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# From the editor

Schools are, by their very nature, dynamic institutions. They constantly seek to change and improve whenever and wherever they can. But at times of violence in the world, political upheaval, economic change and a general feeling of uncertainty, which we have all experienced recently, the calming effect of a school should not be underestimated. They are also places of tradition, continuity, security and an all-embracing community spirit. Despite an Ofsted inspection in the latter part of the Summer Term, I still found it very comforting to simply go into school, teach, interact and smile.

Sir Anthony Seldon understands the significant role that schools should, or rather must, play in the calmness and well-being of everyone in the school community including governors, heads, teaching and support staff, pupils and parents. I have been lucky enough to work alongside him over the last four years. Those who were fortunate to

attend the SATIPS conference on Mindfulness and Well-being, held at Port Regis School recently, will know what I mean. He is inspirational in this important aspect of school life and I hope that SATIPS will organise another one soon.

By sheer coincidence, at a delightful dinner hosted by Stephen and Amanda Ilett prior to the conference, the conversation turned to children and their use of computers. This elicited an article on the theme by the Deputy Head, James Webb. Marvellous. Now I'm not saying that you have to invite the Editor to dinner in order to get your point across in an article in Prep School but...

My thanks, as ever, go to all who have contributed to this issue.

Paul Jackson

If you would like to contribute to the next issue, please email [editor@prepschoolmag.co.uk](mailto:editor@prepschoolmag.co.uk)

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# *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose: a reverie*

Alec Synge on the never-ending search for improvement

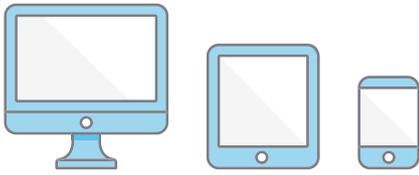
On Thursday 3rd October, 2013, my Year 7 History class was joined by an ISI Inspector. The aim of the lesson was to ascertain why Harold lost and William won the Battle of Hastings and to try to judge the key reasons for the result. Using the white board, video clips, and colour copies of extracts from the Bayeux Tapestry we questioned the evidence, possible motives and each other. The lesson was

received favourably by my ISI colleague. But in our chat over coffee afterwards, he prompted me to remember when I first taught this topic.

The answer is “at some stage in mid-January 1971 – my first term of teaching”. A number of things were different. There was less questioning of motives and none of the primary resources. Colour copies were

unavailable, except as single large book pages, and the text book input was dull. And there were certainly no video clips. Yet the children were, as now, fascinated by the story of the fyrd charging down Senlac Hill. Did they fall for a fake retreat? Or were the Saxons simply undisciplined? So, the great similarity of 1971 with 2013 was the grip on the imagination generated by the story, not least the





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sheer bad luck caused to Harold by Hardrada's invasion and William having the wind change at just the right time.

I reckon that the children have changed much less in over 40 years than the teaching methods used to help them learn. When I started I had a degree in History but was an unqualified teacher, something my headmaster thought an advantage. Even so, he was very supportive of my request to attend the Satips Conference held at Worcester College in the Spring holidays of 1973. This gave me my first introduction to the Schools Council Project, called "Time, Place and Society", the History element of which became the Schools History Project. I think that without this course, which proposed a radically new conceptual framework for teaching History, I would not have continued teaching. For this alone, I owe Satips a great debt, the result of its forward-looking approach to supporting prep school teachers. In this, I hope – and believe – that nothing has changed!

In the 1970s, Independent schools co-ordinated their publicity through the Independent Schools Information Service, whose acronym was ISIS. One of the speakers at the conference was John Bolton, the leading History HMI and later to become HMCIS. He proposed using the acronym as a flow-chart to illustrate the dangers facing independent schools, as follows: Independence > Separation > Isolation > Stagnation.

While this was certainly a striking call to arms for us in prep schools to move with the times, in fact its presumption of undynamic conservatism was somewhat unfair, in at least some quarters. One of my colleagues at Mostyn House, Henry Dixon – always a Satips stalwart – was a member of the Malvern College team, which developed the Nuffield Science teaching initiative. Henry was specifically tasked to enhance science teaching for the prep school age group. This was not only a success in its own right but was used as a model for other curricular developments,

not least approaches to the National Curriculum. I think John Bolton would have been pleased, if a little surprised, at this dynamism.

Somewhat later in my career two major opportunities affected the way I try to teach in prep schools. The first was teaching secondary pupils. Luckily for me, Mostyn House developed a secondary 13-16 (subsequently 18) department and I began to teach in it exclusively, just after finishing my extremely belated teacher training. While Year 9 is definitely an 'experience' that is good for the soul, GCSE teaching is a pedagogic tonic. The rigour of the exam boards' criteria, course work, especially the associated moderation meetings, and genuinely public exams certainly help to supercharge teaching and open up new avenues. This was also, (perhaps especially), true of marking GCSE scripts which I did for Religious Studies and for SHP History GCSE. I recommend doing this as one of the best forms of training any teacher can obtain. And you are paid for it! My return to prep school teaching was, I think, richly informed by this secondary experience, especially in respect of assessing how well I have set questions, devised assessment criteria and accurately marked pupils' work.

The second career opportunity was to become a Head, which I have been of two schools. Perhaps we tend to think of the Head as an Olympian, and inevitably panglossian, figure who glides through at the top of the system, finding it all charmingly easy. Believe me – it isn't like this! But – and also believe me on this – it is a rare privilege. If any one thing emphasises this it is in the level of delegation that a Head must use, not only to survive in management, but to enable the school to thrive. Every single lesson – except the four, six or eight that he may teach himself – is a responsibility delegated by the Head. And the accumulated value of these delegated lessons is where the success of the school is generated – or not. Amazing as it may seem, I had not really thought of this until

I was a Head, but it might help non-head colleagues if they are seriously apprised of how much delegated responsibility they really do carry – all the time.

After 14 years or so of headship, I went "back to teaching". I put it like this because the two roles – headship and subject teacher – are very different indeed. But one of the reasons why I plan to continue teaching into my 70th year (and with much gratitude to St Ronan's for making this possible) is because the insight I gained as a Head so strongly informs my classroom practice. I really have never been so enthusiastic to learn how to get the lesson just that little bit better for my pupil learners – the result of reflecting on that delegated responsibility.

When Year 7 and I cover the Battle of Hastings in early October this year, I will be trying to make it an improvement on what we did in 2013 (and 2014 and 2015) *because we can*. In this sense teaching is a rare profession because we can still be learning more about it, and changing and improving our practice, until the very last day of our career. So children may not have changed that much but teaching has and will again. Much of how it can change is in our own hands and I hope everyone relishes the chance to make this happen as much as I have.

Alec Synge has taught at several Prep Schools including Mostyn House, Holmewood House, Northcote Lodge and St Ronan's. He was Head at Birchfield and Hazelwood and was the IAPS subject co-ordinator for RE. He has edited the SATIPS Broadsheets for PSHE and RE and held the post of General Secretary for SATIPS for several years. As Alec stands down from the latter, SATIPS wishes to record its heartfelt thanks for his very valuable contribution to SATIPS' continued development and progress

# Whither Common Entrance?

Dr Matthew Jenkinson, Deputy Head Academic at New College School, Oxford, argues it is time to rethink the transition between prep and senior schools

Let me propose a scenario:

- Let's charge families, I don't know, between £10,000 and £20,000 per year for an education system.
- As part of that education system, let's narrow the curriculum so it can be easily assessed when, say, the pupils are thirteen.
- Let's then test those pupils a year or two before said assessment, when they are eleven or twelve, to see which school they will go to after the assessment.
- Then let's concede that the original 13+ assessment isn't really a proper assessment, because everyone who passes their 'pre-test' then passes said assessment.
- Nonetheless, let's give those pupils and their families about six months of worry before the 13+ assessment.
- Let's encourage teachers to scrap proper teaching and spend those six months teaching to often rigid and sometimes dubious question styles.
- Then let's send the assessment papers to a variety of different markers, in a variety of different schools.
- Let's give those markers some mark schemes, some of which are only 'suggested', some of which are sufficiently vague to allow for a wide discrepancy in their interpretation.

- Then let's accept that those senior schools set their own grade boundaries and levels of academic stringency, without any proper standardization or recourse to appeal.
- At the end, then, let's provide the pupils with a set of grades that may or may not reflect their ability, or their ability compared to their peers whose papers have been sent to schools with different marking criteria.
- Then let's concede that the grades don't really mean much as a result of this, especially as the pupils have got in to their future schools anyway.

Actually, scrap the fictional scenario. This is called Common Entrance.

I am about to send yet another generation of pupils through the CE exams. I know the system all too well, partly because I teach two of its subjects, and partly because I oversee the administration of the exams in my school each year. Each year I have to pretend that none of the above scenario is real. I have to pretend that all the revision the pupils are doing is worthwhile; that the questions they are being asked actually truly assess their ability; that the grades they receive at the end reflect how good they are at the subject.

I will concede that this works both ways. I am sick of good pupils being given 'C's and I am sick of weak pupils being given 'A's, dependent on the academic standards of the school

that is reading their paper, or the pupil's ability to satisfy each marker's idiosyncratic reading of often vague mark schemes. I am sick of the tearful 13-year-old who has been given a 'B', standing next to their less-able peer who has been given an 'A' because of a totally unstandardized system. No one is allowed to tell them the truth, and that is abhorrent. And I am sick of pupils and their families getting stressed out about CE – the very state anathema to learning – when they have plenty of years ahead to get stressed about GCSEs and A-Levels.

We are operating in a system permeated by myths. Common Entrance is not really an entrance test to senior schools; entry has usually been sorted in Year 6 or 7, based on pre-tests and/or interviews. CE marks are not standardized and they are often not fair; depending on the subject, different schools interpret rather vague mark schemes in different ways – the same exam script can be awarded an 'A', 'B' or 'C' depending on the senior school to which it has been sent. CE is not always used for setting at senior schools; pupils are set and, crucially, re-set once they arrive at their schools. On those occasions when senior schools set using CE, they are setting based on a pupil's ability to satisfy the CE mark scheme, so they rejig sets according to other more reliable methods of assessment in Year 9 and beyond. I will concede that senior schools like seeing CE papers to gauge how their future pupils are



doing; but CE is a one-off exam at the end of June that is not necessarily representative of their overall ability across all subjects or competencies outside the classroom.

Furthermore, I would dispute whether CE is really a kite mark for academic rigour and excellence. This depends on the subject: in some subjects CE follows the National Curriculum anyway, in some the curriculum coverage is narrow and unimaginative (not necessarily rigorous) and the ways knowledge and skills are assessed are narrow and unimaginative. Overall, CE does not allow its candidates to show off all they can do; it does not even cover the whole curriculum. It does not take into account pupils' creativity, and it does not take into account burgeoning and vital subjects like coding.

So this is what happens: CE candidates are prepared for an entrance test, which isn't really an entrance test. They, and their parents, are encouraged to worry about something that is almost always already a *fait accompli*. In Year 8 especially, teachers feel the need to teach to certain question 'styles', which do not necessarily show off candidates' innate ability. The curriculum therefore narrows for

no good reason, and real learning is too often replaced with memorising model answers. This is all in the hope that our pupils candidates come back with 'A's, in an unregulated and unstandardized marking system, wherein the allocation of grades can be based as much on the idiosyncrasies of the destination school as the quality of the candidate.

Having thrown off our government overlords, we have taken on a new master. We have charged parents for the benefits of an independent education, then introduced new shackles. Surely it is time to take advantage of our independence, and to work towards a curriculum and assessment system that has academic rigour at its core, while still giving credit to the broad talents, creativity and manifold achievements of our pupils. This should be a system that keeps the best bits of the National Curriculum (and, indeed, CE – it's not all bad) while allowing our talented teachers freedom to evolve the curriculum to make it more varied, interesting and challenging.

Surely we can work towards a system that does not encourage cynical or stodgy teaching to particular arbitrary question styles and mark schemes, so we can free up about half of our Year

8 time from past papers and model answers. That system should still have exams at key times (our pupils still need to get used to them) but it should also give credit to what our charges do along the way. It should have a fair and transparent marking system at the end of it. And it should give our pupils the subject knowledge and the ability to learn, while encouraging them to think about those skills and taking some ownership of their progress with them, instead of being able to regurgitate model answers.

If we are to accept that entrance to senior school has been sorted long before Common Entrance, we need to take advantage of the opening-up of the Year 7 and 8 curriculum to take full advantage of this period of academic freedom. It is in everyone's interests: prep schools can work with excited young minds free from the shackles of CE; senior schools get better pupils in Year 9 who have spent the last two years learning rather than training for arbitrary question types; parents will get their money's worth in a truly independent system; and most importantly – right at the centre of all this – our pupils will get to learn bucketloads in an exciting and liberated system. Surely it's a no-brainer.

# Soft skills, soft leadership – the best of modern prep schooling

Alex Osiatynski on why EQ is as important as IQ

For generations, Prep Schools have differentiated themselves from other educational offerings by adding value outside of the classroom, be it in sport, in the performing and creative arts, and through other activities and pursuits. In more recent years a further area of development has also been something which set Prep Schools apart, even though it was perhaps not clearly articulated; as a theme it is starting to gain recognition and traction – that theme is soft skills, encompassing soft leadership and emotional intelligence.

I think it is not too controversial to suggest that the Prep Schools of olden day were not establishments which promoted emotional intelligence and soft skills, but that is not to be critical of them; we are all a function and a product of our place in time and locus and the British stiff upper lip has only more recently started to relax into smiles, and sometimes tears, across our national psyche. Our schools have become more tolerant of otherness, more prepared to encourage difference and debate rather than to enforce conformity and submission; again, a reflection of the society in which we live. Many of us, whether through the media, through our own ongoing professional development or other channels, have become familiar with the concept of 'EQ' and the work of authors like Daniel Goleman

who promote the idea that EQ is as important as IQ<sup>1</sup>.

I do not want to delve (back) into the depths of Goleman's, or anyone else's, theorising on EQ but, of course, it is all about how we empathise to others as well as reflecting on ourselves and our own behaviours: what I want to look at is how, in practice, we ensure that our children develop these skills. There may be schools which have opted for specific 'EQ lessons' or 'soft skills days', but my preferred route is to shape and mould our everyday activities to incorporate opportunities to practice soft skills and soft leadership.

Indeed it is those very activities, which I mentioned at the start as having

always set us Prep Schools apart and continue so to do, which provide such a great opportunity to do exactly that. Furthermore positions of responsibility – heads of school, prefects and so on, which have always been an important aspect of our schools – have become much more about supporting and looking out for other children than about disciplining and punishing. My deputy has regular meetings with our prefect team to keep his ear to the ground and use their collective antennae to any potential unhappiness which might go unnoticed by teachers – it rarely if ever is thus, but it makes it clear to our prefects where their duty lies. The older looking out for and after the younger is also part of this





narrative, and one of the duties of our 13-year-old prefects is to monitor (with a member of staff) our 8-year-olds at play time, playing and engaging with them. Indeed one of our prefects, who is affected by ADHD and sometimes struggles with his relationships with his direct peers, is particularly brilliant at this and, following an episode of behaviour which led to his prefect status being temporarily rescinded, he asked if he could continue with that particular responsibility, which demonstrated his passion for looking after others.

I do not claim ownership of the idea that Scouting – and by extension, Girl Guides – has a valuable place in our schools to develop soft skills; I first came across it as an inspector some years ago and visited Forres Sandle Manor's thriving Cub Pack a couple of years ago as we prepared to launch our own, but I dare say I am probably the only Prep School Head who is simultaneously 'Akela'! I was so determined that we should have a Cub Pack that, yes, I ended up running it myself; as I write this article I have just returned from a fun but exhausting county camp, with another summer camp to follow in July. I remember being told at the school I inspected that Cub Scouts was a valuable way for the Year 6 children – in what was, like Bilton Grange, a 13+ prep school – to take responsibility and be given leadership opportunities, and I remember being impressed. In the

latest iteration of the award scheme for Cub Scouts there is a challenge badge for teamwork, and another for team leaders, again reflecting our zeitgeist of focusing on such skills. To earn their badge, team leaders (which are of course Sixers and Seconders) have to look after a new Cub, teach younger Cubs a new skill, find out what other Cubs want to do and represent their views to the Leaders. More widely they must earn respect, lead and support with care and compassion, and not boss the others or throw their weight around, and activities such as Cubs which cut across age groups certainly help to accentuate leadership, perhaps more so than being a sports captain among your peers.

One example of putting this into practice was a night game I played with my Cubs last term; it was a team challenge to find a box of treasure (confectionery!). However unknown to them I had carefully distributed the goodies so that there was not quite enough for everyone. Those leaders who served themselves first and left the rest to get on with it ended up with very unhappy young Cubs and felt rather guilty for it; those with more advanced skills ensured the youngest were served first and coped with forgoing their own pleasure. At our recent camp I gave some of the oldest and most mature Cubs a specific responsibility to help the Leaders to look after the youngest campers, some of whom were away from home for the first time;

their enthusiasm for taking on the responsibility was palpable.

Of course the imperative to develop and deploy EQ, soft skills and soft leadership isn't limited to the children in our care; I have written before in Prep School Magazine about the leadership studies on the Buckingham MEd course, which many of us have completed, meeting the work of Goleman *et al* along the way, and to which I returned this last term as a 'visiting lecturer', and having my own leadership persona dissected in the process. Whether as school leaders or teachers, we are always reflecting on our empathetic skills, with pupils, colleagues and parents. Us Heads can no longer afford to try to lead our schools by dictat and force of personality; we too must encourage, support and lead from behind, which is why I find the role of Akela so personally instructive and refreshing – even if right now I am exhausted after a busy camp and a short night's sleep!

Alex Osiatynski is the Headmaster of Bilton Grange, near Rugby, sending children on to the eponymous public school of that town as well as to a number of other leading schools in the Midlands and beyond.

#### Endnotes

1. EQ of course stands for 'Emotional Intelligence Quotient' – the 'I' clearly being dropped for simplicity's sake, even though those of us who remember old-fashioned hi-fi systems still think of EQ as pumping up the bass...



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# The dangers of group work

In this extract from *The Slightly Awesome Teacher*, Dominic Salles questions the effectiveness of group work in the classroom

When observing lessons I keep seeing group work. These lessons usually flounder and often fail. Many of us feel that group work is a true test of our skills, showing off peer learning, our control of discipline and pace, and achieving the ultimate aim of being the guide on the side, rather than the sage on the stage. Phil Beadle, in *How to Teach*, a book I love, even recommends seating your students in tables of six. But, when you're not awesome like Beadle, film the lesson. Chances are you won't like the lack of learning that you see when you re-watch it.

## So what's the problem with group work?

Professor John Hattie's Visible Learning is particularly scathing about the teacher as "facilitator", claiming that all the data points to this kind of teaching as low in value. Doug Lemov, in *Teach Like a Champion 2.0*, details 62 techniques used by the most successful teachers in his schools. Group work is not even mentioned. Like marking, it is a British fashion. The closest he gets to group work is paired

discussion. But Lemov names his techniques after studying his teachers with highest value added. This should give us confidence that our students can excel without group work.

There are two questions to ask yourself:

1. What do I want the students to learn?
2. How will they best learn it?

Usually the answer is "not through group work".

If the answer is "through discussion", would more be achieved in a pair? If they need more ideas, you can seamlessly introduce a new pairing. In a group of four, by contrast, two students are all that is needed to complete a task, so two can opt out. If you choose students at random to feed back, each of the four group members will feel they have a 3 in 4 chance of not being picked. These feel like good odds.

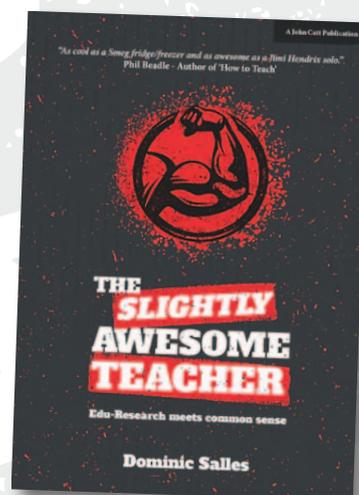
However, in a pair, it is much more obvious that you are not contributing. The probability of being caught is much higher. If you select students to feedback at random, the odds feel like 1 in 2. This is much less comfortable, so as a student I am much more likely to wish to stay on task.

A further problem is your positioning – it is very difficult to monitor each group. Once you move in to assist or question a group, you will probably leave half the class unsighted, and it doesn't take a genius to take advantage of this. It simply takes opportunity. In most group work lessons I see, the teacher provides opportunity again and again.

A final problem is the inordinate amount of time group work takes, eating up time in planning, and then more as you get drawn to particular groups. A good rule of thumb is to ask how fast a single motivated student would get through your tasks working on their own. Now you can see how much time the group work potentially wastes. If the individual will do better with another's ideas, then pairing is usually a better solution.

## To Summarise:

1. Is group work the best way to teach what you want the students to learn?
2. Have you modelled the group work skills and told the students you will assess them?
3. Can you avoid getting sucked in to the discussion?
4. Are you in charge of short time limits that you can then choose to extend if you need to?
5. Have you thought through how to force students to keep learning during the plenary?



*The Slightly Awesome Teacher*, by Dominic Salles, is published by John Catt Educational and available from all good bookstores.

# Open for business?

Ian Hunt examines what Brexit might mean for independent schools

So, weeks after the momentous news of the EU referendum, the political landscape is still in turmoil. Mr Johnson and Mr Gove re-enacted *Macbeth*, with Gove reinforcing the adage that ‘a week is a long time in politics’. Theresa May emerged from the ashes but is she a phoenix or albatross? The Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn is hanging on by a thread, with a new candidate now challenging his leadership. By the time you read this, the political arena will probably look very different to the view of it today. The FTSE 100 though, appears to have somewhat recovered from the turmoil of the past weeks, although sterling is still significantly weaker.

So what does all of this mean for independent schools, both prep and senior, day and boarding? The only clear reality in all of this is that such events and their impact are unclear. Uncertainty still reigns as the markets and the politicians come to terms with the implications. Unfortunately, uncertainty is the worst of both worlds.

Against this, schools are quite rightly making bold statements that they are very much open for business from all corners of the globe. Schools are undoubtedly more enriched and better places for the diverse cultural and

racial mix that makes up so many of our UK boarding and day schools, and their global nature can only enhance the pupils’ experiences as they prepare themselves for life in a global context.

In London day schools, the situation remains just as unclear until the outcome of longer term decisions taken by banks and financial institutions is fully understood. Morgan Stanley quickly announced the relocation of 2000 staff to Dublin and Frankfurt. This may be the tip of the iceberg or an isolated decision. We just don’t know.

Until clarity is achieved, the message from all independent schools is that they remain a welcoming and most appropriate place to educate your children. For overseas families, the weakness of sterling will make fees more affordable, and some families are asking schools to be able to pay fees in advance to take advantage of these favourable currency fluctuations. The most flexible and adaptable are welcoming these requests. Equally, schools are rightly urging families to continue to consider a British independent education where their children will be welcomed just as warmly and supported just as wholly as before the vote.

There is no doubt that perceived uncertainty over visas is causing an issue. However, we need to challenge the myths of the immigration system. Tier 4 is relatively straight forward. Either you have the documents (in which case the application succeeds) or you do not (in which case it fails). There is no cap on the number of students, and there is unlikely to be a significant short term change in visa requirements for EU citizens. If (when) visa reform does return to the political agenda, the organisations representing the education sector (HMC, IAPS, ISC) will be fighting to ensure that students will be able to follow a smooth path to be able to study in the UK.

Article 50 is unlikely now to be triggered until the end of the year, effectively leaving 30 months before the UK leaves the EU, and hopefully there will be a less uncertain future for everyone. In the meantime, schools continue to keep their doors very firmly open. They have always been at the vanguard of globalising the experiences of their charges, and even more so now are aiming to continue to do this.

Ian Hunt  
MD Gabbittas Education



# Cross-sector partnerships on the increase

The ISC on their Schools Together report

Independent schools have a long tradition of local community and inter-school partnership working yet the media likes to criticise these same schools for “failing to do enough to justify the tax breaks of charitable status”. The criticism continues despite clear evidence that we put in, in bursaries alone, far more than we take out.

The Independent Schools Council has been involved in this area for many years, successfully calling a Judicial Review in 2011 to confirm that education is a charitable activity and increasingly working with the Charity Commission to clarify the public benefit requirements of charitable status which is held by the majority of ISC schools.

Whether schools are charities or not, they are necessarily linked to local communities through services and employment across the catchment area and beyond. SATIPS readers will know that our schools are in reality friendly neighbours and not the stand-offish, toffish institutions so often portrayed in the media. There are many cases of cross-sector school partnerships where private

schools and state-funded schools work together. It is through the development of friendly relationships between teachers that numerous school-to-school partnerships have developed already.

This year, ISC collected more information about partnership working than ever before [fig 1]. The full findings are available in the ISC Census 2016, pages 21 and 22, available at [www.isc.co.uk](http://www.isc.co.uk). We were delighted to report that around half of ISC schools are engaged in music and drama partnerships and most ISC schools are also involved in sporting and academic partnership of some kind. ISC census findings show that 1,112 schools are involved in partnerships with state schools (that's more than the number of schools which are charities) and collectively, 1,337 ISC school facilities are shared with state schools. As many as 10,000 state-funded schools engage in partnership activities with ISC schools. This is more than last year.

Importantly, collaboration is a two-way process and not a one-way arrangement. The best partnerships are mutually beneficial and ISC

worked with the Independent/State Schools Partnership forum at the Department for Education to launch a website in January called Schools Together ([www.schoolstogether.org](http://www.schoolstogether.org)) which showcases and encourages partnership working.

Schools are encouraged to register and then upload information about projects either as a brief overview or in more detail, including images. Over 1400 projects have been uploaded since the beginning of this year and the site shows the wide range of projects that are broadening the horizons of pupils, widening educational opportunities and supporting staff development.

Projects are categorised so that schools can find types of collaboration:

- Academic
- CCF
- Drama
- Governance
- Music
- Sponsorship
- Sport Partnerships

## Partnerships

- Volunteering
- Digital Inclusion (ICT)
- Design and Technology

Projects are mapped so that schools can easily find collaborators in a geographical area and the site includes “top tips” for developing effective partnerships.

**Deborah Leak-Bailey OBE is the Chairman of ISSP and a champion of cross-sector partnerships.** “We want schools from both independent and state sectors to be able to use the site to increase their collaborative activity, especially to improve their curriculum and teaching, but also engage in other forms of partnership. We both believe that the result of partnership for pupils can be better access to good teaching, and the raising of attainment and aspirations.

Amongst school staff, partnership can lead to the exchange of ideas and professional development. ISSPs have been a successful – and durable – initiative, which have had a real impact on the quality of learning in partner schools. It is our hope that this website will facilitate further projects. All of our young people,

regardless of background, deserve an education that properly equips them to prosper and succeed in a global economy.

Working exclusively in one school can limit horizons, whereas working collaboratively can make a difference. ISSPs can be adapted to the individual circumstances of each school and with strong relationships underpinning them, any challenges that do arise can be overcome. The benefits are clear for all schools. Expertise, curriculum, teaching approaches, facilities and extra-curricular opportunities can be shared. Evaluations have shown that, in inspiring a high degree of co-operation across sectors, the partnership made a big difference to the skills and confidence of teachers who participated.”

All schools can undertake meaningful partnerships—from the large to the smaller scale—and these need not cost very much to run. All that is required is a good relationship with neighbouring schools and a desire to share good practice wherever we can help each other. Everyone has something to give and everyone has something to gain. Prep schools and

primary schools can share specialist knowledge, facilities and events.

Whether it is sharing the costs of training or a visiting speaker or swapping policies to save time, joining together for sports festivals or watching each other’s concerts and plays, our school communities are all the richer for links with neighbours.

SATIPS members are very welcome to contribute to Schools Together and we hope that you will find the website inspiring. ISC will continue to use examples from the site in our lobbying against the threat of increased legislation aimed at making certain types of partnership obligatory and your contributions to the site will demonstrate what is possible for all schools when we join forces.

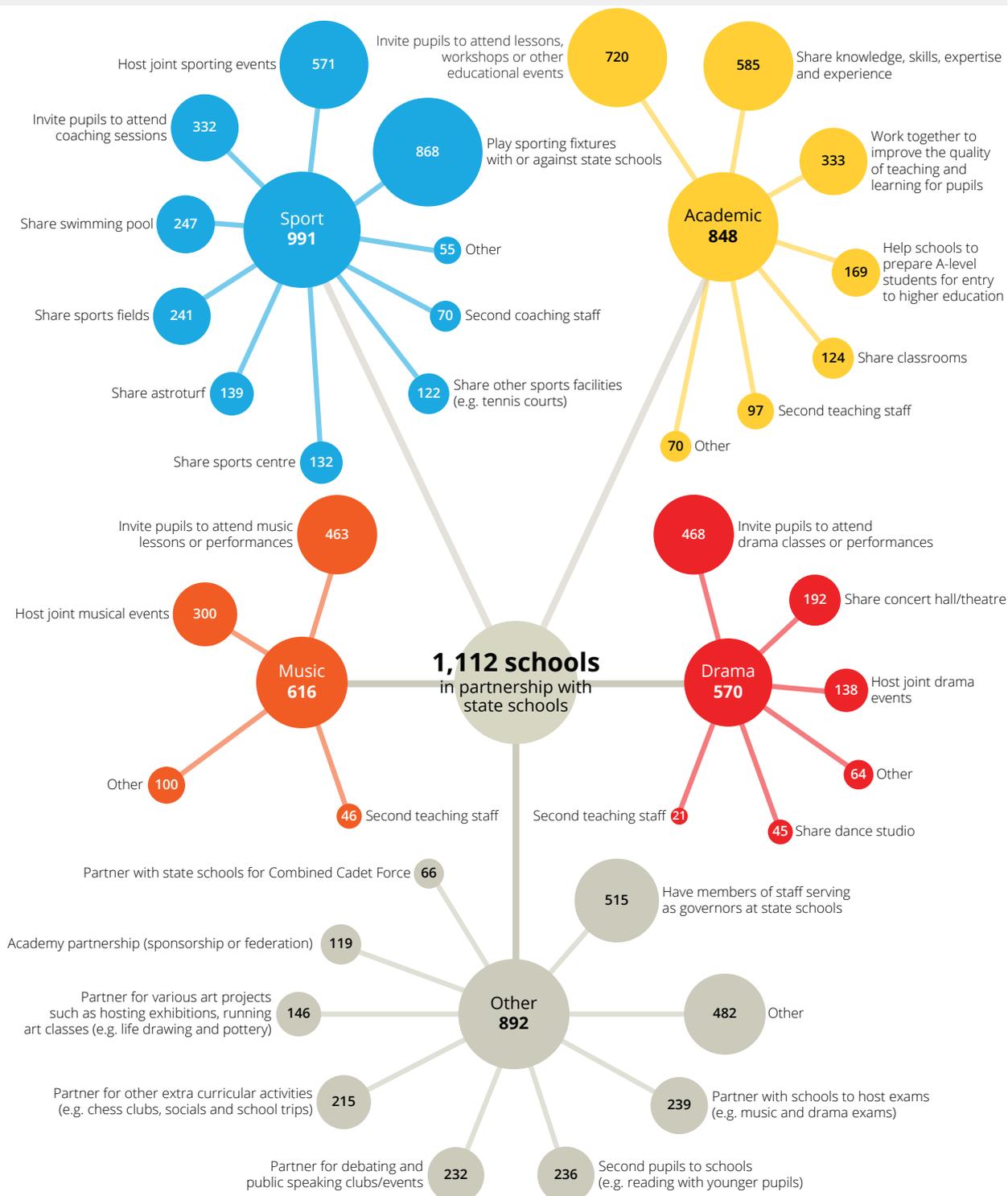
[www.schoolstogether.org](http://www.schoolstogether.org)

Julie Robinson is General Secretary of the Independent Schools Council, representing schools across the independent education sector. She liaises with influencers in education across schools, government and the media, serving the interests of ISC constituent associations and member schools.

## ISC Annual Census 2016: Partnerships with local state schools



ISC schools are increasingly forming partnerships with state schools through sharing facilities and expertise; 87% of schools are involved in such partnerships. There are a variety of ways in which ISC schools are involved in partnerships with state schools, from sharing sports facilities to inviting pupils from state schools to attend music lessons. ISC schools view partnerships as having wide ranging benefits for pupils and teachers from both sectors.





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# Across the horizon

CEO of COBIS, Colin Bell, advise on how to develop your career at an international British school overseas

Perhaps you or a colleague are considering venturing to live and work overseas by gaining employment at a high quality international British school overseas. While an incredibly exciting prospect, there is much to contemplate before collecting your passport, cancelling your gym membership and making the move. Research is key and there are many avenues to explore. This article illustrates a few areas for you to think about as you start your research...

Ask yourself why you want to teach overseas, what's motivating you? Whilst the plethora of opportunities from Paris to Panama and beyond are exciting and stimulating, do make sure that you're realistic in your outlook and that your potential move is for the right reasons.

By no means an exhaustive list, however, as a starter, I suggest that you consider the following pointers to determine if you are...

- Confident that you can adapt to living and working in an entirely new culture and out of your domestic comfort zone, sometimes thousands of miles away from friends and family?
  - Comfortable with the location, size, structure, resources available and set up of the school?
  - Reassured by the recruitment and induction process?
  - Reassured by the conditions of service on offer? Are they competitive and realistic?
  - Confident that you can work to deliver the school curriculum and assessments?
  - Reassured that the school promotes and operates in a safeguarding culture for the benefit of children, staff and members of the wider school community?
  - Comfortable that the school lives and breathes an ethos and culture of high expectations for all which is supportive and which will address your own professional development needs and career aspirations?
- Remember to do your homework and as appropriate, review published inspection reports. While not painting the full picture, they will certainly provide a useful overview of the school. For example, all COBIS Accredited Member schools, have been inspected against DfE standards for British schools overseas (BSO). The inspections are all carried out by DfE approved inspectorates, which in turn are monitored by Ofsted. All schools which have successfully been BSO inspected can deliver NQT induction. This can be through IStip and other recognised providers. Therefore these schools provide excellent support for NQTs and induction tutors alike.



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- Policies and procedures
- Risk assessments

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- Contracts of employment
- Outsourcing and TUPE
- Policies
- Restructuring

#### IMMIGRATION

- Sponsorship licences
- Tier 4 and Tier 2 visas

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It's worth pointing out that the take up of the DfE inspection scheme for BSOs remains limited, with just over 100 schools having been inspected against these specific standards. However, with long established associations such as IAPS, COBIS, BSME, FOBISIA, LAHC and NABSS offering measures of quality assurance relating to schools, this is another source of external validation.

For example, providing high quality assurance is a key component of COBIS membership standards. When a school seeks to join as a member, COBIS considers the structure of school governance, quality of curriculum, CPD provision for all staff, quality of staff qualifications and school development plans. Safeguarding and child protection is also of paramount importance. In fact, it's mandatory that senior leaders from all 260+ COBIS member schools undergo child protection and safeguarding training. In addition, the facilities, resources, policies and employment contracts of the schools are also evaluated. Once COBIS members, all schools are quality assured. This is currently on a 3 year cycle. As the international British schools overseas sector grows, quality assurance is of high importance so as not to dilute the excellent brand of British schools overseas. With this in mind, COBIS is continually working to monitor and evaluate the methods by which it provides credible external validation for schools worldwide.

Our colleagues and valued COBIS Supporting Members, ISC Research (part of the International School Consultancy), have identified that there are currently more than 100,000 UK trained teachers working in international schools across the globe. With approximately 3,500 international schools following the National Curriculum of England, the opportunities for quality teachers and leaders making the move from the UK to overseas continue to grow.

After narrowing down the geographical locations where you would like to work, planning ahead for the recruitment and selection process



will serve you well. Amongst other advice, tailoring your application to specific individual job ads is a must! Successful applicants can expect to undergo a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service). This service is something which COBIS facilitates for a significant number of staff and schools throughout the year.

Overall, in addition to qualifications and experience, schools overseas will be looking for evidence that applicants are adaptable, culturally sensitive, are excellent communicators and committed to achieving excellence and to developing their career by choosing to work overseas. As for the benefits, there are simply too many to list! However, you will certainly develop exceptional cultural and emotional intelligence which will benefit you and any school community which you work with in the future.

If you're not already a school leader, your first job at an international British school overseas may be your first step towards becoming an excellent school leader of the future, be it overseas or in the UK. Indeed associations such as IAPS and COBIS are committed to nurturing talent, to facilitating meaningful professional networks to delivering

exceptional professional development programmes through a variety of innovative channels.

So, to conclude... as a valued member of support staff, teacher or school leader working in a high quality international British school overseas, you will be professionally challenged within a supportive working environment. Your overseas career choice will only serve to strengthen your CV if you choose to return to the UK or to explore other international posts. It's safe to say that similar to your prospective students, you will be set high expectations and you will work hard. However, you will be rewarded with an enormous amount of personal and professional adventure, excitement and fun!

The question is; to where and when will you go?

Find out more about COBIS or to find your next position in a high quality international British schools overseas visit [www.cobis.org.uk](http://www.cobis.org.uk)

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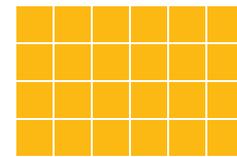
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**STAGE**

# Gratnells takes to the STAGE



Created by renowned industrial designer Anthony Hill, Gratnells STAGE is easy to assemble, robust and affordable for schools.



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Steps and safety rails are available as part of the product offer and there are three standard starter packages, STAGE ONE, STAGE TWO and STAGE THREE, pre-selected according to the likely usage profile. The modular nature of the system means it can be re-oriented, for example from a stage to a catwalk and children will be able to handle, move and assemble the system as part of the learning experience.

Gratnells believes that being 'on-stage' either as an individual

or part of a group is one of the most valuable experiences of children's lives, fostering a sense of confidence, rewarding excellence with a place in the spotlight and making the very best of group activities for performers, producers, backstage crew and teachers too.

Facilitating performing arts is part of the Gratnells mission and Managing Director Murray Hudson says that too extends beyond the performers.

"Presenting any 'live' activity is a collaborative project. Staging is a fundamental part of the process which includes sound and lighting, scenery, costumes, direction and production.

The stage itself offers that extra dimension of focus and attention which makes it all work. Gratnells STAGE is a natural extension of the company's mission to enhance, enrich and enliven the learning environment for both teachers and pupils.

Our products are developed and produced to a unique design with quality and performance in mind but it's really what they help children to do and achieve that makes our work so rewarding. From arts and crafts to computers and science Gratnells products help children to organise, display, present, arrange and retain the best of their work."

Murray Hudson concludes. "We hope that Gratnells STAGE will provide schools with a system that will help raise standards, inspire performance and give children literally a step-up in the enjoyment and value they get from their time at school. For the teaching and support staff it offers a flexible and quality system for a very wide range of performance, activity and display work."



*Stage components can be used for building raised platforms and seating*

# A celebration of talent at the SATIPS Art Exhibition

Pick up a pencil and draw! That was the advice from world-renowned artist, Sophie Ryder, speaking at the VIP launch of this year's SATIPS National Prep Schools' Art Exhibition - hosted by Cheltenham College Preparatory School, Gloucestershire.

Ahead of the doors opening to more than 800 visitors, dedicated staff at Cheltenham Prep's Art department spent weeks in the balcony, a space which became fondly known as 'The Gallery', sorting, displaying and hanging artwork sent in from around 60 prep schools nationally. There were over 400 exhibits; from giant, colourful, collaborative textiles and mosaics, to delightfully delicate 3-dimensional pieces. The variety was mind-boggling! Having unpacked,

photographed and hung many of the entries herself, Head of Art at Cheltenham Prep, Mrs Alayne Parsley said, "I kept seeing new and different works. The wealth of talent and ideas was astounding!"

The celebration of young artistic talent and creativity began with a Grand Opening for Head Teachers and Art Teachers at participating schools, where Sophie Ryder officially opened The Gallery.

Headmaster of Cheltenham Prep, Mr Jonathan Whybrow, said: "We were delighted to not only host the SATIPS Art Exhibition in 2016 and showcase such talented young artists' work at this exciting event, but also to welcome such a prestigious artist to our school, and to be able to hear

from Sophie about her inspiration and achievements."

Sophie Ryder is an internationally acclaimed sculptor, and widely recognised in the Cheltenham community for her piece "The Hare and the Minotaur", which resides on Cheltenham's Promenade, a popular shopping location. Clearly impressed by the sheer variety of mediums and inspirations on display at the exhibition, from artists as young as four years old, Sophie's grand opening speech gave an insight into her true passion for every possible artistic material and technique. "I've given everything a go, when I could," she said.

The artist struck a chord with each member of the audience when she spoke about the joy of paper and



pencil – that it doesn't need charging; that it costs very little; that you can take it with you wherever you go; that drawing forms the basis of every kind of art.

When planning a sculpture, Sophie herself indulges in pages of sketches, exploring her ideas and inspirations. With this simple pleasure in mind, Mrs Parsley was delighted to see so many visiting children pausing in the exhibition to draw, using the sketchbook and pencil they were given upon arrival. Visitors poured through the doors over the following weekend: artists and their families travelled from as far as Plymouth, Kent, London and Manchester, relishing seeing their work on display alongside paintings, portraits, sculptures, mosaics, and textiles from the very length and breadth of the country.

For two weeks, the exhibition then played host to art lessons and creative workshops with schools from around Gloucestershire, and the Cotswolds. "We are very proud that eight of our pupils have been able to display their work in this national event," said Head of Art at The Downs Malvern School, and coordinator of the exhibition in 2012 and 2013, Mr Simon Mellor. "We're even more pleased that our Year 6 pupils were able to fill their sketchbooks with drawings inspired by the exhibition. It is a credit to the wonderful young artists who have taken part."

Once the exhibition had closed and the pieces of artwork were being returned to their creators, organisers were already looking ahead to the exhibition in 2017, which will once again be hosted by Cheltenham College Preparatory School on Saturday 23 April for 2 weeks. "We want to encourage as many schools as possible to take part," said Mrs Parsley. "The self esteem this gives the children is priceless: seeing their work on display in a national exhibition, regardless of their age or inspirations."

Registration for the 2017 exhibition will open this Autumn. Schools wishing to take part can find more information at [www.cheltenhamcollege.org/SATIPS](http://www.cheltenhamcollege.org/SATIPS) or by emailing [a.parsley@cheltenhamcollege.org](mailto:a.parsley@cheltenhamcollege.org).



# Children and video games: it's not all bad

A nuanced issue, argues James Webb

So how was your weekend? What did you get up to? In response to this commonplace Monday morning question I often find myself on the wrong end of a withering shake of the head or a volley of sanctimonious tutting when I declare with some pride that I spent a good proportion of my Sunday evening – yes yes, children asleep in bed, suitably bathed and storied - playing video games. But I'm a grown-up now and the only person who gets to choose what I do in my spare time is me, so need not take any of this semi-jocular disapproval remotely seriously.

A more pressing question is whether the playing of video games by our schoolchildren is an activity we would like to see parents encourage, discourage, ration and/or monitor at evenings, weekends and during the holidays. I suggest frustratingly that the correct answer should be "it depends".

Some studies have found a correlation between regular video game playing

and lower grades at school, but this makes obvious sense and doesn't give us much to go on when deciding what we should do about it. Less time thinking about schoolwork will naturally lead to lower performance as would be the case regardless of the alternative activity chosen, whether it be DIY, fishing, smoking or sleeping. The solution to that problem isn't to spend less time gaming; it's to spend more time studying.

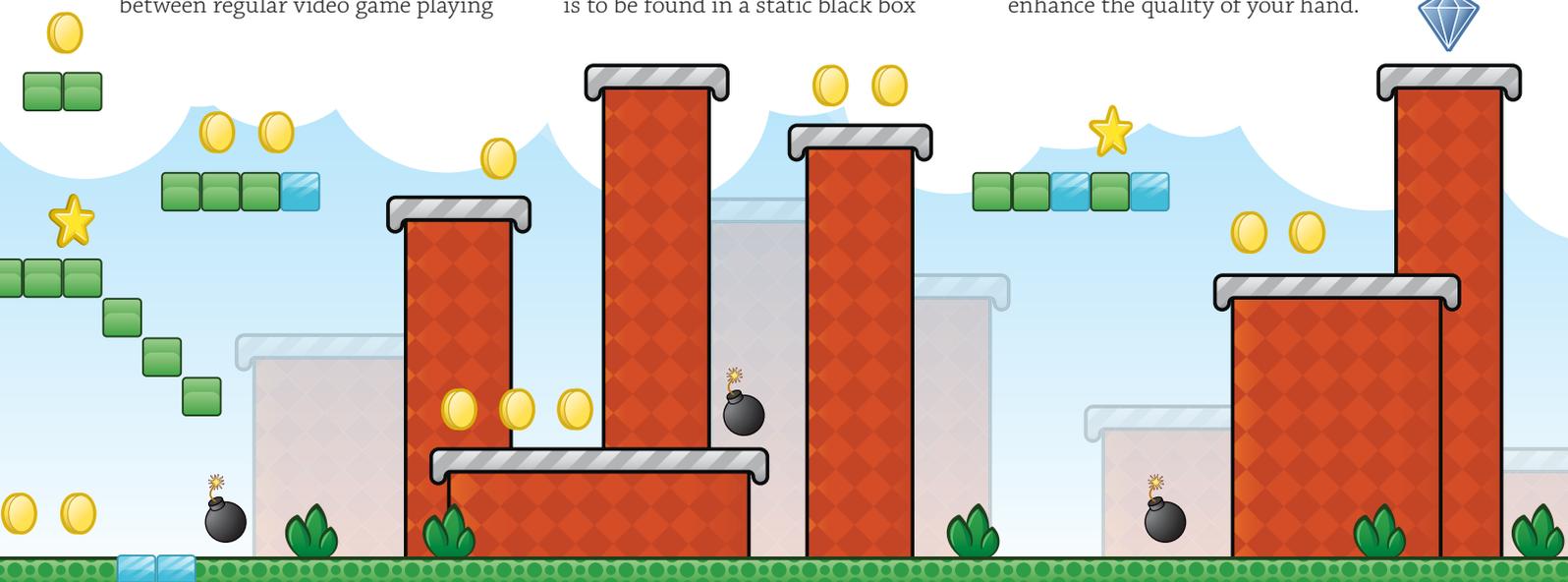
It would be wrong to deny that there are any problems associated with playing video games. Spending too time in front of a bright screen, perhaps sitting with an awkward diagonal posture on a sofa or even kneeling on the floor, cannot be doing the body any favours.

The modern sedentary lifestyle is regularly blamed for the rise in obesity among British youngsters and it is certainly true that there is less reason to move than there used to be when one's main source of entertainment is to be found in a static black box

plugged into a socket in the corner of a bedroom. (And if you're in need of Vitamin D I certainly wouldn't recommend closing the curtains and settling down for a season or two on FIFA 16.)

But there are all sorts of other pursuits which require of their participants a similar state of motionlessness: reading, knitting, chess, letter-writing, Scrabble... where are the articles decrying these supposedly wholesome pastimes which must be helping to turn our children fat?

In any case, gaming can actually make you fitter: the Just Dance series available for the market-leading Nintendo, PlayStation and Xbox machines is a very popular title which exploits motion sensor technology to award points for good dancing, so to achieve a high score you'll need to burn some calories. I'm not aware of any new-fangled version of cribbage requiring you to get out of your seat and start flapping your cards about to enhance the quality of your hand.



It therefore seems clear to me that we can't easily pin the blame on video games for making our children fat and/or lazy. If we do then all sedentary pursuits must be equally at fault.

So let's move onto another old chestnut: the celebration and encouragement of violence engendered by gaming culture. Doesn't that breed violence? It is certainly a cause for concern if you really think video games make children more violent than they would otherwise have been. But how can we ever know?

The first game I ever played was called *Space Raiders* released on the Sinclair ZX Spectrum in the early 1980s. I can still remember waiting for the game to load as the cassette tape whirled and whirred away. To a five-year-old the wait seemed interminable and only heightened my bloodthirsty desire to blast those aliens to smithereens with my unlimited stock of missiles. With each unforgiving bash of the space bar – hopefully well enough timed to strike them squarely between the eyes - I murdered another alien invader.

I am still yet to murder anybody in real life and my money's on it not happening. Maybe that's because I was given a loving and rounded upbringing which arrests such thoughts at their root? Who can tell? Equally, who can tell which murderers, criminals and delinquents were either born with a propensity to violence, grew up amidst it, or both, and found in violent video games an activity they simply enjoyed because it was there, much as a keen footballer might enjoy playing *Pro Evolution Soccer*? The evidence is not yet clear and academic consensus far from settled.

It's one thing to claim, as I have attempted to do, that video games are not necessarily harmful to children (though they might be, er..., sometimes, for certain types of children, depending on the game and when, where and how often they play it... you get my point). It is quite another to say that children actually benefit from playing video games.

So let me have a try. Controlling a joystick, controller, nunchuk or other input device gives them a chance to practise their fine motor and spatial skills and enhance their hand-eye coordination. A 2014 University of Toronto study found that regular gamers were better than non-gamers at performing new tasks requiring a level of "sensorimotor" proficiency. It would be interesting to know how many racing drivers, pilots, soldiers, surgeons and professional sportsmen and women currently performing at their peak grew up with video games – an advantage, if it is one, that previous generations didn't have.

In another study, Professor Daphne Bavalier of the University of Geneva found that players of action video games such as *Call of Duty* are better at "multiple object tracking" – the sort of skill useful when driving a vehicle for example. In her TED talk (available on YouTube) she explains how the brain can get better at non-verbal rotational shape puzzles by playing action video games over a two week period. Many senior schools use this type of puzzle in their computer-based pre-tests – but I imagine the suggestion we should prepare our pupils for them at school by giving them intensive video game sessions

is unlikely to gain the support of parents!

Young gamers also benefit from games which simulate the real world. Titles such as *Sim City* and *Transport Tycoon* are enjoyable ways to learn about the allocation of finite resources and the consequences of their misallocation, and the effects of tax rates and subsidies on economic activity.

*Football Manager* and other sports management simulators are really enormous databases disguised as games and help children to become adept at searching for and working with a range of data in order to achieve the simple but addictive aim of winning matches. The economic element is present there as well: you might win the FA Cup and go bust in the same season because you have overspent on Brazilian strikers. *Football Manager* is also a text-based game, which has obvious benefits for literacy. There are even clear educational benefits to arcade-style football games like FIFA if you switch the commentary to French, Spanish or German.

In the end, the main benefit of video games is surely that children enjoy playing them. As long as the opportunity cost isn't too great – i.e. by playing games, what better thing are the children *not* doing instead – then I for one am happy to let children enjoy the world of video games much as I did, and still do.

James Webb – Deputy Head,  
Port Regis School



# Top four excuses why parents are scared of social media

by Simon Noakes, CEO and Founder, Interactive Schools

It seems like parents have a challenging time trying to keep up with all the digital shifts.

Social media is always rapidly changing, and not just amongst the younger generations. One moment a certain platform is really popular, then it falls into obscurity the next.

What is it that makes parents stay in one spot (and resistant to dive in and learn more)? Meanwhile, their children are bouncing from platform to platform all around the web.

Millennials are making up their own rules, and we [parents] are being left behind. Why don't parents take the time to fully understand social media?

There seems to be a few reasons I hear about a lot! But are these justifiable reasons, or just excuses to avoid the inevitable change that every generation needs to tackle head-on? [149]

## 1. Scared of change

This is a very very normal human (mainly adult) trait. Change brings the possibility of things turning out for the worse — and nobody wants worse - we all want better. Do we risk the comfortable, routine 'Status Quo' of our narrow mindsets. Is that what our 13 year old self would do? Is that what you want your own children to adopt as their standard position? No!

Media culture exaggerates this dynamic, magnifying anxieties and

reinforcing fears. For adults to hear the voices of youth, they must let go of their nostalgia and suspend their fears. This is not easy.\*

Change isn't all bad. We seemed to move on from the radio to TV, from VHS to DVD to Bluray, from vinyl to CD to MP3. Why can't we move on from offline forums to social [online] forums? Our children already have, and many adults have too. It's time to open our minds, but this cannot be done overnight.

Change takes time. People need to be brought along the journey. Parents need to be educated too. This is a shared responsibility with the schools. Schools need to take the lead. What is your school doing to help bridge this gap in knowledge between your students and their parents? Sadly, most schools are still doing nothing. Paying lip service to 'online safety' talks - without tangibly getting under the hood of these channels that consume our children's lives.

## 2. Parents do not have the time

Our lives feel increasing 24/7, always turned-on, always connected. Millennials are an on-demand generation. They don't expect to wait for anything, have a short attention span, and are very visual. Parents have had to adjust to this huge shift in managing their [already] busy lives.

Ask any parent, and they all have their own views, values and ideas in raising their child. There is no magic formula. We learn from past generations, but past generations themselves are not equipped to advise on the new generation.

Being a parent vs parenting? A tough question, but one that every parent needs to distinguish between. Parenting requires every parent to prepare their child for the 'real world' that they will enter and lead. How can this be done, if parents do not find time to understand what their children are using, and why they use it? It is more about understanding human behaviour, rather than technology.

It doesn't mean that every parent needs to be on, and active in every social media channel their child is on - but they need to understand it.

There are only so many hours in the day. Agreed. But, if your child was about to climb Everest - wouldn't you find time to understand the risks and journey they are taking? Don't you also want to share in the stories and experience? Why is social media any different?

Make time.

## 3. The platform does not make sense

Parents today didn't grow up with the same speed of evolving technology

as we are today. It seems that many still struggle with adapting to the new online environment. Technology growth is exponential. The doubling of computer processing speed every 18 months, known as Moore's Law, is making devices smaller and more powerful.

With new platforms popping up everyday, the entire process can become incredibly overwhelming. And that leaves many parents feeling hopeless in their effort to learn, adapt and succeed with new social media platforms, let alone their smart devices!

Millennials don't try to analyse how things are different because of technology; they simply try to relate to a public world in which technology is a given. Because of their social position, what's novel for teens is not the technology but the public life that it enables.\*

Do you bury your head, or overcome [Excuse 1] and [Excuse 2], and find time to understand them?" Let's be honest, most parents think that Snapchat is what their teenage children use to share naked photos of themselves with their friends! The fact that it is a powerful storytelling platform has been lost in the media hype. A small bit of knowledge [or lack of] is dangerous in the wrong hands - and parents love to 'know best'!

If your child is under the age of 12, they have never known a world without Facebook

Nostalgia gets in the way of understanding the relation between teens and technology. Adults may idealise their childhoods and forget the trials and tribulations they faced. Most adults assume that their own childhoods were better and richer, simpler and safer, than the digitally mediated ones contemporary youth experience. They associate the rise of digital technology with decline—social, intellectual, and moral.\*

#### 4. Parents are not interested

And then sometimes, parents just

truly don't care!! Ok so you have read [Excuses 1, 2 & 3] - can you honestly say you are not interested! This is your children's future?

Teens are struggling to make sense of who they are and how they fit into society in an environment in which contexts are networked and collapsed, audiences are invisible, and anything they say or do can easily be taken out of context. They are grappling with battles that adults face, but they are doing so while under constant surveillance and without a firm grasp of who they are. In short, they're navigating one heck of a cultural labyrinth.\*

For whatever reason, the idea of social media doesn't seem appealing. But many parents watch YouTube, and have Facebook accounts? Ask your children about Snapchat, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, Periscope & Vine.

Don't project your own lack of interest

in emerging technology onto your children, or the gulf will only widen as they grow up. Let's face it, they will be the ones running our world. Don't let them develop bad habits, or fall victim to privacy issues. Their digital legacy means much more to them (and you). Be interested!

The world has changed. The way we communicate, share, learn, collaborate, consume, has all changed.

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*\*from "It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens" by Danah Boyd*



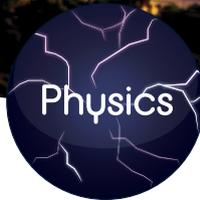
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# Out of order?

Grant Murray of Redwood Collections explores the moral and business cases for applying for an *Order for Sale*.

According to the *Independent Schools Financial Benchmarking Survey 2015*, 38% of surveyed schools have an unpaid debt that is secured via a charging order on a property. However, very few charge holders realise that they may apply for an *order for sale* which can result in the property being sold and the debt cleared.

## Background

Charging orders have long been a common way of enforcing a County Court Judgment (CCJ). Although HM Courts & Tribunals Service does not release official statistics, it is believed that around 100,000 charging orders are granted to claimants each year. These can be for anything from an unpaid credit card, a water bill, or of course unpaid school fees.

There are many reasons why a creditor may choose to secure their CCJ with a charging order. In the case of schools it is often because there is a tacit agreement with the debtor(s) to secure the debt against the property until such time as the pupils finish their examinations or otherwise leave at the end of the current year or key stage. This is sometimes accompanied by an agreement for the parents to make token payments toward the debt to gradually clear the charge.

## A feeling of insecurity

So you have a charge on the property and the debt is “secured” against an asset. But when the child has left, the payments have stopped and the debtor is no longer responding to letters – what happens next? The debtor will often be content to simply let the charge remain on their property. Although this can almost seem to be a guaranteed long-term investment for the school (charging orders generally

accrue 8% statutory interest pa) the charge may not be as secure as first thought. Depending on how the charge was registered with HM Land Registry the debtor may still be able to sell the property *without* the consent of the charge-holding school, leaving the charging order redundant and the debt still unpaid. This is something all existing charge holders should seek to clarify.

## The case for action

There will always be those school fees debtors who are simply taking advantage of the system. Often such debtors know that the debt to the school will not immediately affect their credit worthiness in the same way that, for example, missing mortgage payments would. Priority may therefore be given to their other outgoings rather than their obligation to pay the school. An application for an Order for Sale has been shown to reverse this standpoint and often produces favourable repayment offers or settlements in full.

Net worth, where possible to determine to a fair degree of certainty, can reasonably be taken into consideration when assessing the appropriateness of an order for sale against a recalcitrant debtor. Some may be experiencing genuine financial hardship in terms of their income/expenditure, but also have a very high net worth. For these ‘cash poor, asset rich’ debtors, does it really constitute fair treatment of them to perpetuate their financial difficulty by accepting a low value instalment arrangement, keeping them indebted for an extended period of time, incurring even more interest? Perhaps it would suit all parties if the court granted the school’s Order for Sale and the debtor’s assets were liquidated. Depending on the value of their assets

this could result in their debts being cleared, their monthly outgoings greatly reduced and substantial net funds given to them at the end of the process.

## Protecting the vulnerable

Any reputable solicitor or debt collection agency should have measures in place to spot sensitive circumstances and take them into consideration when weighing up whether to issue an order for sale, then advise the school accordingly. This helps to reassure the school that legal action is not issued inappropriately.

Further protection for the vulnerable is provided by Section 15 of the Trusts for Land and Appointment of Trustees Act 1996, which requires courts to consider the interests and the welfare of the debtor, other members of the debtor’s household (and dependent children in particular) when considering a creditor’s application for an order for sale. Therefore if a judge ultimately approves a school’s application for an Order for Sale, that school can be sure that the decision has given appropriate consideration to the debtor’s circumstances.

Finally, schools seeking assurance of the fair treatment of their debtors should consider instructing a debt collection agency that is authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), the new regulator for the financial services industry. Such agencies are bound by the principles of the FCA’s Treating Customers Fairly initiative.

Grant Murray is Head of Risk & Compliance at Redwood Collections Ltd  
020 8288 3566 | gmurray@redwoodcollections.com

# Could Classlist solve your school's parent communication problems?

It's a perennial headache faced by school heads everywhere. Parents clamour for contact details of other families at the school – but data protection laws make it complicated and time-consuming for the school to draw up a list.

Some schools still toil laboriously to provide these – often involving weeks of work by the Registrar or another member of staff – only to find they immediately need updating because families have moved house or changed their emails.

At other schools, parents try to adapt existing social media platforms to help out – typically setting up WhatsApp groups or Facebook pages for their class, year group or school.

But now Classlist - a new free platform pioneered at a leading prep school - is also being championed by a rapidly-growing number of schools.

More than 150 prep, primary and senior schools nationwide have now adopted Classlist as a more secure solution to the need for parents to exchange contact details.

Given the ubiquity of Facebook, it's hardly surprising that some parents and schools have tried to use it for group school parent communications.

But despite Facebook's universal popularity, it appears many parents worry about using the site to share private data because they have to rely on the group administrator to navigate the privacy settings correctly.

And schools themselves have severe reservations about using social media for school-related communications because of the uninhibited way many parents are used to engaging with each other on Facebook.

This can lead to the school Facebook page being used for malicious criticisms of the school or individual members of staff or to the entire group receiving spam about subjects unrelated to school.

"We have had a problem with Facebook with people putting inappropriate posts publicly and in private class groups. People wouldn't put this stuff in an email, but when they are in 'social and share' mode on Facebook they can lose their inhibitions," says

Louise Evans, a parent governor at Hungerford Primary School in Berkshire.

The school has now stopped using Facebook groups and has instead adopted the Classlist platform,

pioneered at the Dragon School in Oxford and launched nationally a year ago.

Classlist is now operating in schools in locations ranging from Scotland to Somerset and in both the independent and state sectors.

"I don't think we will have the same problems with Classlist as we did with Facebook as I can already see that people treat it completely differently. It is a separate school-based service and not mixed in with social media usage," says Louise Evans.

Indeed, one of Classlist's conditions of use is that content can be moderated by an appointed parent lead who will take down posts that complain about a school or school-related matter.

Classlist was created as a 'virtual schoolgate' by two busy Oxford mothers as a way of helping parents to contact each other and to take some of the hassle out of running their children's school lives.

"We just tried to create something that we - and other parents - would find useful," says Susan Burton, creator and CEO of Classlist (and a mother of three).

Classlist is data protection registered and an approved supplier to PTA



UK, the national body for parent associations.

Many schools have adopted Classlist because it offers a free and secure way to outsource their communications problems - and mindful, no doubt, that parental engagement is now an OFSTED metric.

Parents sign up to Classlist – and can choose how much information they share with other parents. They can also edit or update their information at any time. This means that - unlike the excel spreadsheets drawn up by form reps or Registrars - Classlist is never inaccurate or out-of-date.

“We used to have a paper-based directory of parents’ details but that got out of date quickly and there were data protection issues.”

says Matthew Godfrey, deputy head at Caterham School, in Surrey.

“Classlist is a much more sophisticated tool and in our experience has helped parents link up. Our parents use it to ask about lost property and to arrange Parents’ Association events,” he adds.

Parents can contact other parents in their class or year group but no third parties have access to any parent data, including the local businesses whose advertisements finance the site.

Of course, some schools already have their own parent portals – but these offer limited functionality. Parents may need to copy and paste email addresses from the parent portal in order to use them and these portals do not offer the flexibility of, for instance, sharing a phone number but not a home address.

With Classlist parent members choose exactly what information to share and can even be contacted directly on the platform itself.

All group messages are copied to named parent association representatives, who have moderation rights and approve all parents to join Classlist.

Jane Jarrett, registrar at Reading Blue Coat School, which recently adopted Classlist says: “We are getting the feedback that parents want to be able to contact each other with an up-to-date contact list.

“Some of the parents have started using WhatsApp groups, but that doesn’t work for us. Not everyone is on WhatsApp, and not everyone likes it. We think Classlist is a better alternative for the parents and the school.”

Some schools – particularly those with a dispersed catchment area or in

towns with bad traffic problems - have also been attracted to Classlist by its unique lift share function.

This enables parents who register to get access to a map showing other families who live nearby to share lifts with or find a friend to walk or cycle to school with.

“Classlist is far more than simply a super communication tool for our parents at Christ Church Cathedral School - I was particularly attracted to the innovative School Run option on the site,” says Richard Murray, head of Christ Church Cathedral School in Oxford. “This enables parents to organize lift shares with confidence. We are in a central location and very concerned about traffic congestion,”

It’s clear that the way that parents communicate with each other is constantly evolving – and the future seems to lie with flexible, secure digital platforms such as Classlist.

For more information:  
[www.classlist.com](http://www.classlist.com)

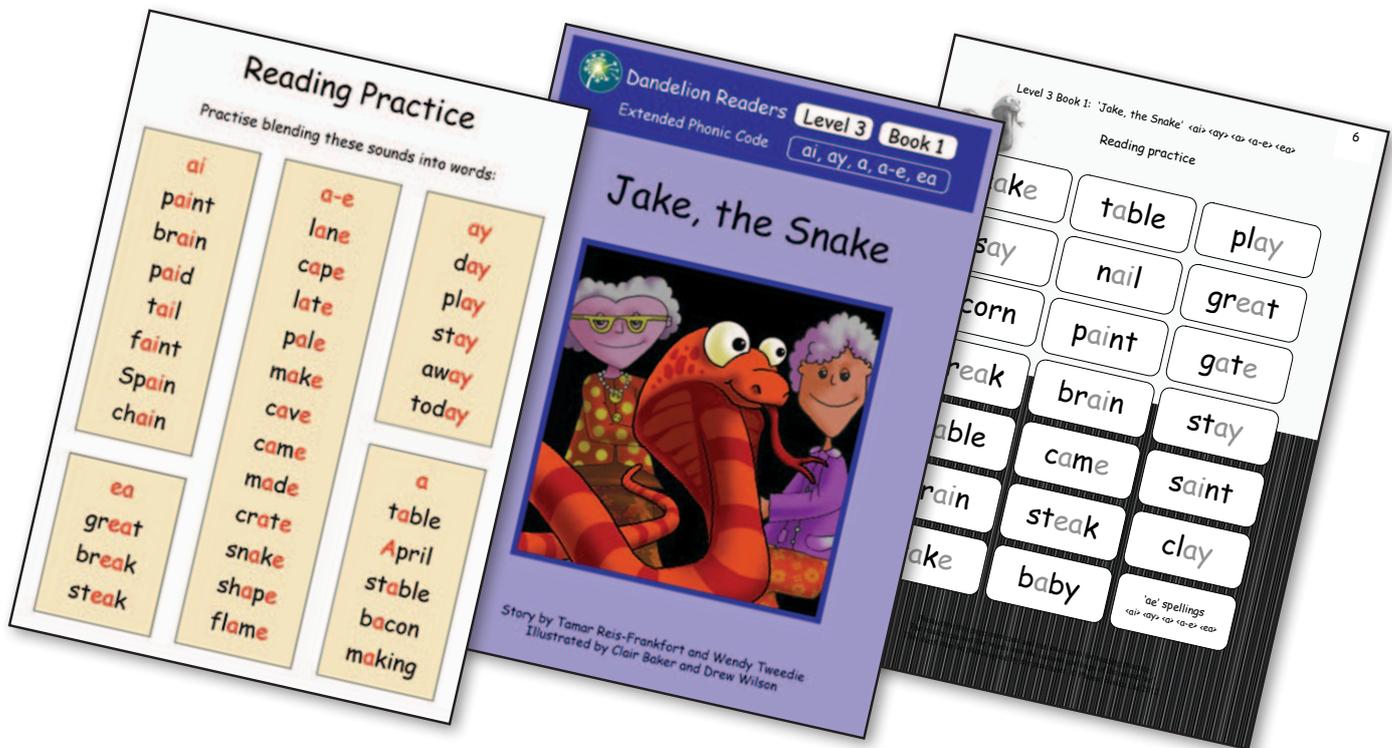
# Why English spelling is difficult and what to do about it

English is a very rich language. For historic reasons, it has amassed many 'loan' words from German, French, Greek, Latin and other languages. English has kept the spellings from those languages and this has resulted in a complex phonic code: 44 sounds spelled in 180 different ways. Some sounds can be spelled a number of

ways ('aw' is the worst culprit: or, ore, oor, aw, au, ough, a, al, oar, our, ar, augh). Some spellings can be pronounced in different ways (take <a> as in at, call, about, baby, want etc.) This is called an 'opaque' or complex spelling system and is why many children find learning to read and spell in English so difficult.

## A systematic approach underpinned by the alphabetic code

Some children learn to read and spell through whatever method they are taught. They are the lucky ones and can teach themselves. Children with a poor visual memory will



find learning to read and spell more difficult. Memorising shapes of words is an inefficient method for them as it relies on their weakest tool. When taught this way, they experience memory overload, remembering a finite list of words by sight. Teachers have noted that such children often present sudden reading and spelling difficulties in Year 2. This is why it is important to teach reading and spelling in a systematic way, giving them the tools to decode, referring back to the alphabetic (phonic) code - which is how the English language script works. Despite what is often claimed, the vast majority of words in English can be categorised into phonic spelling patterns that fit into the alphabetic or phonic code. Learning the sound/letter correspondences helps children decode (read) and encode (spell) words in English.

### Teach reading and spelling together

It is very important that from the very beginning of learning to read, children are taught that spelling is the reverse activity to reading. Reading is decoding symbols into sounds and blending them into words. Spelling is segmenting words into sounds and spelling them with letters of the alphabet. In order to make this connection clear to the beginner reader, word-building and spelling the words they have built should be the central part of every lesson.

### Use dictation

Dictation is seen as an old-fashioned teacher-directed activity, but it is a useful tool that encourages children to use the spellings they have learned in their writing. In a controlled way, children learn to listen to sounds in words and spell them correctly. This helps children make the connections between reading and spelling and produces successful results! They gain confidence in sounding out words when spelling and this is immediately reflected in their independent writing.

### Sorting helps children detect spelling patterns

It is straightforward to teach children the simple part of the phonic code: the sounds of the alphabet and the consonant digraphs sh, ch, th, ck, ng, qu, wh. It starts to get complicated when a number of alternative spellings for a sound are introduced. Children need to decide which spelling is correct for the word 'rain'? It is 'rane' or 'rain' or 'rayn'? Asking children to sort words out according to their spellings encourages them to look for spelling patterns, e.g. nail, pail, mail, sail, tail, trail, etc. The teacher can call their attention to spelling tendencies e.g. the spelling <ay> usually comes at the end of words: play, day, stay, etc.

### Have a phonic chart on the classroom wall

While children are learning the alternative spellings, it is useful to have a reference chart of the phonic code in the classroom. This will encourage them to take ownership of their own spelling.

### Phonic spelling books

Children can have their own spelling books organised according to spellings. The /ae/ page can have columns for <ai, ay, a-e> etc. As they encounter new words they can record them in their books and refer back to their lists when needed.

### Teach high-frequency words in a phonic way

Many teachers ask children to learn high-frequency words by sight – under the misconception that they cannot be phonically spelled. Many of these words are from the simple part of the code such as 'dad, not, and, can, up, him, get, just,' etc. Others can be taught in a phonic way by segmenting the word into graphemes and teaching the children the graphemes they don't know. Take the words: 'this, that, them, with'. Children need to be taught the spelling <th> and will then

be able to spell accurately by listening to the sounds in the words.

### Teach syllable splitting

Children are often reluctant to spell long words in their writing. Teaching them to break them up into syllables and sound out each syllable as they spell the word encourages them to attempt writing more challenging words.

### That 'spelling voice'

In English, multisyllabic words have one stressed syllable. We tend to swallow the vowel sounds in the weak syllables. This is called a 'schwa'. Take the word 'bucket'. We stress the first syllable and gobble up the second saying something more like: 'buckit'. This is problematic for pupils who are spelling their words by sound. A way around this is to ask children to use their 'spelling voice' and to exaggerate the weak syllable so that they hear all the sounds they need to spell the word correctly.

### Prefixes, root words and suffixes

Once children have come to grips with the phonic code, it is very useful for them to learn about English morphology. Learning how words are built (based on their meaning) helps with their spelling and comprehension. For example, learning the meaning of the root word 'port' (carry) and the prefixes 'de, im, ex, trans' allows the spelling of many long words accurately (import, export, deport, transport, porter etc.) and helps make connections with words from similar morphological structures.

### Reading, reading and more reading

Last but not least – regular, daily reading will help pupils with their spelling.

Download a free phonic code chart:  
[www.phonicbooks.co.uk](http://www.phonicbooks.co.uk) and  
 click on Teacher Tools.  
 Tami Reis-Frankfort  
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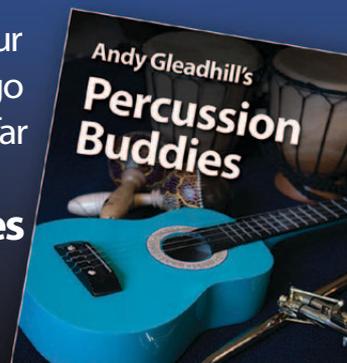


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# From strength to strength

## The Mathematical Association on their Primary Mathematics Challenge

Educators have stressed the importance of problem solving in the mathematics curriculum for many years, but it is not always easy to locate a good source of problem solving activities for pupils in the primary phase. Ideally problem solving should be embedded in the everyday mathematics experience, rather than used as a 'bolt on' additional experience, so teachers need to be able to find resources which enable them to plan for problem solving within their general teaching approach.

In 1999 The Mathematical started the Primary Mathematics Challenge with the aim of motivating pupils and helping them to develop their problem solving capabilities. It also helped by providing a rich resource bank for teachers.

311 schools took part the first year of the PMC and from then on it has gone from strength to strength. Last year 1784 schools and 70 000 pupils took part, with 1554 pupils being invited to take part in the second

round and 500 medals being awarded to the pupils taking part in the second 'Bonus' round.

The November paper contains 20 multiple choice questions, gradually increasing in difficulty, followed by 5 more challenging questions. The paper must be taken during the week 14-18 November and the results fed back to the Mathematical Association shortly after. Pupils who score very highly will be invited to take part in the Bonus Round in February 2017.

We know from the feedback we receive that the pupils enjoy the experience and relish the challenge of the more difficult questions towards the end of the papers. Of course there will be some for whom maths is not a 'fun' activity. I was reminded of this and brought down to earth when I asked a friend's son if he had enjoyed taking part in PMC last year. 'No, I hated it, but lots of my friends enjoyed it', he proclaimed.

With a national emphasis on 'reasoning' and 'problem solving' we

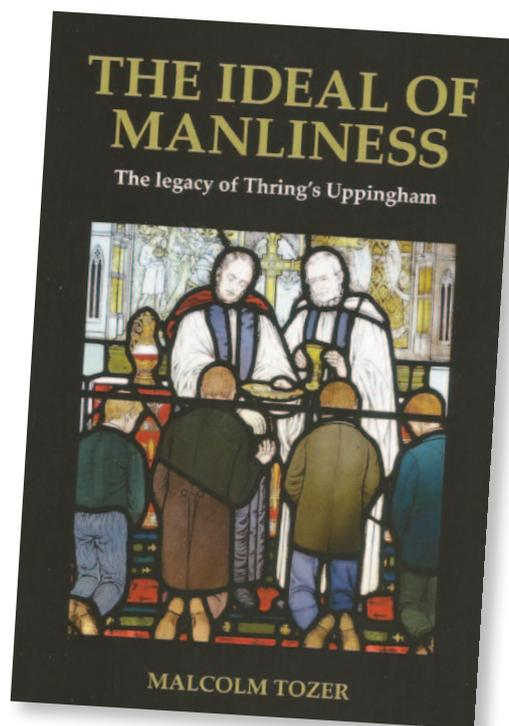
at PMC believe we have produced a really useful resource for teachers. Administering the Challenge in school is very easy. A marking sheet is provided and the answers and notes give useful ideas for following up some of the problems. Previous papers can be accessed via the website: <http://www.primarymathschallenge.org.uk/> so that pupils can become familiar with the format of the papers. The MA has also published two books entitled, 'Challenge Your Pupils' which are ideal for practising problem solving.

The papers are written and compiled by a group of mathematics enthusiasts involved in primary mathematics. We meet once a year and sort through the problems submitted to create the two papers. If you fancy trying your hand at writing problems do get in touch. We would be delighted to hear from you.

For further details visit our website: [www.primarymathschallenge.org.uk](http://www.primarymathschallenge.org.uk)

Lesley Jones  
Chair, PMC committee

# The ideal of manliness: the legacy of Thring's Uppingham



Paul Jackson reviews Malcolm Tozer's new book

There is no doubt that all of us who teach or have taught in schools are fascinated by the Headmasters and Headmistresses we have met, taught with, heard of or who employ us.

I would suggest that the latter takes up as much time in terms of indirect conversation as most of one's current pupils and, hopefully, it will be all positive!

Similarly, most of us will have strong feelings about the Heads who influenced us when we were at school—and I can certainly empathise with that.

My own first senior school Headmaster has, sadly, just passed away in the last month. HAJ (Alan) Staveley reached his 99th year and I remember him fondly. He will have been a great Head at Lawrence Sheriff, Rugby and Stamford School I know but I really only came into contact with him on three occasions at Lawrence Sheriff—and he was inspirational each time.

He presented me with the Form prize at Speech Day in my first year (I still have the signed Oxford Dictionary

50 years later); I and the rest of the school witnessed him present a school cap (blue velvet and gold tassles) to the then captain of Rugby (Robin Pointon who went on to teach at Winchester House) and I got mine seven years later; but perhaps of most importance in my life, was his comment to me as I was walking along the front of the school in the June sunshine aged 11, "Good morning, Jackson. Happy Birthday, old boy."

I have never forgotten that moment. He knew the names of all the pupils in his schools and because it gave me such a lift, I have always endeavoured to converse, however briefly, with all the pupils in my schools whenever we have passed in quad, corridor or cloister.

Edward Thring was not Malcolm Tozer's headmaster at Uppingham as Staveley was to me but this excellent book captures the inspirational processes and legacy that were the signatures of Thring's headship as if they had that same relationship.

Thring was years ahead in his educational thinking and pastoral

work which benefitted not just Uppingham but the whole of the education sector since and the amount of research that has gone into this book is, in itself, inspirational.

Malcolm Tozer is to be congratulated on what is obviously a lifetime's work on his part and he can rest assured that he has done the man and the subject justice. I read the book avidly from cover to cover—and I highly recommend it to you.

Interestingly, once I had finished my reading, I knew a great deal about Thring and his prominence within Education—but I then wanted to know more about the author and the background to this exceptional book.

As a result, I contacted Malcolm Tozer with, what I thought were the relevant questions—and I hope you find his replies as fascinating as I did. I feel they are an important ingredient to the review of this publication.

*The Ideal of Manliness: the legacy of Thring's Uppingham*; 536 pages; Sunnyrest Books; Truro; 2015; ISBN-13: 978-1329542730 (paperback) and 978-1326415747 (hardback)

# “Striving for a balance of truth, courage and self-control”

Malcolm Tozer reveals the influence of Thring on modern schooling

## “How and when were the seeds first sown for the work?”

When I arrived at Uppingham from Loughborough in 1966 to find a very conservative public school, with an ex-service instructor teaching PT to a few younger boys and compulsory team games for all on three or more afternoons of the week, it seemed that the school matched the *Tom Brown's Schooldays* stereotype that I had met in my history of education lectures. Those lectures, alas, did not mention Edward Thring, Uppingham's great Victorian headmaster, otherwise I would not have been surprised at what I was soon to discover. Far from being the school's first PE teacher, I learnt that Georg Beisiegel had been appointed to do the job in 1860, soon after the opening of the gymnasium, the first at a British school.

The opportunity to find out more had to wait until 1972. I had broken my leg and was laid up for a term in our top floor flat; colleagues covered most of my lessons with only my A-level students coming to me for their theory lessons. There was plenty of time to kill and visitors were always welcome. One visitor was Brian Belk, now in charge of archives but formerly a boy at the school and a long serving master. He brought me titbits from his collection – football rules for 1857, the committee of games rules for 1862, games songs for 1858, results for the athletics sports of 1861, photographs of the gymnasium and

ancient teams, and so on. In addition there were all the Thring papers, for the headmaster had died in harness and the contents of his study had been kept in safe storage. I decided I must do something with this treasure trove.

I had not taken history at O-level, so I knew that I was going to need help. I wrote to several local universities and accepted the offer from Bob Wight at Leicester to sign up for an MEd by thesis. The result was published by the

school in 1976 as *Physical Education at Thring's Uppingham*. It was only as the thesis neared completion that I appreciated that PE in Thring's time played a vital role in the inculcation of an all-round education, or what Thring called the ideal of manliness. I had run out of time and words, so I signed up to do a doctorate with 'the ideal of manliness' as my theme. That was completed in 1978

I was now a housemaster in the school and with a young family; there was



# Get back in charge of your portable devices



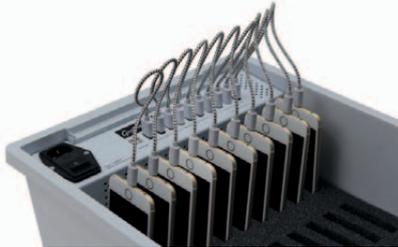
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little time for further writing. But the school's quatercentenary in 1984 and the 1987 centenary of Thring's death jogged me back into action. Manliness was now a fashionable topic amongst historians and, for about a decade, I received numerous invitations to speak at conferences and to write essays for books and journals.

All then went quiet until 2014 when Nigel Richardson published his long-awaited biography of Thring. At the book's launch in the Victorian school-room at Uppingham, Nigel said – 'Now you must pull together all your writings on Thring's legacy.' I accepted the challenge and set about bringing my work up to date with modern scholarship. The result – *The Ideal of Manliness: the legacy of Thring's Uppingham* – was published in October last year.

### **“How inspirational and ahead of his time was Thring?”**

When Thring arrived in 1853 he was half of teaching force of two for some 25 boys. Twelve years later there were 300 boys (Thring's chosen limit), almost all were boarders in purpose-built boarding houses. Thring's magnetism had attracted parents and staff and money; a chapel and the schoolroom were built; playing fields and fives courts were acquired; and local farmers were persuaded to allow the boys to roam the countryside and to swim in rivers. In addition, he attracted to the staff men who would be leaders in their field – in gymnastics, music, and art for example.

Uppingham led the way that others would strive to follow. Firsts included the gymnasium, the indoor swimming pool, the gymnastics master, the director of music, school songs, orchestra, an East End mission, and much more.

### **“What is his legacy for schools today?”**

The education of the whole man and attention to the individual child are the two central legacies of Thring's Uppingham; the principles and

practices he established in the mid-Victorian years can be found in most independent schools of the twenty-first century. Attractive surroundings and a homely atmosphere; Christian teaching and moral guidance; pastoral care and concern for well-being; intellectual training and a broad general knowledge; a well-planned physical education programme and real attention to the arts and music; a sense of communal responsibility and charity to the less fortunate; the joy of childhood and preparation for adult citizenship; and a spirit of individual freedom – all these comprised an education in manliness. The current concern for character, happiness, emotional health, determination, resilience and perseverance whilst maintaining high attainment in all areas of the curriculum matches Thring's striving for a balance of truth, courage and self-control.

### **“How much influence did he have on your own approach to Education?”**

It took about eight years for Thring's influence to change me from a specialist teacher to a generalist teacher – from being solely concerned with my responsibilities (physics, PE, athletics, basketball, etc) to appreciating that teaching is a team effort and that every teacher on the staff, every subject on the timetable, and every aspect of the co-curriculum contributes to the holistic ideal. Children come first.

I tried to live up to that ideal in my fourteen years as a housemaster – the best job in the world – and in my sixteen years as a headmaster.

### **“From your own experience, are there other educationalists who have been or are as pioneering as Thring was in his day?”**

Frederick Temple is the closest – headmaster of Rugby from 1858 to 1869. But he left Rugby to seek church preferment and ended up as Archbishop of Canterbury. Thring stayed in his school – by choice.

Edward Benson, founding headmaster of Wellington from 1859 to 1872, strived to be a pioneer but his severe personality let him down. He too left for church preferment, also becoming Archbishop of Canterbury.

Repton's Stuart Pears (1854–1874), Clifton's John Percival (1862–1879), Tonbridge's Theophilus Rowe (1875–1890, from Uppingham), and Sherborne's Daniel Harper (1850–1877) all deserve an honourable mention. Note – all their schools are either brand new foundations or upgraded grammar schools.

No old foundations. It was the new wave that led the way. But when the new wave wanted to ape the ways of the 'great' schools, that was when the rot set in – hearty muscular athletic manliness and then imperial military warrior manliness.

Later pioneers are listed in the last part of the book – *The Survival of True Manliness*, p379ff.

### **“Any other relevant points or issues which require explanation.”**

You may have spotted this review on Amazon – from Stephen Fry:

“Thring, his legacy, his influence and his transformation of Uppingham School were all but pushed down my throat as sacred creeds during my time at Uppingham. His statue and portraits and name seemed to be everywhere. Malcolm Tozer shows us why. The man truly was as remarkable as Uppingham myth made him out to be. Edward Thring was one of those tireless and extraordinary reforming Victorians with an indomitable will, unquestioning sense of destiny and remarkable powers of persuasion. This marvellous book shows how they were combined with a genuinely pastoral sense of how education could benefit 'the whole boy' and thence the whole of society. Malcolm has taught me more in this book than he ever managed to do when I was a schoolboy. But then, to be fair, he was lucky enough never to have me in one of his classes.”

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# A distinct 'Swallows and Amazons spirit'

Walhampton School is on an upward trajectory, thanks to its Headaster Titus Mills

An independent day and boarding school for boys and girls aged 2-13, Walhampton lies in ancient woodland on the southern edge of the New Forest, on the coast near Lymington in Hampshire. With big vistas and broad horizons set within one hundred acres of lawns, lakes and woodland, the school's location is truly remarkable.

Walhampton's pupils are encouraged to develop both the discipline of study and the joy of learning. Academic rigour sits at the heart of teaching and learning throughout the school. However, the school's location and facilities allow for a broad and dynamic curriculum which stretches beyond the four walls of a classroom. Lessons are often taught outdoors, in the school's kitchen garden or stunning woodland, helping to bring academic subjects to life. In how many schools would you find the Battle of Trafalgar staged on a lake, or the Battle of Hastings re-enacted with children in armour on horses? There is a distinct 'Swallows and Amazons' spirit that burns brightly at Walhampton.

Alongside academic learning, there is a strong emphasis on character. Every Walhampton pupil is encouraged to develop a strength and depth of character so that when they leave, they do so as confident, capable, compassionate and independent minded young people. The school's core ethos is both strong and distinct and is championed, with passion, by its headmaster Titus Mills.

Titus' experiences in education have been diverse and have taken him from

Bath to Uganda, Eton to Lambeth and Rome to India. He has been fortunate to teach across different cultures in independent, state and international schools. While the settings have been varied, one thing has remained constant – his passion to teach and inspire children.

This is Titus' third Headship and when he joined the school his brief from the Governors was clear: to help reinvigorate Walhampton so that it becomes one of the country's leading prep schools. Under new leadership Walhampton is undoubtedly on an upward trajectory. The pupil role has grown rapidly and is now close to capacity. The staff team has worked hard to drive up standards of teaching and learning, pastoral care and marketing. In all quarters the mood at Walhampton is buoyant, confident and ambitious. Such is the turn around that Tatler magazine, in September, shortlisted Walhampton for 'Prep School of the Year.' The Good School Guide wrote of Titus: 'Convincing Head: high octane energy meets sophisticated unconventionality. High levels of commitment and sensitivity soon become apparent.'

In re-writing the school's mission statement, Titus was keen to incorporate the small but potent word: 'joy'. He passionately believes that Walhampton should be, at its heart, a 'joyful' place. For those who have observed the school's development since his arrival, it is very clear that it is indeed a joyful, happy and charmed school, with a distinctly strong sense of community, spirit and positivity.

Titus recounts that he and his wife Jemima, were both completely smitten by Walhampton on their first visit to the school. They were struck by the character of the place and the stunning grounds which overlook the sea and the hills of the Isle of Wight, making it a truly unique Prep school.

Titus is not only a headmaster of Walhampton he is also a parent, with his three sons all having been - or being - educated there. His family live at the school and are an integral part of the Walhampton community - they often open their home to host ad hoc dinners for the boarding children or barbeques for staff.

Beyond school, Titus has a love of art history, gardening and sponge based puddings! He has spent the last twenty years recording the stories of WW1 and WW2 veterans and has produced a documentary film about the Battle of Arnhem, fought in 1944. Titus takes pupils and their parents to Arnhem, every September, to meet the last few veterans who fought there. It is deeply poignant witnessing a ninety five year old, wearing his medals and beret, placing an arm on the shoulder of a ten year old and relaying unimaginable stories of bravery, sacrifice and friendship. In those moments, history comes alive. It leaves an indelible mark.

Another example of teaching and learning at its most powerful - beyond the classroom. Walhampton is not afraid to think outside the box. Nor is its headmaster, Titus Mills.

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# Effortless fun

## A roller disco is a creative solution for all sorts of school events

Do you remember having fisher price skates? Do you remember the craze in the 80's for skates and leg warmers? Roller discos bring back nostalgic memories for most adults, but they have been making a huge comeback in recent years.

The team at Mega Roller Disco have been running events for the past five years and have seen their popularity rocket during that time. Managing Director Graeme Merifield said "I think there are a number of reasons for the popularity of the events. For adults it's all about re-living their younger years, but for kids it's just great fun!"

It's not just us who love to skate though, Beyonce and Katy Perry have recently been spotted on rinks in America and the sport of Roller Derby has really taken off in the wake of the hit film 'Whip It'.

Roller Skating is fun for all ages, keeps you fit and is great fun when put to music. One of the joys of roller discos is that the kids have so much fun skating, they barely notice that they are doing lots of exercise! Cold Aston Church of England Primary School enjoyed their recent event, saying "the children absolutely loved it!" and Manchester Healthy Academy said "the kids had a fab time and are still going on about it today!"

Mega Roller Disco have now run over 100 events and the popularity of events in schools has vastly increased. Schools often book roller discos for end of term parties, attendance rewards, school discos or PE lessons. The events are also popular with PTAs as fundraisers.

The Mega Roller Disco team provide an experienced event manager and skate marshall to make the events effortless for teachers. In fact, the teachers are so relaxed, it's not unusual for them to end up on skates themselves or suggesting tracks to add to the playlist. Bentley New Village Primary School recently praised the event team, "good safety equipment provision, good quality of skates, staff arrived on time, set up efficiently & left at the end of the day promptly and were personable and friendly."

Safety is of utmost importance and all events come with high quality skates, which will not damage floors and protective equipment for skaters. Mega Roller Disco are also covered by £2m public liability insurance and complete comprehensive risk assessments for each event. The team also bring all the audio and lighting equipment needed for the disco and can even provide event artwork for posters in advance.

Roller Discos are great exercise, fun for all ages, safe and affordable. Mega Roller Disco take care of everything on the day, so all you need to provide is the venue and a plug socket. Give your pupils and staff a treat they will remember and get in touch with them for a quote.

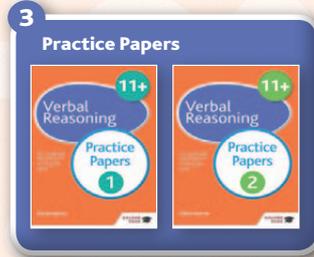
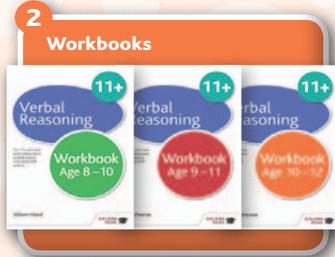
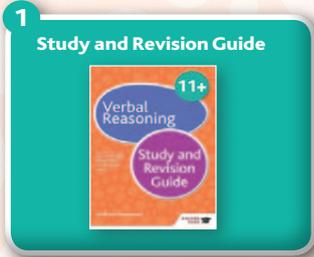
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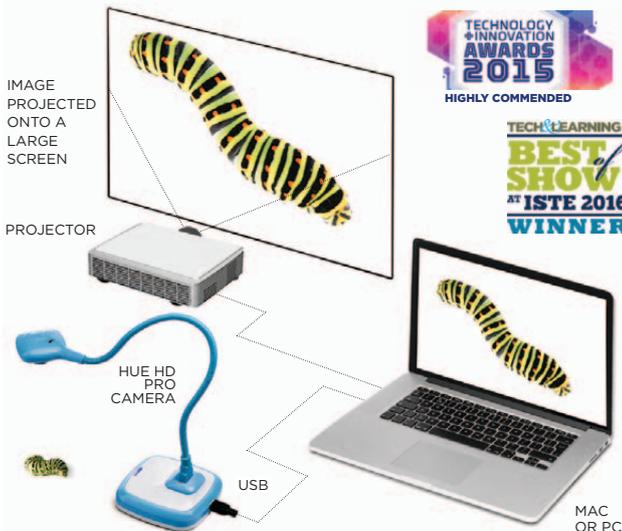
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## Are you stretching your pupils?

10 My school has 23 teachers. At today's staff meeting 3 teachers are missing and a quarter of those are asleep. Out of those that are present and awake, 20% are texting. The rest are listening to the Head. How many are listening to the Head?

- A 12    B 13    C 14    D 15    E 0

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# Worry-free events

Say hello to online events booking with Trybooking

It was the month before the school Nativity Play and the little elves were quietly selling all the tickets.

With more and more aspects of school administration becoming digitalised, so it is true for organising any type of school event.

Wouldn't it be nice to be able to put on a school event and not worry about creating and producing flyers or letters, or worse, slips to be printed and distributed, to then be completed and returned (late and crumpled) or emails to respond to acknowledging bookings/reservations and that's the easy bit if the event is free.

If the event involves a payment there is a whole other world of work, collecting cheques and cash, securing it, banking it, keeping balances, and worst of all chasing late payers. There are always a couple!

Say goodbye to cash handling and chasing cheques. Say hello to online events booking.

Created specifically to meet the needs of schools and colleges they provide a pleasant, logical, cost-effective method for parents to book, ticket or register for any size gathering. So easy, they can organize themselves and their children's performance or the school fundraising event anytime of day or night at home, from the office, even from the car or airport. Parents get automatic immediate email confirmation too.

Most preparatory schools put on free events regularly, eg the Christmas Nativity Play, however, the organisation can still be very time consuming and unpredictable.

How many times have parents stood in the aisles at a year group's first public performance? How many times has the catering far exceeded the number of guests. Too many mince pies left over?

It is within the Nativity Play where many pupils perform for the first time having just started school or even taking up a new instrument in September. Parents want to be organized and know they have a seat with a view. How many schools cater for parents/relatives in wheelchairs ensuring they have a view too.

One school found their intimate theatre was always packed to the rafters at Christmas for the Nativity, so they decided to:

1. Put on performances over two days – Thursday and Friday, knowing Friday's are the most popular.
2. Set up a live viewing in one theatre and a streamed viewing in another.
3. Used online booking to confirm attendees.
4. The system told them when one section and day was sold out, so they could easily fill up the other area and day with bookings.
5. Set up a seating plan so that parents could choose their preferred location –middle, aisle, front, back.
6. This included disabled/wheelchair access seats to allow for a less mobile guest.

The result was no more parents standing in the aisles or at the back. Everyone had their allocated seat so they could just turn up, take their place and enjoy the performance.

Online booking takes all the stress out of putting on school performances/ events by asking parents to take a few minutes to reserve their seat or place, especially important if the lead singer's parents don't get a seat.

Here's what some more schools already in the know have to say:

"Many thanks. We've been letting the tickets sales quietly happen in the background whilst frantically try to assemble a programme!" - *Sedbergh School*.

"We run a host of alumni and fundraising events, including an online shop via Trybooking. Trybooking assists with our event management and makes booking quick and easy for parents. It is very beneficial to transfer all ticket funds into the school bank account immediately." - *Kingston Grammar School*

"We have 130 people booked for the eSafety event. Fantastic!" - *Rickmansworth School*

"We have been using Trybooking widely across the school and it is making quite an impact. Saves huge amounts of admin time and improves cashflow. It helps with free events too such as Open Days. We easily capture all information without endless form filling and collating." - *Merchant Taylors' Schools, Liverpool*

Online booking and registration systems have come a long way and the easiest ones are those that operate in that intangible, tangible space The Cloud. Easy to access web based systems, not soft ware solutions that have to be integrated into other school systems. This makes them a proper "pay as you use" system. If your event is Free it is Free to use all aspects of Trybooking. If your event is ticketed, there is a very small flat fee applicable to each ticket.

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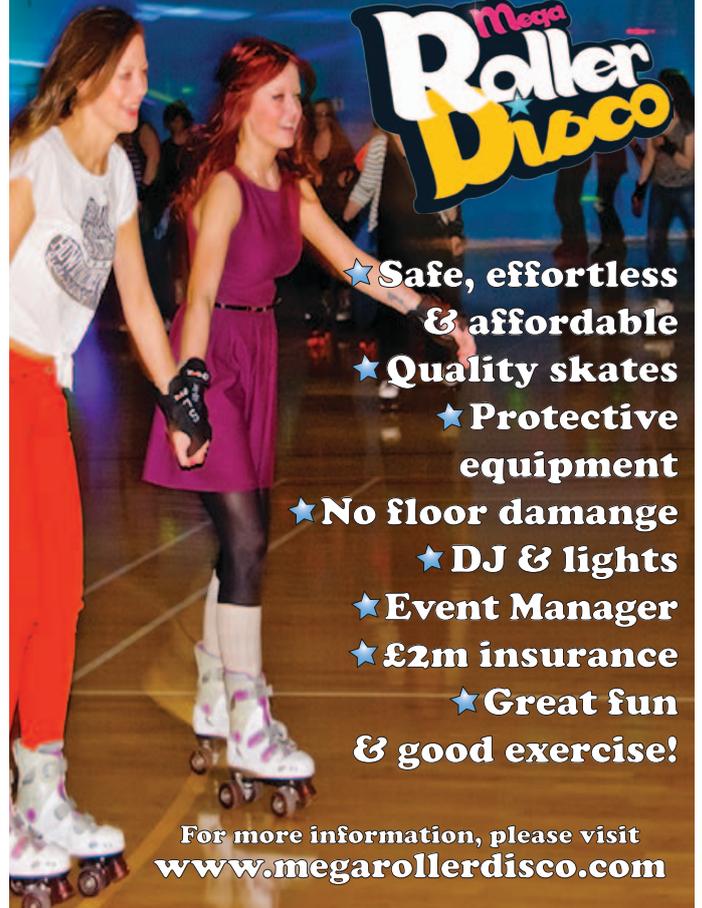
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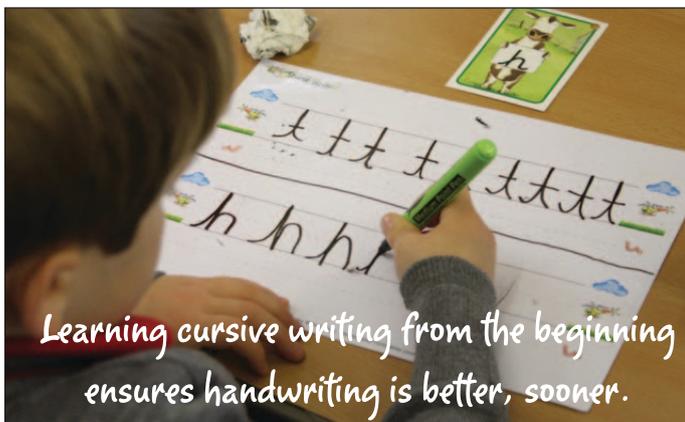
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# From the common room...

Our schools abound with stories of great interest concerning individuals or groups who work within our communities. Do let us know about them. They make a good read! First up in this new series, a gold-medal-winning hockey star!

Paul Nicholson is the deputy head at Bilton Grange, Rugby. He excelled at Hockey as a pupil at Lawrence Sheriff, Rugby and was within a whisker of playing for England as a young man until diagnosed with a heart problem which saw his playing career put on hold for 10 years. This did not, however, stop him from successfully coaching teams at Bilton which he has done for over 30

years, or has his health improved from playing the game locally. Three years ago, Paul was selected for the over 50's England team and at the start of the Summer Term this year, he was part of the England over 55's team which won the FIH Masters Hockey World Cup in Canberra. You can imagine the scene when the Deputy Head was presented with his gold medal in the first

assembly of the Summer term at Bilton. Marvellous.

### And finally...

Many congratulations to our Vice President Richard Tovey who received an MBE at Buckingham Palace earlier in the Summer. Richard is a former Chair of IAPS and Head of Tockington Manor



The SATIPS Broadsheets are a superb practical resource for schools. Each issue, we will highlight a different subject, starting with Geography

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Broadsheet

## Editorial

The Spring Term is always a short sharp affair that is seemingly over before it has begun. Those having examinations at the end of the term might feel as if there has, with half term, been scant time at all to have done much teaching, especially if there have been plays, or swimming heats or other such distractions. It is of course, never the best term for expeditions either, despite the mild weather we have largely been experiencing (though the point is taken that there is never inappropriate weather, just inappropriately rugged up pupils). Whilst there may be opportunities to do some field work on weather, sometimes this might be best done staring out of the classroom window and accessing the wireless weather station!

It is a good term, however, to take a little stock, and perhaps to consider the IT needs of the department, and to think about expeditions in other terms. It might also be a good time to consider not only the weather, but the changing climate.

Hopefully this term's edition gives some food for thought. I wish you warm weather and a splendid Spring Break.

*Andrew Lee*

## iPad Pro and Apple Pencil in the Geography Classroom

The iPad pro and apple pencil were released in November 2015. Unlike many of the Apple devices that have been reviewed in the SATIPS Geography Broadsheet, the iPad Pro and Apple Pencil are ideal classroom companions for the teacher rather than for pupils. At first there may seem little reason to rejoice, instead seeing the Device as just another iPad. The beauty of this device, however, lies in

its connection with other technology in the classroom. Where connectable to a digital screen via an Apple TV (either Version 3 or Version 4) the set up has the capacity to act as a wireless whiteboard slate. With the technology configured in this way is possible to face classes when writing notes or drawing diagrams on the iPad, thus maximising eye contact in the classroom and creates an environment where the teacher is able to keep the class in view. This makes lessons more compelling and increases pupil engagement.

In order to use the iPad in this way, is necessary to download applications that support handwriting. The use of the iPad in this way does not appear to have been as yet fully exploited by application developers. Whilst there is a number of applications that will provide this functionality, there is not one clear leader in the pack. Hopefully, application developers will see the potential for the use of the technology and produce applications that replicate the touch screen whiteboard. Using the Apple pencil, however, provides much increased control over writing. Not only can the pencil be tilted to provide a shading stylus, it is also pressure sensitive meaning that a hard press on the stylus leads to a darker line simulating the use of real pencil.

Being freed from the very front of the classroom is also a great bonus so as to provide visual variety in the classroom. Given that the iPad will operate throughout the room and beyond, it is possible to move around the room and teach which is useful when demonstrating equipment, Showing maps, or pointing out the examples. Because the iPad Pro, like other iPads, is equipped with the camera it is also possible to project things on the desk onto the screen while to look at small objects or rock samples etc. This turns the iPad into a virtual episcopo and allows pupils to see things more clearly and allows the teacher to point things out effectively. The iPad Pro and Apple Pencil are also excellent

tools for the drawing diagrams. Given that these diagrams are immediately digital, it is very easy to upload them to teaching websites or two other useful locations. Moreover it is also possible to make small recordings of demonstrations in classroom which way then be emailed or uploaded to teaching websites.

One of the other advantages is that many types of teaching media maybe uploaded onto the iPad. This means for example, a teacher could easily Flip between YouTube, Keynote, Safari, and handwriting on the board applications such as those listed. Using the technology in this way reduces the amount of 'flip' time which normally occurs in the classroom as a teacher shifts from one data source to another. Moreover, once the iPad is connected and going the teacher can concentrate on one device, rather than trying to get a DVD machine to work, plugging in equipment, finding remote controls etc.

Applications that teachers might find useful on the iPad pro include: Notability, Paper 53, Evernote.

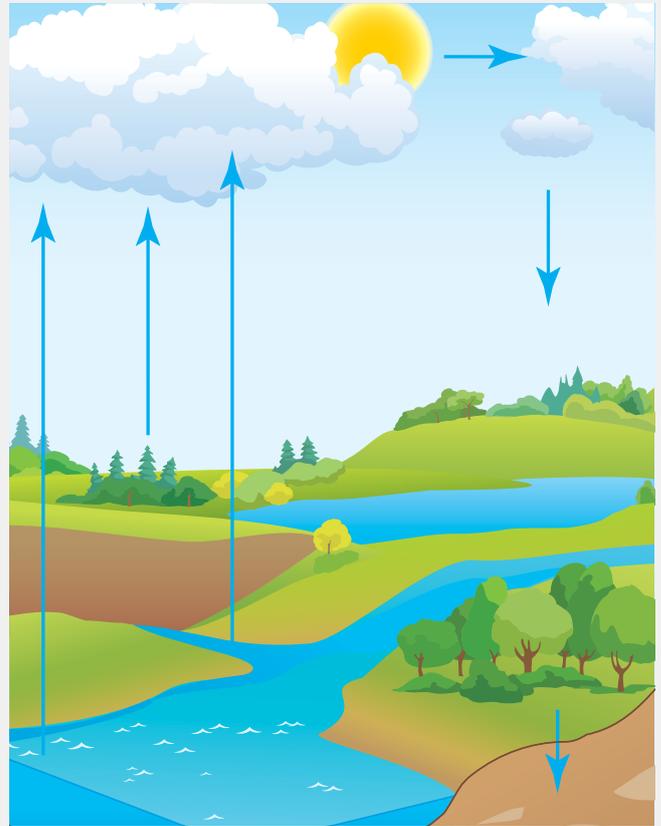
## Teaching about environment in CE

### The Hydrological Cycle

The hydrological cycle is a topic that pupils sometimes complain about saying that they have been taught the topic time and time again. The topic, however, becomes much more interesting, when taught to pupils with a solid level of geographical and meteorological understanding. Indeed, there is much of great interest in the water cycle. Whilst it might seem that increasing levels of complexity might make pupils baulk, quite the contrary can be the case. Because of their experience of weather, and even of the countryside is a very personal one, pupils often respond well to understanding the processes which they have seen and wondered about. The key to capturing imagination is ensuring that the processes are explained in sufficient details so pupils can clearly grasp what is going on. Sometimes this is best done by analogy or demonstration using teaching aids.

### A detailed look at the Hydrological Cycle

It is a good thing, that in the Common entrance syllabus, the water cycle is considered part of the unit of work weather and climate, rather than being part of the rivers topic. Whilst the hydrological cycle is naturally connected to



fluvial morphology, there is much more opportunity within the weather and climate topic to connect hydrological processes with the processes of weather. Pupils, typically find learning about the process of rainfall creation to be quite interesting. This topic allows them to learn about the differences between snow sleet, hail and rain. Pupils always find hailstones interesting with many having stories of massive hailstones to relate to the class. YouTube videos of large hailstones can also be compelling viewing in the classroom and are easily found. Revealing to pupils that hail is commonly experienced in warmer weather is also an interesting opportunity to explain to children the differences in temperature at ground and cloud levels. The notion of frozen rain blowing about high in the atmosphere and growing through the layering of water onto already frozen droplets is one that pupils can easily picture. Snow too, both as plaything and as a concept is something that much interests pupils. Deeply exhaling onto a window pane and showing condensation is an excellent exercise to

demonstrate the way that water vapour appears in a cloud as a parcel of air cools. Subsequently explaining to pupils that snowflakes are formed when that water vapour freezes without coalescing into water droplets once again gives pupils a means of picturing the process in their mind's eyes.

There is an interesting 8 minute film about Chuck Bentley who as a US snow enthusiast who became very interested in photographing snow crystal formation.

See: [tinyurl.com/satips002](http://tinyurl.com/satips002)

The very formation of raindrops is something that also captures the imagination of pupils. The point at which water condenses from cooling air leads onto tiny particles of water coalescing around condensation nuclei. Tiny aerosols comprised of materials such as ice, salt crystals, fragments of pollution, or volcanic particles might be suitable micro-objects around which particles might coalesce. Subsequent droplets of coalesced water might then collide with one another leading to the formation of larger and larger raindrops. Pupils find it interesting to consider that each raindrop contains many of these such aerosols around which they began to coalesce. These micro-particles are known as condensation nuclei. It is these condensation nuclei that are sometimes used to seed clouds in an attempt to instigate rainfall creation processes leading to downpours.

Cloud seeding, however, has only ever had limited success. See this 4 minute BBC video on cloud seeding in the UAE: [tinyurl.com/satips003](http://tinyurl.com/satips003)

Following water around the water cycle leads to mountain tops where ice is potentially trapped in ice caps for thousands or even millions of years. This is another opportunity to capture the imagination of pupils being taught. Consider Arctic and Antarctic ice for example and consider the millions of years that it has been trapped in situ. The water cycle, therefore, has storage moments, where water is stuck in the cycle, perhaps on ice caps, perhaps it is 'stuck' in a lake for a long period of time. It might even be frozen into the ground in permafrost.

Exploring processes of interception, infiltration, and surface run-off also provide pupils opportunities to visualise paths and trajectories of raindrops. Rain, for example on the leaves and trees takes much time to reach the ground. Having been slowed down water then infiltrates into the ground but only after there has been

the delay in getting that water into the aquifer. Having pupils imagine the path of a raindrop is a useful projective technique. Consider, for example, the raindrop that lands in a forest by a river compared with a raindrop that lands on the roof of guttered house similarly by a river. The raindrop landing on the roof will move into the gutter and through into the drainage system and then quickly into the river much faster than a raindrop landing on foliage might. Getting pupils to 'trace' water flow through various paths is a useful too for getting them to think through the hydrology of a set of locations.

Also consider raindrops at the point they reach the ground. Some rain will infiltrate into the ground and again make its way downhill as throughflow in the water table. Where conditions have been very dry, and the ground maybe crusty, sometimes water will run off even if there has been little rain. Once, however, the surface softens, water may then begin to infiltrate. In other instances where there is heavy rainfall water might not be able to infiltrate at a sufficient rate to sustain infiltration, if for example the water can't soak into the ground fast enough. In this instance water might infiltrate at a maximum sustainable speed and excess water will run off the slope. In other instances rock type may have an impact upon speed of infiltration.

Clays for example might initially allow substantial infiltration, but although the clay might initially rapidly absorb water, water does not flow through it very quickly meaning that once saturated the clay will be incapable of further absorption and where it the clay might lay on the surface of a slope there might be a rapid change from water being absorbed to it being repelled leading to a sudden change from water infiltrating to water running off. Such a change might lead to the rapid accumulation of floodwater once a 'tipping point' is reached.

Careful use of terminology is important when teaching about the water cycle. Run-off for example might be either a noun or verb in that that run-off might be the water moving across the surface of a slope but it might also be the process by which water runs off slope. On the other hand, throughflow refers to water moving through the aquifer with the means by which it moves being referred to as infiltration. Percolation on the other hand is the process by which water moves downwards through cavities and porous subsurface rock.

There is a useful video without commentary which might be useful in the classroom to help show or trace processes. As a prep it might be useful to set pupils to write a commentary that might go with the animation. It may be found here: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=0\\_c0ZzZfC8c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0_c0ZzZfC8c)  
Or here: [tinyurl.com/SG060216](http://tinyurl.com/SG060216)

Al Gore's Update: The Climate Reality Project  
Released Friday 23 February 2016 (Recorded in Vancouver)

[tinyurl.com/satips001](http://tinyurl.com/satips001)

Since Al Gore's Inconvenient Truth was released in 2006 Mr Gore has been campaigning relentlessly for the environment. Whilst his initial offering was a sobering picture of just how much had to be done, his revisit just released celebrates the extent of what has been done. There is an awareness in environmental circles about public exhaustion regarding persistent gloomy pictures of the future and whilst there is no doubt continuing concern about the future of the planet, this last episode is an opportunity to say well done, we've done amazingly well in many areas, but there's still much more to be done.

**Here are some of the key information revealed in Mr Gore's update.**

We deposit 110 million tonnes of carbon every 24 hours into the atmosphere.

We still rely on dirty carbon based fuels for 85% of the energy we use, globally.

The energy trapped by man made global warming pollution is now equivalent to 400 000 Hiroshima atomic bombs per day 365 days a year.

This energy heats up the atmosphere. We have an increasing number of extremely hot days.

Higher temperatures are having a very significant impact on people and plants.

The heat is being trapped in the oceans.

The warmer oceans are evaporating more water vapour into the skies. This funnels water vapour over the land where there are record breaking downpours.

This is causing historic floods and mudslides e.g. in Chile, Spain.

There is more energy in the atmosphere and storms are different now. There are also increased droughts in some

area and more water vapour in the atmosphere in other areas. There are more fires, more lightning, more rainfall and more flooding. These climate related disasters also create political instability. The Syria drought for example turned 60% of Syria's fertile land into desert and drove 1.5 million people into Syria's already crowded cities.

Tropical diseases are spreading to the higher latitudes with transport playing a role in the movement of viruses.

Land based animal and plant species are now moving towards the poles at a rate of 3 metres per day. The earth is at risk of losing 50% of the living species on the planet by the end of the century.

Last year even in the middle of winter the Arctic was not frozen over. The temperature was 10°C higher than usual.

The ten cities most at risk from sea level rise are Kolkata, Mumbai, Dhaka, Guangzhou, Ho Chi Minh, Shanghai, Bangkok, Rangoon, Miami and Hai Phong.

Whilst we still need to effect massive change in the way we use energy there is some good news.

Humans have moved to wind power much more quickly than was anticipated. It was expected that by 2010 there would be 30GW of wind based energy generation in the world. In fact we've now around 435GW of energy, with the cost of this energy going down and down.

On 26 December 2015, Germany managed to get 81% of all its energy from renewable sources (mainly solar and wind). Many countries managing more than 50%.

With solar power the expectation in 2002 was that by 2010 there would be 1GW growth per annum, but by 2010 it was 17 times this amount. By 2015 it was beaten by 58 times.

The cost of renewable energy is becoming cheaper and cheaper. At some point 'Grid Parity' will be reached, when renewable energy will be less than the cost of energy from non renewable sources.

It might be useful to show the video to pupils.

It can be found here: [tinyurl.com/satips004](http://tinyurl.com/satips004)

# SATIPS

Support and training in Prep Schools

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## Why should my school be in membership?

- **SATIPS** offers a breadth of training, networking and supportive opportunities to schools in membership.
  - It is the **ONLY** organisation in Britain which is dedicated to the needs of teaching staff in Prep Schools.
- **SATIPS** is absolutely concerned to cater for staff ranging from NQT to Head of Department or Senior Leadership Team. We also aim to cover all age ranges from Nursery to Key Stage 3.

## **SATIPS offers a four-part core of activities and support:**

### **Broadsheets**

These are published each term, covering a wide range of curriculum interests, as well as specific concerns: eg Senior Management, Special Needs and Pre-Prep.

Broadsheet articles are usually written by practising Prep School teachers with occasional contributions from leaders in their field. This ensures that, whatever the article is about, the reader can be certain that he or she will not only share subject and age-group relevance but also cultural assumptions: eg parental expectations or what “works”. Writing articles for the Broadsheets encourages staff to reflect on their classroom practice and curriculum development.

Broadsheets are edited by Prep School teachers who, with proven track records in their field, have taken on the role of subject ambassador. For further information about the Broadsheets, go to <http://satips.org/> and, for sight of recent editions, follow the links to “Specimen Broadsheets”.

### **Courses and INSET**

**SATIPS** offers a wide range of training courses, Conferences and other In-Service opportunities.

Courses can be accessed on the web-site at <http://satips.org/courses/>

Courses are designed to cover a wide range of interests. Attention is given to course feed-back which helps to shape our programme. School requests for training is particularly encouraged.

Course presenters are very carefully vetted. Our aim is always to make use of known experts in their field who are also first-class presenters. Members schools receive a substantial discount on course fees.

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## **Competitions, Exhibitions and events for pupils**

**SATIPS** offers a variety of pupil-focussed events. Over many years Schools have enjoyed entering their pupils in events that hold a nation-wide attraction with high standards. Currently, these events are:

- **SATIPS** Challenge Annual General Knowledge quiz
- National Handwriting Competition, held in conjunction with Cambridge University Press
  - Poetry Competition
- SATIPSKI the annual Ski competition held at Hemel Hempstead indoor ski centre
  - Annual Art Exhibition

Full details of all these events are at <http://satips.org/competitions/>

## **“Prep School” Magazine**

“Prep School” is published three times a year. It offers readers in Prep Schools a broad range of authoritative articles on educational matters with an emphasis on issues that concern all Prep Schools.

## **What next? Joining Satips or seeking further information?**

We are proud of what **SATIPS** offers. With all Council members and Officers still working in Prep Schools we believe we understand the demands on staff working in schools and are here to support them.

Please do contact us if you would like more information or if we can be of any assistance.

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## SATIPS courses and directory

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## Courses and events

A selection of courses from the Autumn 2016 training programme:

23/09/16	Digital Conference: The next generation, making IT so	David Horton, Professor Stephen Molyneux	London
30/09/16	Learning to Learn	Tom Barwood	London
07/10/16			
10/10/16	ISI Excellent Marking	John Medlicott	London
04/11/16	Classics: a testing time	Bob Bass MBE, Jonathan	
07/11/16	Outstanding Behaviour for outstanding learning and progress		London
14/11/16	Maximising boys learning	Tom Barwood	London
17/11/16	4th National English Conference		London

Please visit the website for more detail on all these courses and to see the full programme for the Autumn term.  
For information please email training@satips.org or the Director of Training, Sarah Kirby-Smith on 07584 862263



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