighting and relationship to the school's gardens contribute to a sense of warmth and familiarity, providing an opportunity for the whole school community to enjoy a moment of calm in their day.

The refectory at Ibstock sets a high bar for school dining facilities and the school can now rightly claim to offer fine dining in every sense – and more. One thing we can be confident of, for all schools, is that the celebration of communal life this year will be more heartfelt than ever.



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Heads Hunted

Among the upcoming head
and principal appointments:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Bishop Challonor School | Kent |
| Elmhurst School | Surrey |
| Queen Anne's School | Berkshire |
| Queen's College | Somerset |
| Reddam House | Berkshire |
| St. Bees School | Cumbria |
| Silcoates School | Yorkshire |

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

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

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Jangro launches antiviral range to tackle coronavirus

Jangro has expanded its 'Professional' range with the launch of three antiviral products, all of which have been tested and proven to be effective against coronavirus.

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CHANGING FACES... CHANGING PLACES...



Queen's College, Somerset, has welcomed Henry Matthews as Head Teacher of its Junior School.

He has taken over from Mrs Tracey Khodabandehloo who retired after

ten years as Headmistress.

Mr Matthews was previously Head Teacher of St Joseph's School in Launceston, Cornwall, where he started his teaching career in 2012.

He became Deputy Head three years later and was appointed as Head in 2018.



Gareth Jones, currently Headmaster of St Andrew's Prep School in Eastbourne,

is to be the new head of Bilton Grange School, Warwickshire from September.

Gareth held senior positions at the Dragon School in Oxford including Director of Sport and Housemaster, before becoming Headmaster at

St Andrew's six years ago. He read English, with History, before taking his PGCE in Primary Education and a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership.

Gareth is married to Gemma, a teacher and an England Masters hockey player, and they have three children Ava, Darcie and Jacob. He will take over from current Headmaster, Alex Osiatynski, who has been at the School for eight years.



Dean Close St John's, Monmouthshire, has a new head. Mr Nick Thrower has joined from

Lambrook School, Berkshire, where he was Assistant Head and Chaplain. Prior to that he was Director of Sport and Houseparent at St Andrew's, in Turi, Kenya.



The new head of St Mary's School, Colchester, Essex is to be Mrs Nicola Griffiths, currently

Deputy Head of Ipswich High School. She will succeed Mrs Hilary Vipond who will retire in August after 25 years at the helm.



Chatsworth Schools has announced the appointment of Mrs Sarah Hobby as the new Headteacher of Crown

House Preparatory School, Buckinghamshire. Mrs Hobby recently completed the Chatsworth Schools Leadership Training Programme and is the first graduate of the course to become a Headteacher.

Prior to her appointment at Crown House, Mrs Hobby was Deputy

Head of Highfield Preparatory School in Berkshire. At Highfield, she had both academic and pastoral care responsibilities and as an Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) inspector was involved in making sure the school was always inspection ready. Before joining Highfield, Mrs Hobby was Deputy Head of Pre-Prep and Housemistress of the Junior Girls Boarding House at Marlborough College Malaysia, a sister school to Marlborough College UK, where she developed the Pre-Prep's curriculum and established a strong community spirit.



Shoreham College, Sussex, has a new Principal, following the departure of Richard Taylor-West after five

years at the College.

Sarah Bakhtiari has strong links within the community, studying for a BA and MA at the University of Brighton, and then teaching

locally for twenty years. She spent 17 years at Roedean, as a teacher, Head of Department and Head of Key Stage 3. She joined Shoreham from her role as Co-Principal and Director of Welfare at Bellerby's College, Brighton.

Married with 3 children, Sarah loves to travel, read, walk and wholeheartedly enjoys the theatre.

The Warwick Independent Schools Foundation has announced two new appointments to guide their schools through the next stage of their journeys.

Mr James Barker has been appointed as Head Master at Warwick School, and Dr Stephen Burley as Head Master at King's High School.



Currently Acting Head Master at Warwick School, Mr Barker began his association with the school as a pupil, spending seven years there, before leaving to study Philosophy at Cardiff University. He returned to Warwick School as a graduate teacher, before taking on leadership positions at Abingdon School and Royal Grammar School, Worcester,

returning to Warwick as Deputy Head in 2016.



Dr Burley, currently Academic Deputy Head at King's High School, is already a well-known figure in the school community. A graduate in English from University College London, Dr Burley went on to sit his Master of Philosophy at St Catherine's College, Oxford, where he was also a tutor for admissions, and took his doctorate at Queen Mary, University of London. Beginning his career at The King's School, Canterbury, Dr Burley then moved to Sevenoaks School, before joining Headington School as Head of English. He joined King's High as Deputy Head and recently took over the position of Acting Senior Deputy Head.



Miss Lotte Tulloch is to be Head of Denstone College, Staffordshire, with effect from September 2021. Lotte will succeed

Mr Miles Norris, who is moving to Switzerland.

Lotte is currently Deputy Head of Sedbergh School in Cumbria and is also a member of the Senior Leadership Team of Casterton,

Sedbergh Preparatory School. She was educated at Loretto School, Edinburgh and was awarded a Morehead-Cain Scholarship to the University of North Carolina where she graduated with a BA with Distinction in English Literature. Lotte gained her PGCE in secondary education from Buckingham University and studied for her Master's degree in Business Administration (MBA Education) at Keele University.



Bickley Park School, Kent, has announced the appointment of Mrs. Tammy Howard as its new Headteacher. She will take up her post in January 2022.

Mrs. Howard is currently Principal at Reddam House School in Berkshire. Following seven years as Head of Waverley Prep School, she was recruited as Head of Junior and

Early Learning Schools at Reddam House before being promoted to become Principal in 2017. She has had considerable success leading a team of four Heads of School and an extended leadership team at Reddam House.

With a strong background in science and mathematics, having read Physics at the University of Durham, Tammy also brings experience of teaching internationally. She will take over from Mr Patrick Wenham.



Mrs Rachel Torkomoo will be returning to New Hall School, Essex, in Trinity Term 2021 as Head of the Pre-Prep Division, having previously held the role of Head of Boarding of Campion House.

Rachel completed her first degree in Biomedical Sciences at the University of Southampton, followed by a Masters in Public Health at Maastricht University in the

Netherlands. Originally educated at Benenden School in Kent, Rachel believes that she has found her true vocation in teaching.

Outside of work, Rachel enjoys music, sport, travelling and cooking. She is a big supporter of New Hall's Catholic ethos, with its core values of care, trust and respect. Previously Miss Tagoe, Rachel was married in December 2020 to her husband Ben. She returns to New Hall as Mrs Torkomoo.

A clean bill of health

The pandemic has shone a spotlight on school cleanliness, making it higher priority than ever before. In response, schools across the country have increased cleaning time, invested in equipment, introduced new processes and trained staff.

Danny Peat shares his thoughts on school cleaning in the time of Covid and beyond...



In the past, thorough cleans were the staple of school cleaning. The standard pattern was for schools to be cleaned morning and evening, to ensure classrooms and communal areas were ready for the school day. Cleaning was completed to the highest possible standard in a busy, operating environment.

Most schools would only schedule a deep clean three times a year; at Easter, in the summer and in October. With the building empty, a full sanitisation would take place, with all furniture moved, carpets shampooed, floors polished, chewing gum removed and toilets and kitchens deep cleaned.

Since Covid, the rigour and frequency of both thorough and deep cleaning has increased. In many schools, cleaners now work throughout the day, including

carrying out deep cleaning procedures to keep touch points, toilets, food areas and home economics rooms safe. In boarding schools, where the number of high-risk areas is increased exponentially by pupils living, sleeping, washing and socialising full time on site, an element of daily deep cleaning is essential as we continue to live through the pandemic.

A range of new cleaning products and processes have become an everyday part of school life. Hand sanitising stations are here to stay. Fogging, rarely used in the past, has become part of the school deep cleaning armoury. Spraying a light mist of anti-viral chemicals across all surfaces is quick, effective and enables the sanitisation of spaces that are hard to access with a cloth.

Swab testing for cleaning validation

is also becoming more widely used in schools. Areas are swabbed before and after cleaning to test the effectiveness of cleaning and prove that surfaces are sanitised, safe and virus-free. Results are independently processed online to ensure standardisation and impartiality.

Mention of chemicals can ring alarm bells in schools, but a growing number of eco-friendly options are available that are as effective as heavy-duty chemicals. We use an extremely safe, green cleaning fluid called Odorbac that is also a powerful anti-viral product; recent tests showed that it killed 99% of the Covid-19 virus within 60 seconds. It is a little more expensive than some traditional chemicals, particularly as we're currently using it at high concentrations (in a 50:50 ratio with water, rather than the

usual 1 in 10 for general cleaning). However, we believe it is a price well worth paying. Look for eco-friendly anti-viral products rather than anti-bacterial – most cleaning fluids that kill viruses also kill bacteria, but the same isn't true in reverse.

Post-pandemic, I believe that parents and pupils will continue to expect higher levels of school cleaning than in the past. In the independent school sector, cleanliness could even become a key consideration in school choice, particularly when parents are looking at boarding options. In time, we may see the introduction of some kind of cleaning kitemark to guarantee the standards at a school.

The world has changed forever from a cleaning perspective and, inevitably, school cleaning will have to change with it.

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