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Conference & common room

The magazine for
independent schools

**Handling the
hot topics of
the classroom**





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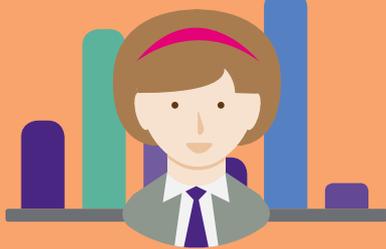


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At least three pairs of eyes on every child
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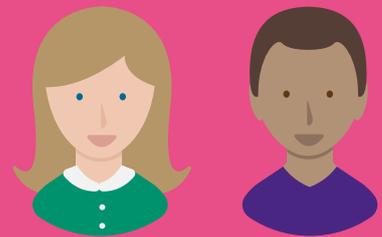
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The last issue of *Conference & Common Room* appeared soon after the result of the referendum on whether the United Kingdom should or should not remain in the European Union. This one coincides with the scheduled inauguration of Donald Trump as President of the United States. Both countries claim a unity in their title that is far from evident in reality. In our case, the Union established by Parliamentary legislation in 1707 and confirmed in 1800 is under severe challenge, both internally and externally. It is quite impossible to predict how 'Brexit' will affect every part of this country and how Scotland, particularly, and Wales and Northern Ireland will respond in political terms. In the United States, where Union was only confirmed after a civil war and where the relationship between federal and state government is still subject to massive centrifugal forces, devolution and unity are in a state of unfruitful tension. If these internal problems are both confusing and worrying, the external ones are even more so. The children in our schools face what may be a turbulent future and Jason Morrow's *Letter from America* is of particular interest, coming as it does from Manhattan, where some see themselves as living in a disaster area following the 'Trumpocalypse'.

Perhaps most concerning is the degree to which misleading messages have become commonplace in debates that are increasingly conducted in a media free for all. Instant and constant news is as difficult to process as it is to manage. 'News' seems to appear and disappear at random. It's not just that this morning's truth is reclassified as this afternoon's lies, but also the fact that nobody can tell at what point information will take on some degree of permanence, at what point the message becomes embedded. Blink and you miss the apology: look away and you miss the retraction. Fake news is just another reality game, but playground politics in Westminster and Washington have a toxic fall-out. Perhaps the most valuable gift that any teacher can impart is discernment. It is vital to persuade children that the way they communicate with each other on social media is quite different from what should happen in the classroom or in their academic work.

Nevertheless, despite the continued intervention of politicians in educational matters, there is still plenty of good news in our schools. The London and Rio Olympics gave hope to those who still value a united kingdom. The Association of National Olympic Committees named Team GB as the best team at Rio and rated the GB women's hockey players as the best female team. In Rio as in London, women led the way, adding a whole new level of inspiration in sport for girls, particularly welcome at a time when resurgent misogyny has featured so prominently in media coverage of politics. It has been observed that independent schools play a significant part in nurturing this country's sporting talent and we focus on that contribution in the current issue, examining the benefits that it has for pupils and schools alike.

In the present political climate, the temptation to look fondly at the past may be more than usually forgivable. Although a return to the classical teaching methods reviewed by Hugh Wright is most unlikely, (despite the government's apparent desire to return to grammar schools and therefore, presumably, secondary moderns), school archives are enjoying a resurgence of interest, not least in the widespread marking of the centenaries of World War I. However, the threat to drop History of Art A level, now happily withdrawn, came at a time of worrying unfamiliarity with the historical, religious and mythical contexts of art. The New College of the Humanities is unafraid to turn back the clock with its provision of one to one tutorials, once the USP of Oxbridge and now a rare provision for undergraduate courses. The Oxford University Press, whose book list establishes it as supremely authoritative, goes some way towards filling the cultural gaps with its Very Short Introductions series. As Stanford professor Tina Seelig, quoted in Duncan Piper's article, says, 'culture is like the background music of any community'.

Central to the purpose of all schools is the nurture and development of everybody in their community. At Truro School, three pairs of eyes triangulate the well-being of every pupil, and schools are increasingly sympathetic to the view that transition can be very challenging. But the pupils are not alone in needing care and attention as Graeme May and Cathy Barnett write. Good school leadership can be transformative and, in an age when teachers are bearing increasingly heavy loads of work and responsibility, and when they might be forgiven for thinking that some of their 'stakeholders' see themselves as extras in a Dracula film, their protection is a very high priority.

Schools should be places of safety, not least safety of expression. Pupils learn how to manage argument and conflicting ideas; how to make a case and how to listen to one. Verbal bullying is as unacceptable and corrosive as physical bullying and it is crucial that a school's ethos makes that clear. Managing the endless stream of information and opinion that pours from the ubiquitous iPhones needs a discernment that may not come naturally but which can be taught. Relationships that are mediated through a screen rather than conducted face to face are vulnerable to misunderstanding; in the virtual world, reality and unreality can become interchangeable. Emails, now distinctly old hat as a form of communication in the eyes of the Millennials, have grave limitations, missing as they do the tell-tale signs of face and body language. It is hard not to see a teaching body that communicates mainly by email as being one in danger of becoming sterile. The very speed and brevity that are the essence of Twitter create obvious communication risks, and the opinions that fly through the ether like clods from a muck-spreader are often examples of 'over-valued thinking' and glib imprecision.

Although those who teach in schools are not without their problems, they are probably better off than many who work in universities. Generally speaking they work with a fair degree of job security, whereas many who carry the burden of teaching in universities do so on precarious short term contracts. The recent growth of student-led censorship described in *What's happening in the University?* reviewed by Ralph Townsend, must be demoralising for those seeking to broaden their pupils' minds. On the other hand, in a world turned upside down, it is understandable that some may feel that they simply can't cope with the current ubiquitous and rampant polarisation of attitudes. If your inner child has not retreated too far underground, Tracy Shand offers some suggestions as to how to start what will be another interesting year on a positive note.

HERE & THERE

If you have news of topical interest, however brief, for 'Here and There', please email it to Tom Wheare at tom.wheare@gmail.com. Items should not exceed 150 words. Good colour photographs are also welcome.

Survival skills put to the test in Malaysia



Twenty-seven CCF cadets and four members of Sutton Valence School staff flew to Malaysia, to put their survival skills to the ultimate test. The students marched four days of the Sandakan, colloquially known as the Death March, the first British cadets to do so. At the end of World War II, Allied prisoners were forced to march ten days from Sandakan to Ranau, which resulted in the death of 2,371 prisoners.

In a salute to these fallen soldiers, the cadets walked part of the same march, navigating and trekking through thick jungle, crossing rivers and climbing hills; grateful that unlike the original prisoners, they had clothing, shoes, food and a comfortable place to sleep each night. The trail included the final challenging walk up Quailley's Hill in Sabah, dedicated to and named after Alan Quailley, an Australian prisoner of war who was killed atop the hill. During their visit the cadets had an opportunity to shoot a blowpipe with a local Malaysian, Pak Zudin, who reportedly inflicted casualties on the Japanese during the war with poisoned darts. They also met Madam Domima, the "ring lady" who fed six escaped prisoners, under threat of her whole village being executed.

At the end of the march, the cadets visited two of the prisoner camps. They held a service of remembrance at Kindasang War Memorial for all of those who died on the Death March, and read aloud the names of the fourteen soldiers who had lived in Kent to honour their ultimate sacrifice. Sutton Valence is the first British school to have visited the memorial and experienced the emotional and trying march. Humbled by the experience, the whole group agree that they have made memories that they will never forget.

Recovering Robert Pearce House

Sarah Gowans describes how life goes on at Bishop's Stortford College

The events of 29th September 2015 will be for ever etched in the minds of the Bishop's Stortford College community for, at around 02.40, a fire broke out in Robert Pearce House (RPH) – a boys' boarding house. The alarm was raised by one of the boys and within minutes all occupants were safely outside. The fire quickly spread from the roof of the Arts and Crafts building, dating from 1923, down into the first and second floors. The building was almost completely destroyed with just the front façade and the cellars remaining.

The boys and staff were given temporary accommodation in School House, another boarding house, which meant the suspension of boys' flexi-boarding, but life at the College, home to some 1170 pupils, was only on hold for 24 hours as life quickly swung back to normal.

Within a few weeks of the fire, plans for a temporary boarding house were placed with the Council. A structure comprising 52 Portakabins had been designed that would be fabricated off site and installed in 'box-sized chunks' in situ. The scheme would take just over 2 months to install and fit out. As soon as planning permission was received, the ground works commenced and the installation of the Portakabins started in December, continuing into the New Year. By the 24th February, just 5 months after the fire, the new temporary boarding house was ready for the boys to move into.

The boys settled in well, enjoying their new space. The rooms were somewhat larger than they were used to, the study rooms and social spaces, well equipped and spacious. Other boarders took a keen interest in their new accommodation (the RPH colour isn't green for nothing) and life settled down again.

With the help of the loss adjusters, architects and designers,

plans for the re-building of the original RPH were underway and, by July 2016, planning permission had been granted.

Whilst all this was going on, the College was also in the midst of another major development – the planning for and building of two new boarding houses, one to replace the existing School House and one to create a new girls' boarding house; and a new boys' day house to replace Collett House. The new boarding houses will offer vastly improved facilities, including *en suite* rooms whilst increasing the boarding facilities for girls to the same level of provision as for boys. The plans also allow for the original College buildings, School House and Collett House, which date from the 1860s, to be redeveloped into superb new classroom facilities, a new administrative hub and a teaching staff facility. This development started in late April and is expected to be completed during the Autumn term of 2017.

When coupled with the rebuilding of RPH, this major development will mean that three quarters of the College Senior School boarding facilities will be brand new by the time the projects are completed. It's a substantial financial commitment but one the College feels is worthwhile as it will ensure that they are able to offer both day and boarding pupils the best possible facilities.

Whilst the fire was a catastrophic event and one which no one wants to repeat, the College is sure that the new buildings and the rebuilding of RPH will give the College another 150 years to look forward to, as it now makes plans to celebrate the school's 150th anniversary in 2018.

Sarah Gowans is the Marketing Manager at Bishop's Stortford College

Work has been taking place to restore Robert Pearce House.





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League tables don't tell the whole story

Andrew Fleck offers some perspective

I am occasionally asked about the value of league tables and where Sedbergh features. The answer to the latter question is more straight-forward than to the former.

The question whether league tables have value is determined by the person who reads them and, in common with any set of measurements, it is important to understand what they show. If the reader values what league tables measure, then they have value.

When considered as a whole, a school's position in the league tables is the product of its selectivity, its balance of educational priorities and the strategies used to enhance its position. It follows that league tables are likely to be useful to a parent who has access to a number of different schools and who is seeking a school which is defined solely by its academic success. They will be less informative to parents who may seek the benefits of broader education and who value the development of the character and personality of their child alongside academic attainment.

The first league table was published by the *Daily Telegraph* in 1966 and they became important in the mid 1990s. As they

gained importance, schools developed strategies to enhance their position. This included asking pupils to leave school after GCSE or midway through their A levels if they had not reached a certain threshold. In some cases, schools have developed subsidiary organisations so that they can stream pupils according to their ability and thereby enhance the position of the core organisation. These are some of the unintended side-effects of the league tables.

Perhaps the best assessment is that they provide an insight into a school and may be a starting point for discussion. Quite a small difference in percentage points will lead to large variations in position that will be of no significance to an individual pupil. All schools are able to measure how well their pupils perform in relation to their individual ability and other schools. This Value-Added measure is more relevant and may be more interesting to a parent and pupil.

Sedbergh does not provide information for league tables since they fail to reflect the unique character and value of a Sedbergh education. Ours is a broad education which properly embraces academia, the arts and sports, as well as a social and





spiritual education. To use an Olympic analogy, league tables are the equivalent of awarding medals for the heptathlon based solely on results in the 800 metres race.

Durham University demonstrated how the level of difficulty of A levels varies by two grades between subjects (SCORE Report, July 2008). Happily, universities recognise this, even if league tables do not, so that the Russell Group, the most selective universities in Britain, identify 12 “facilitating subjects” to which they give greater credit than other less rigorous subjects. The breadth of subjects offered at different Schools and the variability of Exam Boards makes this a significant problem and so, for both these reasons, we do not provide information to the media for league tables.

None of the foregoing helps a parent determine how strong the academic provision at Sedbergh may be.

In the first instance our intake is modestly selective. Our average ability profile sits close to the 40th centile of the national population and the range extends from the top 5% of the population to the 60th centile. We respond to this wide range by using distinct sets in subjects from Year 9 which allows us to group pupils according to their academic ability. This ensures that pupils are taught at an appropriate level and with proper ambition.

We measure ‘Added Value’ for every level of ability and many sub-groups. Yet even this measure creates problems because pupils who are predicted A* grades cannot exceed their predictions and therefore cannot score Added Value. Because of this ceiling, our top set only gains 0.25 grades of Added Value despite recording 82% A & A* grades at GCSE (2016). By contrast, set 6 gained an average of 0.7 grades of Added Value in

every GCSE by comparison to similar schools. Individual pupils may gain as much as 1.4 grade improvement in every GCSE by comparison to their initial predictions.

A different insight into the academic credentials of the School is given by the universities at which pupils gain places. In 2016, 87% of Sedbergh pupils who applied to university gained places at their preferred institution immediately on receipt of results, 52% of them at Russell Group Universities. The full range of universities can be found at <http://www.sedberghschool.org/senior/Explore-Sedbergh/University-Destinations-Degree-Choices>

Sedbergh School does not operate a ‘one style fits all’ policy. Each pupil’s needs are assessed individually and arrangements are then made to meet their specific requirements. Each pupil has a dedicated tutor who is responsible for their academic development, monitoring their progress and liaising between subject teachers, Housemasters, Housemistresses and parents. Since almost all staff live on site, there is every opportunity and plenty of time for extra lessons and tutorials.

Beyond the classroom, the vast range of opportunities on offer gives Sedberghians the edge when it comes to competing for places at the top universities and employment. Their personal statements and references are full of comments about community service, charity work and fundraising, expeditions, teamwork, responsibility and a host of other relevant experiences.

Above all, alongside an outstanding senior school education, Sedbergh prepares its pupils for interesting lives.

Andrew Fleck has been the Headmaster of Sedbergh School since 2010

LEJOG

Not the French for taking exercise, but a challenging journey North

Exeter School pupils, parents, staff, friends and alumni put their best wheel forward in the summer holidays to raise money for two charities as a school community.

The team of nineteen riders, supported by ten crew, two minibuses and a trailer, cycled 935 miles and 46,929 vertical feet over ten days to raise money for *The Children's Society* and *The Janine Di-Vincenzo Foundation*.

Estates and Facilities Manager, Craig Stewart, organised the ambitious cycle ride from Land's End to John O'Groats.

"In the course of several conversations with colleagues over lunch in the dining hall, I managed to talk myself into taking part in a LEJOG charity cycle ride," said Craig. "From there it evolved and I soon found I was organising one! I put out feelers and discovered that a number of Exeter School staff, pupils, parents, friends and alumni were also enthusiastic cyclists and very keen to join in." LEJOG is the acronym for Land's End John O'Groats, the Northward traverse of the whole length of the main island of Great Britain.

Having gained the support of the Headmaster and the Bursar, Craig selected two charities to support. *The Children's Society* is a national charity which runs local projects helping children and young people when they are at their most vulnerable and have nowhere left to turn. *The Janine Di-Vincenzo Foundation* is a recently created foundation started by the Di-Vincenzo family following the loss of Janine through cancer. Her children, Lexie, Max and Luca, attend the school and they accompanied the LEJOG team, together with her husband Marcus and her father Ron, who both took part in the charity cycle. The foundation aims to provide financial support to families who can't afford advice and help from pioneering specialists. The success of these treatments allows the family to have more time together.

In a bid to ensure that as much money as possible went to the charities, Craig had the brainwave of asking schools along the route to provide accommodation for the Exeter School cycling team and crew. Mount Kelly School, Queen's College Taunton, Monmouth School, Ellesmere College, Sedbergh School and Lomond School all generously agreed to support the worthy cause.

"I didn't want external event organisers to be involved, which would drain the pot unnecessarily," explained Craig. "This meant that I had to research and plan the route, find accommodation and provide support for the team. I struck on the idea that I might get accommodation from other independent schools *en route*. This was a huge success, as we were offered accommodation from six schools to all of whom we are very grateful. Additional accommodation was provided by the YHA, The Lockerbie Adventure Centre and the SYHA,



and the cost of this additional accommodation was very kindly sponsored by Marsh Barton Security Services (MBSS)."

The intrepid cyclists departed on 8 August 2016, covering North Cornwall, Dartmoor, Cheddar Gorge, the Clifton Suspension Bridge, the Wye Valley, the Dales, Shap and Beattock Summits. In Scotland they travelled the beautiful West coast route, via Glasgow up past Loch Lomond, through Glencoe and the Great Glen, taking them on up the east coast of Scotland to John O'Groats without the aid of ferries, and, most importantly, each stage always started and finished at their overnight accommodation. The nineteen riders, aged between 14 and 77, completed the unforgettable 935-mile journey in the allotted ten days.

Organiser Craig Stewart said: "I am sure that I can speak for all who took part, that it was in every respect one of the most brilliant things we have ever done, meeting some great people on the way, whilst facing huge physical and mental challenges. So far we have raised over £21,000.00 for our two charities. All who took part would like to thank our main sponsor, Marsh Barton Security Services, which is a part of the MIG Group, and the hundreds of people and companies, too many to mention individually, who have supported our cause." The LEJOG cycling team are very grateful for the support of Sodexo and Greendale for providing cycling jerseys.

Junior School Headmistress, Sue Marks, said the LEJOG endeavour was far and away the most daunting challenge she had ever undertaken. "The miles involved and the number of days on the bike seemed an impossible challenge at the start," she said. "However, as the group began to gel and the miles were slowly (in my case) covered each day, it started to seem as if it might actually be achieved. The charities we were riding for were so much in our minds and the support the group gave one another to keep going was second to none. There were a lot of laughs, quite a few sore places and a considerable amount of calories burned over the ten days. A very special bond developed within the group, and the support we received from friends, family and people we met on the journey made all the difference and spurred everyone on. The feelings I experienced on arrival at John O'Groats were a mixture of overwhelming relief, elation and complete surprise at having surpassed my own expectations. A huge thank you to everyone who supported the event – it has been a most incredible journey."

The Janine Di-Vincenzo Foundation was set up by her family to fund advice and treatments that are not available on the NHS. The Foundation operates for parents with children under the age of 18 years old. It is run by volunteers and has no overheads as it is supported by the family-run business.

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At least three pairs of eyes on every child

Shaun Pope describes Truro School's collaborative approach to supporting students' achievement

Most highly regarded schools encourage academic excellence whilst at the same time ensuring that students get the opportunity to engage in a broad range of co-curricular opportunities. This is the essence of a rounded education.

In this regard, Truro School is no exception, but what might be more unusual here is that we have a team of staff whose responsibility it is to closely monitor student progress; three pairs of eyes ensuring that every child gets the support they need to achieve all that they are capable of, whatever their personal gifts may be.

Why do we take this approach?

Three dimensional view

Our job as educators is to prepare a young person for life after school. As part of this, we need to focus on developing the whole individual so that a student leaves us fully equipped with the qualifications and personal skills needed to thrive in higher education and succeed in the workplace. We believe that when it comes to motivating students and encouraging achievement, three minds are better than one.

What this means in practice is that subject teachers, form teachers and pastoral heads at Truro School work together to encourage progress. They meet regularly to review a variety of information on our students' progress, discussing their achievement and making decisions together on what steps might be needed to help to ensure that each child achieves their full potential.

In our experience, having three views on the progress of each individual student gives us a much clearer focus on the best way to challenge, inspire and support that child, as well as spotting those who need to be passed on to the pastoral, SEN or academic teams for further intervention.

A focus on the individual

If you are imagining our staff having to trawl through pages of data on a student's attendance, achievement and conduct, think again. We use a colour coded system within our management information system (SIMS) which gives us a clear picture of each child's progress in relation to the individual goals they are aiming for. This means we can see at a glance whether a student is below, at, or above their targets, so that decisions can be made



Schools

quickly on what action might best support their progression.

A focus on the individual means a focus on the whole child. What motivates one student may not be successful for another, so having the different views, backed up by the latest information, helps us to decide on the right approach for each child – be that catch-up sessions in maths, activities for developing an artistic or sporting interest, or encouragement to enter an essay competition.

Truro School's mission is to be a beacon of inclusive excellence. We encourage every child to aspire to the highest standards of academic and personal achievement, whether they are day students or boarders or part of our scholarship programme. The three-pronged approach helps us to monitor the progress of each of our scholars closely and effectively and ensure that their individual gifts and abilities are encouraged to thrive and grow.

Holistic education

Exploring different talents alongside studies and encouraging children to embrace new experiences is the foundation of a rounded education. We offer over 70 co-curricular clubs, as well as a plethora of activities that take place outside of school, many of which are run by our teaching staff.

This can mean that teachers are called away from the classroom from time to time to direct an orchestra rehearsal or lead a school trip, for example. These experiences are central to the education we provide, so we have an effective cover system in place to ensure that our students' learning continues uninterrupted if, on occasion, their usual teacher is unavailable. As part of this, we regularly monitor the progress of classes to ensure that students continue to be challenged and supported.

Having three pairs of eyes on each student's progress helps us to ensure they benefit from the wide range of opportunities on offer at Truro School, while keeping them on track with their learning as they move through the school.

Targeting success

We all need goals to aim for in life, so we also focus on motivating our students. One way we do this is to involve them

in the process of setting aspirational and attainable learning targets. This helps them to understand exactly what they are working towards.

Each GCSE or A Level student has an individual discussion with their subject teacher in order to set targets. This discussion will consider baseline data, the student's prior attainment, their personal aspirations and the teacher's professional judgement. Targets will vary across any given year group. For one student, a B grade at GCSE may be a great achievement, while another student's aspiration might be to achieve A*. That's why a key focus for us is to recognise and value the individual rather than treating every student as if they were the same.

Details of students' rewards and sanctions are recorded on the computer system at Truro School and this makes it simpler to find opportunities to praise students who are improving, as well as those who are making a big effort.

The right attitude is key to success, so we recognise students for such attributes as being organised, consistently getting homework done to a high standard or exceeding their targets. Our prize system also reflects this philosophy, with awards in the lower school for achievement and for effort and in the sixth form for a wide range of achievements from academic excellence to community service.

Educating global influencers

With over 1,000 students, including a diverse boarding community representing over 10 different nationalities, we are immensely proud of our school.

In 2016, over half of all grades awarded to our students at GCSE were A* or A, with nearly one quarter A* grades achieved. 1 in 3 of our students play a musical instrument and 1 in 7 compete at regional, national and international level in sport.

Education is about so much more than excellent exam results, important though these are. At Truro School, the aim is to develop confident, tolerant and enthusiastic young people who enjoy working with others and are ready to influence the world. It is this that staff and students aspire to achieve, together.

Dr Shaun Pope is Director of Studies at Truro School



Changing schools is challenging

Moving to secondary school can cause lasting problems

In the last issue of Conference & Common Room, Dr Mark Whalley, an experienced secondary school teacher, wrote persuasively about the benefits of three to sixteen schools, one of which he now leads. In his experience, delaying the change of schools until sixteen could avoid a great deal of early teenage angst. An authoritative study from GL Assessment backs up this view.

Children's positive attitudes to school not only decline once they move from primary to secondary school, but keep on falling for two or three years after they make the transition, according to one of the largest-scale studies ever to look at the problem.

Researchers have long known that moving schools at age 11 causes problems for significant numbers of children, but the survey by GL Assessment, based on data from almost 32,000 children in England and Wales, has found that the problems persist in Years 8 and 9 as well as Year 7.

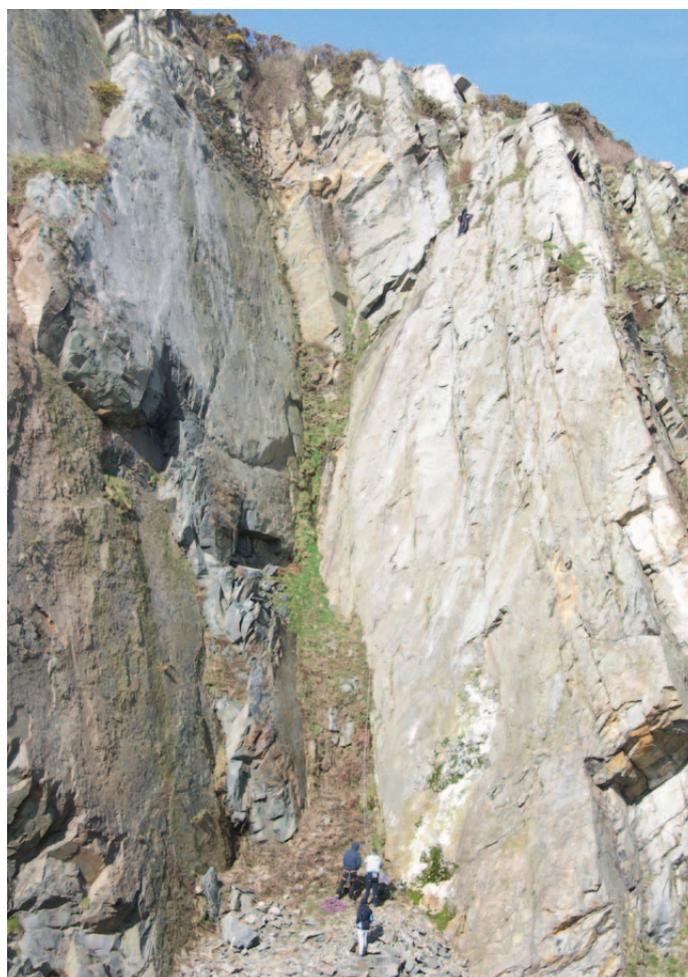
While a whole host of factors come into play at this point in a child's development – hormones, friendships, growing up, taking control – the transition to secondary school marks a significant change for students and it is at this point that we begin to see a notable decline in student attitudes.

The study, from the leading provider of formative assessments to UK schools, looked at children's feelings about school and teachers as well as their attitudes to themselves as learners – their confidence, work ethic and how prepared they felt themselves to be, for instance. It found that the biggest decreases in children's positive attitudes were towards schools, teachers and attendance. The score for children who feel good about school declines from 94 per cent in Year 3 to 84 per cent in Year 9. Positive attitudes towards teachers fall from 93 to 84 per cent and towards attendance drops from 90 to 82 per cent over the same year groups. The biggest declines in all these factors occur after Year 7 and not before.

The proportion of children who think the rules in school are fair declines from 94 per cent in Year 3 to 86 per cent in Year 9. Those who say they are bored at school increases from 19 per cent in Year 3 to 32 per cent in Year 9, and the number of children who say they like their teacher falls 10 percentage points between Years 3 and 9. The fall isn't precipitous, but it equates to some 70,000 students in each year group who have a more negative perception of teachers.

Attendance, too, becomes more of an issue for children the older they become. The proportion of students who say they would rather be somewhere else than in school rises from a quarter (25 per cent) to a third (33 per cent) between Years 3 and 9.

Greg Watson, Chief Executive of GL Assessment, said the findings helped shed light on why so many children found the transition from primary to secondary difficult. "Pupil attitudes to learning and school are crucial and we simply haven't been paying them enough attention. We need to understand what happens to children's confidence and self-perception as learners when they change schools, and teachers and parents need to know what can be done to remedy any problems."



The continued decline in children's positive attitudes well into secondary was revealing, he said. "Parents and teachers won't be surprised that significant numbers of children find the move to 'big' school difficult. But I suspect few of them will have realised just how long attitudinal problems can persist. That should worry us all."

Some attitudinal factors are remarkably stable over time. Self-regard as a learner, for instance, is 76 per cent in Year 3 and remains at 76 per cent in Year 9. General work ethic is 85 per cent in Year 3 and only falls slightly to 84 per cent in Year 9. And not all metrics show a decline. Contrary to received wisdom, students tend to respond well to the increased curriculum demands as they get older. In answer to the question, 'Do you get anxious when you have to do new work?' the percentage of children saying they do fell by half between Years 3 and 9, from 35 per cent to 18 per cent. At the same time, the proportion saying the work they have to do in class is too easy declines from 43 per cent in Year 3 to 14 per cent in Year 9.

Sir John Dunford, Chair of Whole Education and the National Pupil Premium Champion from 2013 to 2015, said: "Moving from one school to another is a stressful experience. There is the anxiety of moving to a much larger school; of



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having to find your own way round without getting lost; of being in classes where you will know few, if any, of the other children; of the presence of lots of much older children; of having more than ten teachers instead of one; of the demands of increased homework – and all this at an age when the complexities of personal development can weigh heavily.”

“Attitudes are a good predictor of engagement,” he adds. “If pupils are engaged and positive about themselves and their learning, they are more likely to be successful. It is particularly important for primary and secondary schools to listen to the voice of their pupils during this time.”

The trends from this study are reflected at Wakefield City Academy, which sees a drop in students’ feelings about school from Year 7 to Year 9, while some attitudes, particularly

students’ perceived learning capability, general work ethic and response to curriculum demands, remain stable.

Dan Styles, the Trust Improvement Partner at Wakefield Academies Trust, is very aware of these attitudinal fluctuations and the school has introduced a number of interventions to limit the dip as much as possible. “Attitudinal surveys have provided us with some excellent insights into our students’ feelings and opinions about school. Sometimes students who on the surface appear the most secure, resolute and resilient can be masking concerns that could affect their potential to achieve. Armed with attitudinal data, we can support these students specifically in areas of self-regard and dealing with stress.”

A free copy of the GL Assessment report Pupil Attitudes to Self and School is available at <http://bit.ly/pupilattitudes>

HERE & THERE

If you have news of topical interest, however brief, for ‘Here and There’, please email it to Tom Wheare at tom.wheare@gmail.com. Items should not exceed 150 words. Good colour photographs are also welcome.



School’s pride as Haseeb plays starring Test role

Fifteen months ago Haseeb Hameed was picking up his A level results from Bolton School; on 9 November, he opened the batting for England against India in the first Test Match in Rajkot. He is England’s fifth youngest Test player, their youngest opening batsman and the first Lancashire opening batsman to play for England in 21 years. After scoring 31 in England’s first innings, he scored 82 in their second, in an opening partnership of 180.

His incredible summer also included him winning not only Lancashire’s Player of the Year award, but also recognition at the national Asian Cricket Awards, where he won the Professional Young Player of the Year award for the second time.

Head of Cricket at Bolton School, Andy Compton, said, “The first time I saw him was in our indoor nets in the Spring Term when he was in Year 8 and we knew then we had a very special talent on our hands. His father, Ismail, has been the largest influence by far on his career and has been his mentor throughout. Making his debut in India could not be more appropriate as that is where his parents are from.”

Headmaster Philip Britton said, “We are terrifically proud of him as a school. We found a boy who was academically able enough to thrive in our school but also had tremendous sporting promise, and we knew we would be a good environment where he could realise that promise and have a good education.”

There's no time to lose

Grace Pritchard Woods advocates an active archive

Have you ever wondered where that door goes? You know the one: it either leads to a dimly lit staircase extending downwards into the deep dark bowels of the school or upwards to the unknown spaces amongst the rafters of the towers and roofs. It is from here that a strange creature, a pale and anaemic looking shape wearing Parfum de Must et Dust emerges. The eyes squint as they meet the daylight, betraying an aversion to bright light reminiscent of the Gremlins of the said film. Needless to say, it is the School Archivist.

Of course this archetypal image of the archives is untrue, but perceptions and confusion as to what School Archivists do all day and their contribution to the current needs of the School remains to some a mystery. This article aims to open up the dusty book and give some insight into what occurs in those hidden away places: the habitat and habits of these strange and elusive creatures.

For those of you not *Star Wars* aware, Madame Jocasta was the Jedi Archivist who was somewhat aghast when Obi-Wan dared to suggest that her archive was incomplete! Whilst we cannot possibly keep everything, we are reliant on the generosity of the School community to ensure not only a diverse collection, but also the long term sustainability of the Archive. A colleague was somewhat surprised one day when I popped up from inside a skip having tried to retrieve an item! It is sometimes difficult to convince the staff and pupils of today that their 'stuff' is the archives of the future. Unsurprisingly

then, much of my time is spent gathering the material created by the institution and entering it into the collection, or writing to Old Decanians to thank them for sending me a bundle of their cherished treasures and memories. Being an archivist is rather like having Christmas 365 days a year: to steal a phrase from the film *Forest Gump* 'you never know what you're gonna get.' The strangest item I have ever had? Perhaps a lump of shrapnel, now wrapped in tissue, which fell on the School field in 1940; or maybe the stick of rock with a Dean Close label!

My job is varied and often unpredictable. The day could start with a simple enquiry regarding family history research from someone asking what I can tell them about their father or grandfather who attended the School; or a phone call from an excited Marketing Director ringing because she has heard the Antiques Roadshow is in town and could we dig out an old relic to take along? I did not take this personally! We get a lot of enquiries from current staff asking for information, ranging from a sporting statistic to what the original motto of each House used to be.

Ultimately, my main aim is for the collection to be used and seen. There is no point keeping and preserving material and then hiding it away, never to see the light of day again. Hence, much of my time is spent producing displays and exhibitions. An unsurprising favourite was the old model railway which I exhibited to accompany the Preparatory School play, *The Railway Children*. It once belonged to the School's Railway



The class of 1887 at Dean Close School

Club and it was amazing how many male members of staff surreptitiously circled the display cabinets trying to peer in without seeming too keen.

We also try to incorporate archive material into the teaching programme across the School. We always look forward to our annual visit from the Year 2 children who come to the Senior School for their Victorian Day. Dean Close School was built during the early 1880s, opening formally in May 1886, so many of the early buildings date back to the Victorian age. The Year 2s all get dressed up as Victorian children and have a tour of the buildings and learn about what it would have been like to have been a pupil at Dean Close during the Victorian period. Following the tour, they get to try on a few bits of uniform, a boater and a mortar board, and they look at some old pictures and artefacts. This is both one of the most enjoyable and tiring of the tours that we do! This year we kicked off proceedings by re-creating the 1887 first school photograph with both an authentic straight-faced Victorian picture, and a happier, less serious version. We do a similar tour, minus the dressing up, for Year 9s when they first arrive at the Senior School and spend the first few weeks in their history lessons learning about the School's past. It is accompanied by a small display of archive material. This incorporates primary sources into the teaching programme and culminates in pupil's writing an essay on change and continuity at Dean Close School throughout its history.

For obvious reasons, the last few years has seen a big emphasis on those past pupils who were killed during the First World War. Since the Centenary began a further seven Old Decanian casualties of the war have been discovered, none of whom we knew about. The prolific research carried out during the run-up to the commemoration, coupled with the increased digitisation of records, has greatly facilitated this process. It would not be a surprise if more names come to light. The archive plays an important role in Remembrance of those lost. Each November an exhibit is created to mark the Armistice. This year it was based on the losses suffered during The Battle of the Somme, which saw 19 Old Decanians killed. As new individuals are discovered it is important that their names are added to the existing memorial panels in the Chapel. We also have a book which was created in the years following the war by the Headmaster's daughter, in which her fiancé, an Old Decanian and master, is featured. This includes photographs of all the Old Boys known at the time to have been lost. We hope to create an updated Roll of Honour to include all those names not in the original book, a project driven by the School Archives to mark the 2018 Centenary.

It must be stated that all of this would not be possible without the kindness and generosity of Old Decanians and their families who donate their treasured items and memories to the collection. Without them we would not have such a rich resource. Often it is thanks to the families of past pupils that we find out about their lives and what they did following their time here. Last year the Alumni Society celebrated its 125th



Grace Pritchard Woods on the Antiques Roadshow

anniversary. As part of the celebrations we researched key members from the early years of its foundation to feature in the literature accompanying the events. If it hadn't been for the help provided by the relatives of those men, it would not have been possible to tell the stories of their time after Dean Close.

Telling their stories forms the crux of my job. A School is not just the buildings but the people who pass through its gates. It is in this capacity that School Archives have increasingly flourished as tools for alumni relations, a key proponent of both our Alumni Society and, more recently, our Development Campaign. The stereotypical image, suggested at the beginning of this article, that archives are only about the past, and that archivists are backward looking obsessives flitting secretively from the attic to the crypt, has perhaps hampered their ability to be seen as relevant and able to contribute to the current business needs of the institutions they serve. Whilst Development is facilitating that process, we have a lot to offer, if given the chance. So next time you are passing that doorway and you are unsure as to what lies beyond, to steal yet another film reference, 'Make my day,' come in and find out!

Grace Pritchard Woods is the Archivist of Dean Close School



‘Everybody has won and all must have prizes!’ Discuss.

Duncan Piper knows that, with the support of Shaw and Newton, leadership can become the foundation of every school

Tina Seelig, the insightful professor of Stanford’s d:school, says that “culture is like the background music of any community”. I became fascinated by this music, aged 17. I was unexpectedly appointed as Head of School in my final year at Highgate and became increasingly attuned to the varied attitudes of individuals towards themselves, other people and their own surroundings. What did a Year 9 boy expect of himself? Was there mutual respect between Sixth Formers and the younger years in the school? How did teachers treat support staff? How did pupils view teachers? Did teachers feel that the school had their back? And did everyone feel that *this was their school*, or did they just happen to work there, or learn there?

I now have the pleasure of spending time in dozens of schools across the UK and, though they all have much in common (with pupils learning and teachers teaching), I’ve come to realise just how *different* they can feel. Some schools have Chopin’s “Nocturnes” in the background. Others have Queen’s “Don’t Stop Me Now”.

How do you change the track? This is something I’ve been working on since 2012.

It was George Bernard Shaw who wrote, “The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man.” I founded The Unreasonables to support the UK’s most ambitious schools to create what we call “cultures of leadership” – environments in which everyone is expected, and supported, to lead.

Cultural shifts are possible, but not easy. The first stage is simple – you’ve got to *want* it, badly. I spend ample time with Heads that still aren’t sure – they stumble across “leadership” with a raised eyebrow and degree of caution.

Concern number one: do we *want* everyone to be a leader?

I’d say that not everyone can be in charge all of the time, of course – that would give rise to impossible pandemonium. But my sense is that leadership is about two things: leaders create change, and leaders create leaders (as opposed to egotistically measuring themselves by the number of followers they’ve enlisted). So, do we need more people that have the capacity to

Visiting schools demonstrates that, while they have much in common, they all feel different





create positive change in this world, and support others to do the same? Yes, surely.

Concern number two: can everyone *be* a leader?

It is shocking how many young people are alienated by leadership, having swallowed whole the dangerous fallacy that all effective leaders need to be male, white extroverts – every Head, and every 16 year old, needs to read Susan Cain’s *Quiet*. I believe that saying “some people just aren’t leaders” is as short sighted as saying “some people just aren’t good at maths”. Though some may have a natural propensity to excel in maths, do we hang those that don’t out to dry? Or do we, as tenacious and inspired teachers, do everything in our power to support all our pupils to achieve the very best they can, regardless of their current ability?

I went to a hippy North London school until the age of 11 – a place full of colour and creativity but where team sports just weren’t on the agenda. And so, at prep school, I arrived with little coordination or athletic prowess. Such boys don’t get picked for the team, and so don’t get invested in. By the time I was in senior school two years later, the gap between my peers and me was just too wide to cross, and I remained on the bench. Roll forward by over a decade and I still have a real sense of foreboding when, wandering through the park, a stray football arrives at my feet and requires a deft kick back to an impatient player – the fear of humiliation has stuck.

Malcolm Gladwell, in his book *Outliers*, captures this phenomenon so simply: “It is those who are successful [...] who are most likely to be given the kinds of special opportunities that lead to further success.” For those of us who are not successful (whether in football, maths or leadership), it’s likely that our graph of accomplishment will remain stubbornly flat.

But, not in your school – you’ve decided that you absolutely do, 100%, want to create this pervasive and transformative culture of leadership across your community. I’d recommend you simply follow the same “Unreasonable Process of Leadership” that we share with every student and teacher we work with: *See-Dream-Create*

The first stage is to do what Will Gompertz suggested at HMC in October – to look at the world like an artist. *See the*

World, with absolute honesty. Adjust your vantage, or clean your glasses, and see things for what they are: “Though I work to create a safe environment for everyone else, I myself am frightened of failure”; “the staff in the common room feel undervalued”, “we have a serious mental health issue in my Sixth Form”.

The next is to *Dream the World*, with great determination – to imagine, in vivid 3D, what it would be like if things were different: “if I had a sense, deep down, that I would be okay”; “if every teacher felt fully supported and celebrated by this school”; “if every member of the Sixth Form had true peace of mind”.

And the final stage is *Create the World* – to make choices, and take action, to get you closer to that dream. Though working out which choices to make, or which actions to take, is no easy game, you’re already two thirds of the way through the Process of Leadership by the time you’re grappling with the challenge. And the process is exactly the same whether you’re a 16-year-old boy trying to reduce the level of homophobia in your year group, or a Head trying transform a community of thousands of people – it’s just a matter of the scale and context of your change.

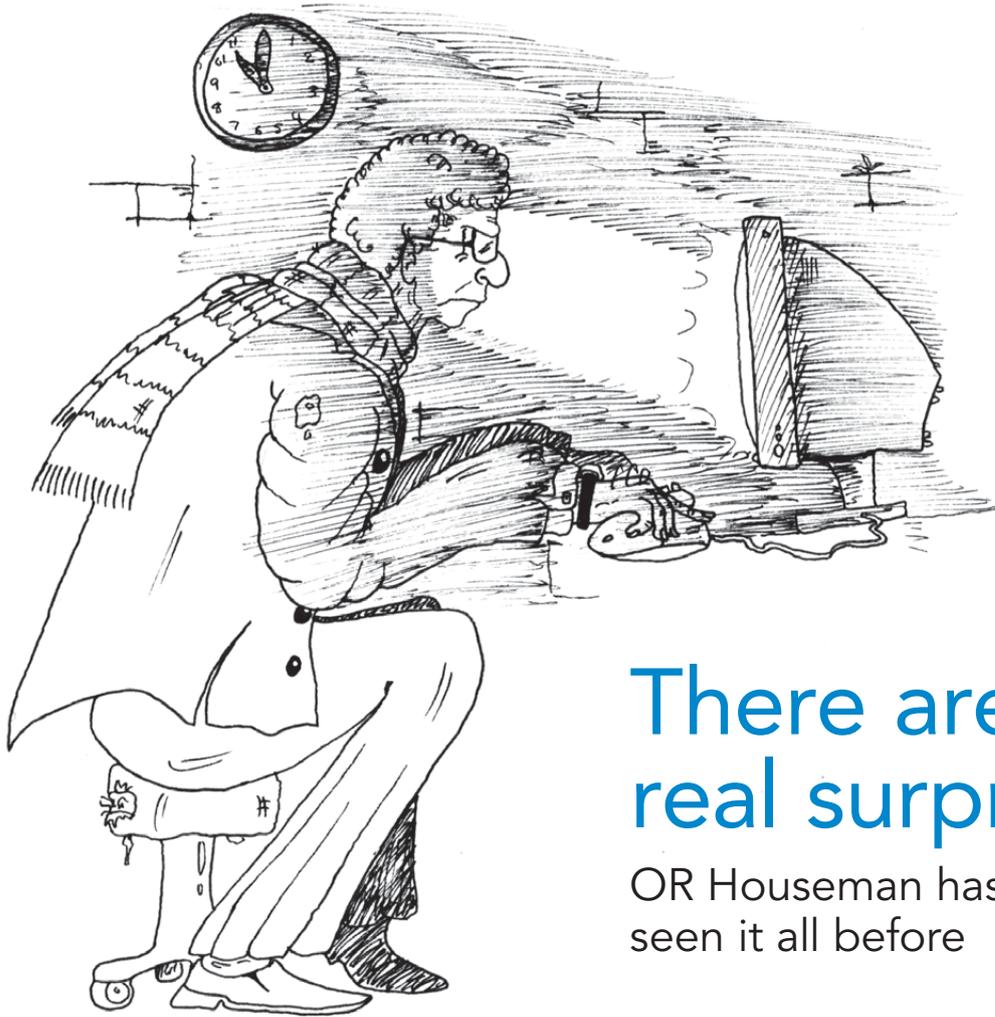
Pop Quiz: What is Newton’s First Law of Motion?

Answer: “Every object persists in its state of rest or uniform motion in a straight line unless it is compelled to change that state by forces impressed on it.” Whether working with a hundred Sixth Formers during our *Debunking the Leadership Myth* programme, or a dozen teachers on *The Unreasonable Teacher Academy*, it is a true privilege to be able to “impress” upon members of a school community a positive “force” to help them to get to where they want to be.

Duncan Piper was educated at Highgate School and The University of York.

He is the Founder of The Unreasonables (www.TheUnreasonables.org)

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There are no real surprises

OR Houseman has seen it all before

Ours is probably not the first Headmaster to tell his Common Room of his dream to have a school without punishments. In fact, he is not even the first Headmaster I have heard express this sentiment. Perhaps all Headmasters say it at some point. It must certainly be true that every Headmaster devises a new disciplinary structure, possibly even more than one, during his own tenure at a school. The purpose of the new structure is always to produce something which is 'transparent' and 'fair'. Perhaps not all Headmasters state a desire that the pupils must 'buy in' to any system which they propose, and perhaps only a few Headmasters actually ask pupils to contribute ideas towards a new disciplinary structure, but even that is not a completely novel idea. Every Common Room is divided by a Headmaster's new disciplinary structure. Some are delighted to be working in such an enlightened new age and believe wholeheartedly in a school with no punishments: others are outraged by the new Headmaster's liberal nonsense. This element of the Common Room will probably now refer to the Headmaster's predecessor in respectful, even nostalgic terms – 'Say what you like about Dr Gussy, he was totally straight on discipline, and the boys knew where they stood.' They never said this about Dr Gussy before he retired. It is also certain that a statement of a new approach to disciplinary structures will be followed by a conspicuous, if not necessarily disastrous, disciplinary episode in the school.

Among the various elements of a new school year is a new group of School Prefects. A new group of School Prefects begins a new school year with Intentions, or at least statements of

intentions, to Make a Real Difference. A new group of School Prefects begins a new school year telling the pupils that they will not be like last year's prefects, but they will be the School Prefects who really care, really do put the interests of other pupils first, and will do everything to ensure they have the best year possible. Some of the School Prefects even believe their own statements.

The School Prefects make similar statements to the Headmaster. They explain to the Headmaster that, unlike last year's School Prefects, they will not disappoint him by abusing their position, let alone neglecting their duties, but they will be exemplary prefects and pupils, explaining the messages of the Headmaster and the Senior Leadership Team to the pupils, and ensuring that all pupils abide by them. This works very well for a while, but then the new School Prefects realise that life as a School Prefect is not quite the idyll they had imagined. It is no longer an exciting novelty to be seen to be a School Prefect, and so the duties, which at first indicated so much prestige, are now merely onerous chores which the other members of the Sixth Form do not have to perform. Meanwhile the privileges to which they had (secretly) so looked forward now seem barely perceptible. They discuss these grievances and come up with an idea, An Initiative. They put it to the Headmaster and the Senior Leadership Team. The initiative is probably impractical and almost certainly involves alcohol for them, so the Headmaster and Senior Leadership Team reject the proposal. However, this will lead to Another Initiative from the School Prefects shortly

afterwards. The Headmaster and Senior Leadership Team may reject this as well, but they know this is a gamble: they will have to accept whatever initiative comes next or there will be revolution. They fear. They have to maintain morale. They have to let the School Prefects exercise some kind of leadership if they are to keep them on side. They also know that when they do eventually accede to the School Prefects' initiative they will also have to face the disapproval of the element of Common Room who are starting to remember Dr Gussy and his reliable disciplinary structures with such fondness. The other element of Common Room, those who actually believe in the Headmaster's stated belief in a school with no punishments will be delighted to hear that the School Prefects' initiative will go ahead. This is, of course, of little comfort to the Headmaster: he probably knows what is going to happen.

Our latest example occurred in the first half of this term.

The Headmaster and Senior Leadership Team had rejected the School Prefects' first two initiatives for a morale-raising, routine-changing diversion. The third had to be accepted. It seemed fairly harmless too: they asked for a 'themed' supper in Dining Hall (with beer or wine for the Sixth Form) and a disco. They got their 'themed' supper – American Thanksgiving – but no alcohol or disco. Instead they compromised and accepted the suggestion from the Senior Leadership Team (the Headmaster had of course delegated management of the minutiae, presumably to allow himself time to prepare his management of the consequences) that the Sixth Form could watch a 'themed' movie in the school theatre instead of prep. Both factions of Common Room were disappointed. Those who welcomed the school with no punishments were disappointed that the Headmaster had not trusted the pupils enough to let them have beer or wine – 'After all, surely we must teach them to drink alcohol responsibly'. The master in charge of school dining was outraged – 'A complete change to school dining arrangements and I find out at 10pm the night before' – nor was he placated by the Deputy Headmaster's observation that in fact he need do nothing whatsoever to manage the complete change to school dining arrangements. The increasingly loyal supporters of Dr Gussy gleefully predicted a disaster.

It was not quite a disaster. Behaviour in the dining hall was almost impeccable, and a large number of pupils thanked the dining hall staff. Behaviour in the theatre during the screening of the movie was almost impeccable, and some pupils thanked the organisers. The master in charge of the dining hall, however, perhaps feeling frustrated by having been relieved of his usual task, decided to inspect the local pubs. I discovered this when he called me.

"I found a group of six boys in the George. One of them is in your house. Has he reported in yet."

"Oh dear. Sorry. But no, no boy has reported in. Can you name him?"

The master in charge of the dining hall named a boy who left last year.

"I don't think it was him."

"Why not?"

"He left last year."

"He could still have been in the George."

"He is at Durham University."

"It may not have been him, actually, now you mention it."

As long as no other boy from my house did not report in, I was in the clear. By 10pm all six boys had identified themselves to their respective housemasters. I was in the clear.

Those yearning for a school without punishment were split. Some were genuinely surprised and disappointed that half a dozen pupils had abused the Headmaster's trust; others felt betrayed by the Headmaster when he decided to punish all six boys who went to the George. The loyal supporters of Dr Gussy tried to indulge their outrage. 'Of course this was going to happen. A total disaster. The Headmaster has been made to look a complete fool. Of course they let him down. He should never listen to the School Prefects. The Head of School should resign, his position is untenable. The boys in the pub should be expelled. If the Headmaster sticks to his plan for a school without punishments he will make himself the laughing stock of HMC.' Some extended this to expect the resignation of one particular Housemaster, three of whose boys had been in the group of six in the George. I spoke to him the next day, and he told me which boys had been in the pub.

"All fairly decent boys" I observed.

"Absolutely. But you always knew that they would spot this opportunity and take it. I think I would have done when I was in the Sixth Form. In fact I know I did."

"I think we got away with it. Only six boys in the entire school went to the pub while the rest quietly watched the film or did their prep."

"I totally agree. It could have been a total disaster. The Headmaster is delighted."

"Delighted? I can imagine he is relieved, it could have been so much worse. But delighted?"

"Absolutely. Now he can reject the next few initiatives from the School Prefects, and quietly forget all about a school with no punishments."

"I didn't think he ever really believed in that."

"Of course not. But he had to say it. They all do at some stage."

OR Houseman finds solace in Stoicism



A synergy of skills

Clare Barnett explores the similarities between being an effective teacher, manager and coach and why this is important.

In the ever-demanding world that teachers and leaders within schools face, the role of coaching becomes increasingly important as a means of enabling them to find the most effective way of working with each other, with their pupils and with their staff.

If I asked you to create a list of what it takes to be an outstanding teacher today, what would be on your list? Such attributes as 'well organised', 'open to questions', 'prepared', 'good listener', 'committed', 'innovative' and 'technology literate' might spring to mind. If I then asked you to compile a similar list of what it takes to be an effective educational manager and/or leader, how different would that list be? Would your list focus on the outputs of a manager or their inputs – for example, what they *need* to achieve versus *how* they achieve their goals? To be 'organised', 'a good listener' and 'always planned and prepared' may well be requirements, but, in a school with a demotivated staff room, roles as well as standards may be very different and another set of skills altogether might be required.

The final list I want you to create is one that identifies the skills of an effective coach. Again, what words would you use? 'A good listener', 'strong, challenging questioner', 'builds an easy and supportive environment for coaching', 'professional' – these could be the buzzwords here. With all three roles, there are similarities. In none of these areas is it simply about working *harder*, when we are already working as hard as we can: there are still only 24 hours in a day and seven days in a week. Instead, we need to think about working *smarter*, and that is where coaching comes in.

According to the many theorists who write about leadership and management, the key focus of any effective manager is to achieve the correct balance between task delivery and people development. We know that it is sometimes possible for strong staff to be working towards the wrong goals, or for them to be aiming for the right goals but without the management backing that is necessary to bring staff in the right direction. Whether we look at Adair's *Action Centred Leadership* or more recently the Alimo-Metcalfes' *Engaging Leadership*, the importance of balancing task focus with an emotionally intelligent leadership style combining authenticity and adaptability has become the Holy Grail. Within the fast-paced, ever changing and highly customer-focused school environment, just managing staff is not enough. The challenge is about how we manage all our stakeholders, from the pupils in the classroom through to parents, governors and the community we operate within. So what makes an effective educational manager?

Hales (1986) suggests focusing on these five stages.

1. The importance of ensuring a degree of congruence between actual and expected practices and performance. Do you know and understand what is expected of you, and can you achieve it?
2. The degree of fit between behaviour and activities on the one hand and tasks and functions on the other. Is the managerial function structured in such a manner as to enable you to be effective?
3. The effectiveness of the manager, not only in their own work, but in overseeing the work of others. Do you have a team with the right skills and abilities to deliver?
4. The effectiveness of the whole management team. Is the whole team capable?
5. The issue of who decides what constitutes the proper management function and defines the managerial tasks, and on what criteria.

Where does coaching fit into this discussion, and how can coaching enable me to be a better teacher, manager or leader? Put simply, *coaching is a conversation, or series of conversations, one person has with another*' (Starr 2003). Knowles states that *'learning is the act or process by which behavioural change, knowledge, skills and attitudes are acquired'* (2005).

When working in an educational establishment it is important to think through how we are developing our own learning, as well as the teaching and learning of our pupils.

Ullrich and Smallwood (2007) discuss the importance of Leadership Brand and the impact that has on the organisational brand. In a highly competitive Independent School market place, the brand of your school needs to be easily identifiable. This enables you as a school to attract the parents and pupils who relate to your brand. A leadership brand occurs when *'the leader's knowledge, skills and values focus employee behaviour on the factors that target issues that customers care about.'* So, if we don't value investing in our staff learning, how can we value the learning of our pupils? Coaching is a learning approach that enables people to develop their behaviour, to find new perspectives, to overcome barriers and unlock doors, and ultimately to become the best version of themselves that they can be.

The skills of a coach are like those of a teacher: a good listener with an ability to ask curious questions (without necessarily knowing the answers); someone who can constructively challenge at the same time as offering encouragement and support; who holds the individual to account, keeping them focused and enabling them to see different options and perspectives. Fundamentally, it is a relationship based on a deep level of trust. How familiar are those skills within the classroom? These are the same skills which enable our pupils to become independent learners.

Coaching is not only about the development conversations that we have as part of our learning path. It is about the everyday practices that occur within a school – the management briefings, the quick chats on how to solve an issue, the dealing with difficult parents, our annual reviews and so on.

Adopting a coaching approach in your own practice

1. Ask questions instead of offering answers.
2. Listen acutely to the words people use: these indicate their frame of reference. Do they think things through or feel them through?
3. Try not to think that your solution is the best one. Enable people to find their own solution which they will then own.
4. Hold people to account through questions. Stop spoon-feeding and enable them to solve their own challenges. This

will save you time in the long run and develop a stronger team around you.

Managing Director Clare Barnett launched Synergia Coaching in 2008. She is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and the Chartered Management Institute.

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HERE & THERE

If you have news of topical interest, however brief, for 'Here and There', please email it to Tom Wheare at tom.wheare@gmail.com. Items should not exceed 150 words. Good colour photographs are also welcome.

Mayfield Riders crowned National Schools Champions again!

Mayfield School Equestrian Squad was once again riding high after winning a number of titles at the National Schools Championships at Addington Manor in late October.

A weekend of Championship team successes saw Mayfield take the National Schools Dressage Team Champions title, become the National 1.10m Team Show Jumping Champions and the National Open Arena Eventing Team Champions, where the team was over 12 marks ahead of any other school.

The girls also swept the board individually. Year 10 pupil Molly Faulkner became the National Special Jumping with Style 1.10m champion, with Mayfield girls also taking the 2nd and 3rd place, and Year 9 pupil Anna Martin became the BE series National Champion, with Mayfield again taking another three section titles in this category.

As a result of the weekend's successes, four of our girls, Kitty Ashby, Catherine Haurie-Moss, Molly Faulkner and Amy Whiffen, were invited to compete for England in the Schools Nations Show Jumping Cup, again winning their section! Year 13 pupil, Immie Long, was also invited to compete in the Nations Cup Dressage Section, providing Mayfield with their final success to round off a triumphant weekend.

Director of Riding Jill Barker said: "Congratulations to everyone who made up the Mayfield team for the four days. Our tremendous success was the culmination of plenty of hard work but also the most fantastic team spirit which was the envy of many of our fellow competitors."



These Girls Can

How rugby is taking off at St Helen's School in Northwood



The exploits of the team GB women's rugby sevens squad at the recent Rio Olympics have elevated the profile of women's rugby in the UK as never before. The squad's stirring campaign, and heart-breaking fourth place finish, brought the sport to a new audience, and gave young people a new set of sporting heroes: women whose pace, power and skill could be admired and emulated.

One of the greatest aspects of women's rugby is that it helps to prove to the next generation that young people can get involved in whatever activity they like, regardless of their gender. With the mind-set of stereotypical 'girls' sports' and 'boys' sports' now firmly buried in the past, women's rugby is being increasingly lauded for offering female pupils an alternative to traditional sports, in addition to improving their general level of skill and fitness, together with a tactical awareness that can be applied to many other sports.

Helen Harding, Physical Education teacher and rugby specialist at St Helen's, has been playing the sport since the age of 13 and was brought up within the Wasps Rugby Club environment.

"Rugby", she says, "taught me to value, respect and look out for all members of my team. It is a great example of how supportive people should be of each other in all areas of life."

Among Helen's many career achievements, she has remained loyal to one club – Wasps Ladies – for 30 years. In that time, she represented her country as part of the 1994 England World Cup winning squad, and made the most of her opportunities to play rugby all over the world. During her career, she has also taught male prison inmates how to play rugby, so she has nothing to fear from teaching 13 year-old schoolgirls!

In September 2014, a lunchtime rugby club was set up at St Helen's School in Northwood for Year 7 and 8 pupils. Two years later, the sport is now offered to four year groups. The girls are making rapid progress and have achieved a great deal of success in recent competitions.

Last year the current U15 team played in the London Youth Games. Two of the players were selected for the England Talent Development Squad with a view to stepping up to England U18 age-group. In the past season, the U15 team came 5th out of 16 teams in the South East regional finals – losing out on qualifying for the national finals by just one game. Their goal is to get past the regionals to reach the nationals this academic year, which would involve playing as one of the best twelve teams in the country.

This September has seen the largest number of girls taking part in rugby trials at St Helen's – including almost two-fifths of the entire Year 7 cohort. As a result of these growing numbers, both the U13 and U15 rugby squads will be training at Merchant Taylors' School this year to make the most of the extensive facilities and expert coaching on offer at a boys' independent school with a long and rich history of playing rugby.

So how has Helen managed to grow rugby at an all-girls school so successfully?

"The first priority for girls new to rugby is to teach them about safety – but every session also has to be fun," Helen says. "You have to be engaging, and concentrate on building skills through gameplay rather than drills. I tell the girls when they first start playing that rugby is like Marmite – they will either love the game or hate it – but the key is that they have to discover the fun in the game for themselves. Girls with potential to progress further will show drive and determination in their gameplay. It is a game for all shapes and sizes: players don't have to be the fastest or the strongest, and there is a position for everyone."

It is clear that the pupils taking part at St Helen's are keenly invested in the sport and are determined to see their teams make progress. Sian Evans-Evans, a Year 9 pupil, commented that, "Playing rugby at St Helen's over nearly two years has taught us not just how to play but also teamwork, respect, how to support each other, and how to lead effectively. Over the next year I'd like to keep learning about our team's strengths and progress to win more games."

Chloe Rabin, also a Year 9 pupil, became interested in playing rugby at St Helen's because "Rugby is different from other sports – it was a new thing to try and so I decided to join the club at the beginning of Year 7."

Thanks to Helen and her tireless commitment to women's rugby, a whole new sporting tradition has begun at St Helen's which might one day see former pupils of St Helen's representing Team GB at future Olympic Games – perhaps even at Tokyo in 2020.

Hannah Openshaw is Head of Marketing and Communications at St Helen's School



Passionate about sport, serious about education

Frank Butt describes Langley School's partnership with Norwich City Football Club

For many youngsters, the prospect of becoming a professional footballer holds enormous appeal, but in reality, competing at the highest level in any sport takes talent, dedication and a lot of hard work. With so much time and energy going into their sport, it can be difficult to ensure that a student who is also a talented and ambitious footballer stays happy, healthy and on track with their schoolwork. This is why Langley School's motto – *passionate about sport, serious about education* – is our guiding principle in encouraging all students to work towards their sporting as well as their academic goals.

Partners in excellence

Langley School has entered into a partnership with Norwich City Football Club to meet the challenge of helping some of the country's most promising young footballers build strong academic foundations as they pursue their sporting careers. Through this arrangement, up to 24 of the club's academy scholars study and board at our school, where excellence in

sport and education is at the heart of our ethos. What we weren't expecting – and have been delighted to see – is the positive impact the initiative has had in helping to generate a culture of high achievement, not only for the players, but for students across the school.

Harnessing energy

Students at Langley focus on their GCSE options from Year 9, so they can make a great start in the subjects that truly interest and inspire them. As a result, there's a real buzz of enthusiasm in our classrooms, and many of our students are aiming for top GCSE grades.

We encourage the same level of aspiration from our academy players, but, faced with balancing a busy training schedule and a packed school timetable, even the most conscientious young person could find themselves pulled in different directions. However, with the right support from the school, the energy and drive that an academy player shows for football can be



Sport

channelled into schoolwork too. It's our view that a sound academic track record is crucial to opening up choices for all our pupils in later life, whether their career lies in professional football, further or higher education, or elsewhere. The key to giving any student the opportunity to fulfil their potential is to keep a close eye on their learning and progress.

Monitoring achievement

A busy schedule of coaching sessions, training camps and matches makes it difficult to fit a young player's lessons into the regular school day. So that nobody misses out on their learning, or has to spend time catching up, we create flexible timetables for the footballers using our management information system (MIS) – we use the solution from SIMS Independent.

Some of our pupils spend one day a week at the Norwich City's Colney Training Centre, so we make sure that their lessons are all scheduled during the time they're in school. Wherever possible, we ensure lessons are covered by the same subject teacher and classes are kept small to encourage focussed learning. Progress tracking is vital for flagging any issues and the way we do this at Langley is by colour coding students' achievement data so that teachers can easily spot if a student is falling behind and step in to provide help if it's needed.

Good communication is key to keeping students on track too, so we keep both parents and the football club up to date with how the academy players are progressing via regular emails. They are kept informed if a player starts to fall behind and will get updates on any merits and demerits the students receive. We can then discuss whether any action is needed to ensure the students meet their targets.

Healthy and happy

Anyone performing at the top of their game in sport needs to be kept healthy and happy on and off the field. That's why one of the key features of our partnership with the football club is having the academy players board at Langley School. This not only enables our staff to help the boys achieve academically, but it also supports their emotional wellbeing. Good nutrition and plenty of rest is part of this and, with the academy players under our roof, we can make sure that they get plenty of time to relax and wind down too. This holistic approach helps to keep the players in good shape physically and mentally, so they can do their best in the classroom and out on the pitch.

Excellence for all

Langley are going one step closer to providing their students with the very best in sporting opportunities available in the UK by partnering with six national, regional and county sports clubs and organisations.

Whilst all of the partnerships benefit from the sharing of expertise, resources and facilities, many of them involve student athletes attending Langley School to combine their academic study alongside personalised, focused sports training. We aim to provide students with the best opportunities to achieve their potential in both academic and sporting areas.

The Sporting Partners Programme was launched at Carrow Road on 20th May 2015 where the Junior and Intermediate house football finals were also taking place. As everyone familiar with the triumphs of the London and Rio Olympic Games will know, sporting excellence is an equal opportunities ambition. Langley School has therefore sought out partners that cater for girls as well as boys. Brooke Cricket Club, for



instance, has teams for both boys and girls from the younger years through to senior level, whilst Harleston Magpies Hockey Club has sides at every level and two of their first team players work and coach at the school.

Aiming high

Schools have an important role to play in encouraging students to hold high expectations of themselves. At Langley, we find that all our students are inspired by seeing the elite players strive for excellence in their sporting and academic endeavours. Through our partnership with Norwich City FC, our students have access to some exciting sporting opportunities too. After all, how many schools hold their inter-house football matches somewhere as inspirational as the club's Carrow Road stadium?

With the right support, sporting and academic success can go hand in hand and, as we have found, dedication and hard work become shared values for all our students, whatever their future has in store.

Frank Butt is senior deputy head of Langley School in Norfolk.

A sporting chance

Tom Beardmore-Gray explains why the Girls' Day School Trust invests so heavily in sport

Sport is a vital part of life throughout the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST), and it is immensely encouraging to see the increasingly high profile of women's sport across the world at local, national, and international level. Not only did women win the first medals for Team GB at the London Olympics, they also won the first Gold medals. Inspired by Helen Glover and Heather Stanning, Olympic champions in Rio as well as London, GDST has now acquired its own boathouse at Putney, where girls from throughout the Trust can take to the Tideway. In Rio, the first GB Gold medals in the Paralympics were won by women and we were particularly pleased that Paralympic swimming gold medallist and Northampton High School student, Ellie Robinson, could join her fellow students at the school on 4th October to watch them compete. The 15-year-old swimmer won a gold medal in the women's S6 50m butterfly in Rio, setting a new Paralympic record with a time of 35.58 seconds. She also came third in the S6 100m freestyle final, winning a bronze medal – fantastic achievements and a great example of how elite sport can be successfully combined with academic commitments. The occasion was one of our largest

sports rallies, involving over 600 girls, which took place at Northampton High School on 4th October, showcasing senior hockey, under-15 netball and primary swimming. Matches and races were fiercely contested throughout the day and, whilst winning was the ultimate goal, good sportsmanship was displayed throughout. For an organisation on a mission to support women who will make their mark on the world, it was truly inspiring to see so many young people showcasing their talents, particularly so soon after the Rio Olympics and Paralympics, where four other members of the Great Britain team had been educated in GDST schools.

Sam Quek (Hockey) and Hannah Mills (Sailing) matched Ellie's Gold Medal, whilst Fiona Bigwood won Silver with the GB Dressage Team. Sam won her first international cap in 2008 and has since captained England as well as playing over 50 times for Great Britain. In Rio, the women's hockey team remained unbeaten throughout the tournament and won their first ever Gold Medal in a penalty shoot out with the Netherlands. Hannah won Silver in the 470 class sailing at Weymouth in the 2012 London Olympics with her crew Saskia



Sport

Clark, but they went one better in Rio, never finishing outside the top ten crews in the regatta.

Fiona's Rio Silver matches her medal in the World Championships of 2010 and the European Championships of 2015, and she has been competing at the top level in Europe since she was eighteen. Her Rio success is all the more remarkable since she has suffered from double vision following a fall in 2014 and wears an eye-patch when she rides.

Although she was not a medal winner, Emma Pooley is a true Olympian. Winning a Silver Medal in the cycling time trial event at Beijing in 2008, Emma was also world champion in 2010 before becoming a leading competitor in triathlon, duathlon and long distance running. Nevertheless, when Rio called, she returned to cycling as part of Lizzie Armitstead's team, competing in her third Olympic Games.

The strength, breadth and depth of the GDST network enables us to spread success by pooling best practice in individual subject areas, including sport. We fund a range of staff development initiatives and run a highly regarded internal programme to develop members of teaching staff for senior roles. The size of our network also enables us to invest in our schools and their facilities to a degree most individual schools can't match. This includes new all-weather pitches at Newcastle High School for Girls and new underground sports halls at South Hampstead High School and Notting Hill & Ealing High School.

When it comes to the benefits of sport, there is a mass of scientific evidence that proves that anything that speeds up circulation in the body actually wakes up the brain and helps mental function. There is also significant evidence that, for girls in particular, weight-bearing exercise in adolescence helps build bone strength and protects them from osteoporosis in later life. Active girls are also less likely to suffer from anxiety or depression, which is important not just for the health of the



Ellie Robinson

individual but for the health of the nation. Sport also builds good habits – girls who get lots of exercise in their school years are more likely to be exercising in their twenties, thirties and forties with all the health benefits that brings.

Schools face a balancing act when their student number includes the sports stars of the future. At all of our schools there are elite young sportswomen with the range and potential of Ellie Robinson. As well as supporting them – which sometimes means being very flexible with timetabling – our schools also want to develop their own top teams. At the same time, there are lots of girls who would join in if only they felt they were better at sport. So schools need a twin-track strategy, continuing to develop elite sportswomen whilst ensuring that there is appropriate and appealing physical activity for everyone.

With this in mind, the first plank of our philosophy is 'sport for all' – that every girl with an interest in sports or dance or other physical exercise should have that interest supported and nurtured, whether or not she will ever make the A team or its equivalent. That's why we love it when our schools have A, B, C and D teams, and beyond, so that all girls who enjoy a sport have the chance to play it competitively.

Good schools encourage every student to find their sporting niche, whether that's javelin or jiving! Across our schools we have such a range of sports and exercise, from acrobatics and archery through to yoga and Zumba, that there will be at least one that a girl can enjoy and possibly, through training, hard work and dedication, at which she can come to excel.

Tom Beardmore-Gray is the Finance Director of the Girls' Day School Trust

Charting a course through stormy waters

Mark Semmence describes a West Country transformation

Barnaby Lenon, speaking at the recent HMC Conference in Stratford, is but the latest high-profile educationalist to express misgivings about the future of the independent sector; and anxieties regarding affordability and the place of independent education in a rapidly changing social and political context have swirled around the sector for some time. Lenon's message, however, was clear: with independent education further and further beyond the reach of its traditional domestic market, schools which fall outside the magic circle of the M25 must adapt fast if they are to survive. The identification of, and investment in, a clear USP; a forensic focus on the quality of teaching and learning; the maximisation of a broad range of income streams and a market-oriented approach hold the key to success in challenging times.

The experience of Mount Kelly since its formation in 2014 is a case in point. All three antecedent schools – Kelly College, Kelly Prep, and Mount House Prep – had experienced significant decline in recent years and faced a highly uncertain future. However, over the last two years, Mount Kelly has seen a 30% increase in pupil numbers from Years 9 – 13, a new

50m Olympic pool recently opened, and boarding houses now full to capacity, so the school's recent history may offer some indications of how independent schools might survive the storm that is already upon us.

The first step for Mount Kelly was to drive through and firmly embed the merger, though, given the very distinctive ethos and market-orientation of the three constituent schools, this was always going to present challenges. Pupils, staff and parents had clearly to understand the imperative behind the merger, and this required an unsentimental analysis of the economic reality facing the three former schools. It was also critical, if the sceptical were to be brought on-side, that the merger should be seen to yield immediate benefits: in a competitive market, there is simply no place for promises of "jam tomorrow".

Central to making the merger more than simply a legal reality was the clear understanding that every decision must be informed by a resolute commitment to the single school principle, and in matters of uniform, structure, curriculum, policy and process, the focus has been on the creation of

'Learning outside the classroom':
On this occasion, at Dartmoor



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The College at Mount Kelly



a single community. From whole-School church services, sporting events and social gatherings, to the establishment of a single parents' association and the creation of a single School calendar, the one-school message must be clearly and consistently championed. Nostalgia, sentimentality or sacred cows – all of these are an impediment to the sort of change that has to happen quickly if a merger is to succeed.

Central also to this success has been a strategic re-direction towards boarding and, given the demographics of the School's location on the sparsely-populated western edge of Dartmoor, it was critical to connect with the wider UK boarding market. The construction of the Olympic Legacy 50m pool has been central to this. Established in 1978, the Performance Swimming Programme at Mount Kelly has produced 72 international swimmers, 17 Olympians and 6 Paralympians. Swimming was therefore immediately apparent as the USP which would extend the School's appeal both nationally and internationally, and has been the focus of major investment. Allied to further development of an already well-established swim programme, Mount Kelly is now attracting elite swimmers from across the UK, and for the parents of ambitious swimmers, this makes for an attractive offer: a 50m pool within walking distance of the boarding houses, a clear and growing commitment to the quality of teaching and learning, a high standard of boarding provision, and all located on the edge of the Dartmoor National Park.

Extending the day by two hours, enhancing the extra-curricular programme, reinvigorating the weekend offer, and heightening the expectations on staff to contribute fully to the life of a busy boarding school, have also brought fundamental change to the ethos of the School. For a small number of parents this has not been easy, but the overwhelming majority of parents appreciate not only that their children are being offered a great deal more out of the classroom, and are being properly stretched and challenged in all areas, but that they are getting

more for their money. Staff recruitment has also been central to ensuring the success of these changes, and the last eighteen months have seen the recruitment of a large number of new staff, all of whom bring to Mount Kelly a range of skills and talents, and most of whom have a strong boarding pedigree. At the same time, the School has committed to an extensive programme of refurbishment of boarding facilities, reinforcing a clear commitment to boarding.

The merger was also the moment to focus on the quality of teaching and learning across the School, and the re-shaping of the School went hand in hand with a root and branch overhaul of the curriculum, and of staffing and management structures. In a small school it made little sense to retain the traditional Head of Department role, so instead subjects have been clustered into faculty areas led by Heads of Faculty. Central to the Head of Faculty role is responsibility for the improvement of teaching and learning and, to that end, the tracking, recording and reporting systems have also been overhauled and improved. Allied to this has been the introduction, in consultation with teaching unions, of an annual, evidence-based appraisal system which, focused on a slightly modified version of the national teaching standards, encourages dialogue and collegiality amongst the staff and between staff and senior leadership.

The merger also provided the opportunity for structural change and has enabled the new School to offer the sort of flexibility on which success in an increasingly fragmented market depends. Kelly College had for many years been a Years 7 to 13 School, drawing pupils mainly from Kelly College Prep School which finished at Year 6. Mount House, across the valley of the river Tavy and always entirely independent from Kelly College, was a more traditional prep school, running up to Year 8 and preparing children for Common Entrance and progression to senior schools around the country. A critical question on merger, therefore, and one that was central to determining the shape of the School, was where the provision

Sport

for Years 7 & 8 would be sited, and what curriculum would be followed.

The decision to retain a traditional Prep/Senior School model, the College starting at Year 9 and with Years 7 & 8 located at the Prep studying the Common Entrance syllabus, was based on solid educational and pastoral principals. For many pupils in 11+ senior schools, Years 7 & 8 can be a time of drift. A clear commitment to the Common Entrance syllabus for all pupils, and the prospect of externally-set exams at the end of Year 8, however, bring greater educational focus and impetus. The decision to make provision for Years 7 & 8 at the Prep, rather than the College, also has clear pastoral benefits. Pupils have another two years in which to grow, mature and develop, before facing the challenges of life in a senior school, and are also able to take on positions of responsibility and leadership which would be denied them in a senior school setting.

Boarding in Years 7 & 8 also plays an important role in Mount Kelly's appeal to parents who may wish to move their children from distant rural primary schools into the independent sector at Year 7. In a large and sparsely populated region, the School's location enables parents across Devon and Cornwall to engage with the life of the School without the challenge of a long school run every morning and evening, while a busy programme of competitive fixtures on Saturday mornings means that parents are able to attend matches and still have their children home for the weekend. Investment in facilities and the improvement of standards at the College make remaining within the Foundation an increasingly attractive option. The commitment to Common Entrance at Years 7 & 8, however, also enables those who wish to continue their education up-country to do so, and the School has a track-record of pupils progressing to high-profile schools, many with

scholarships. This structure therefore facilitates entry into and exit from the School at a range of points.

In common with many other UK independent schools, Mount Kelly has also been pursuing opportunities overseas, and an international school in Hong Kong has been announced (subject to licence approval), while other areas for expansion are also under consideration. Such flexibility is vital if schools are to maximise other alternative income streams and, like all schools, Mount Kelly has been active in this area. Location and facilities are clearly central to initiatives in this area, and the School's 150 acre site, located on the edge of Dartmoor National Park, with its own stand-alone adventure centre, and high-quality boarding accommodation within a stone's throw of the 50m pool, offers a range of commercial opportunity. Success in this area, however, hangs on having the right people in place, and the appointment of an experienced Commercial Director, with a remit to create and develop a greater range of revenue streams, has been critical to the commercial progress of the Foundation.

These are uniquely challenging times for the independent sector, and the hard reality is that, outside the south east, the days of the small, all-round, rural independent school are now numbered. Mount Kelly's early history suggests, however, that for schools that can adapt quickly, are able to offer flexibility in a changing market, are willing to invest in a USP, and can proactively seek the benefits of local merger, the future remains bright.

Mark Semmence worked in the international sports marketing sector before teaching at Rugby School where he was Assistant Head Master. He became Head Master and Principal of the Foundation at Mount Kelly in 2014.

HERE & THERE

Abingdon School Sixth Former signed by Leopard Pro Cycling for 2017

Abingdon School sixth former Charlie Quarterman has been signed by the well-known Luxembourg-based team Leopard Pro Cycling for 2017. The team has a great reputation for developing U23 riders that go on to World Tour level. Speaking about his success Charlie, aged 18, said,

"I am very excited about joining Leopard Pro Cycling. It's a team with a great reputation and a diverse calendar that will test me in a whole range of racing environments. There is a very good support team and a good atmosphere with the mix of older and younger riders. I'm really looking forward to being in a solid team. In 2017 I want to learn how to ride in the U23 races, but I also will try to finish with a podium place."

Charlie only started cycling four years ago, having been inspired by the road race of the 2012 Olympic Games in London. Since then he has progressed rapidly with Oxford's Zappi Racing Team, resulting in a promising 2016 season with a third place in the Giro di Basilicata, and strong placings in two of Belgium's top Junior races: Omloop der Vlaamse Gewesten (5th) and the Grand Prix Bati-Metallo (6th).

Pictured: Junior Tour of Wales, Stage 4, August 2016. Charlie breaking away from the peloton to take 4th place.





When a scrum becomes a Hudl

St Albans School takes two more vital steps towards sporting excellence

Independent Schools have a proud tradition of attracting former Internationals to their sports coaching staff, and St Albans School has been at the vanguard of encouraging some of the very best to impart their knowledge and experience to the School's next generation of sportsmen and women.

The Hertfordshire School, which can trace its roots back more than a thousand years, already boasts three internationals in its ranks: Martin Langston (England Hockey player, coach and manager) is Head of Hockey and Director of Sport; Mark Ilott, the former Essex and England cricketer, is Head of Cricket; and George Harrison MBE, a former British team manager and coach of international athletes, trains the senior distance runners.

To this highly-experienced group, St Albans School recently appointed another high-profile sportsman, Kyran Bracken MBE, to the newly-created post of Elite Sport Development Manager and 1st XV Head Coach.

Kyran's credentials are impeccable: as a former captain of Saracens, a member of the England World Cup winning rugby team and a tourist with the British and Irish Lions, he brings exceptional sporting pedigree to the School. Pupils are now benefitting from his proven rugby and sporting knowledge to improve technique, performance and their overall approach to rugby and other sports.

The idea to coach at St Albans School was first mooted by Tony Dalwood, a Governor at the School, with whom Kyran played rugby at Bristol University. There was also a local

connection: Kyran has family who live close to the School's training ground at Woollams, and his eldest son has been successful in gaining a place at the School in 2017.

Kyran has joined St Albans School with a focus on supporting the 1st XV rugby team, but he will also help and guide the junior teams, to embed a strong sporting and rugby culture more strongly across every age group. As well as providing this 'helicopter' view, Kyran will also be looking to identify specific boys and girls considered elite in their field, regardless of which sport they play. "My challenge is to give direction and motivation to improve the results in the long-term," Kyran explained.

"There is a great pool of talent within the School that I am excited to be able to work with and support. The School has superb facilities at Woollams, which provides some of the best training grounds in the country. We have a weekly masterclass where I work with pupils from all years on basic skills. At the same time, I hope to improve individuals, especially those who are looking for a career in rugby, by sharing my experience of having been a professional rugby player."

"I have already really enjoyed the experience of working with the boys. We have had a very good season to date and I am looking forward to providing further support, guidance and mentoring to future generations of talented sports players coming through the School as well as to members of staff coaching at all levels."

Kyran is not only using his playing experience to teach



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Former England international Kyran Bracken offers technical advice to young players at St Albans School



sport. He is also a strong advocate of exploiting new technology, and is a particular champion of Hudl, a video analysis tool that is revolutionising the way that both coaches and athletes prepare for – and stay ahead of – the competition.

Hudl enables coaches and pupils to take footage filmed during training and matches, from static cameras, as is the case at Woollams, or from smart phones, cameras and tablets. Both players and trainers are able to share and review performance and techniques, providing valuable insight into how performance and strategies can be improved.

“Players are being sent team plays and themes of the week that are highlighted. We tailor our training around where we have fallen short in matches so the feedback is vital,” Kyran added.

“There is nothing more powerful than showing pupils video clips of their technique and where they need to improve. For example, we are looking at getting to seven phases in matches so we can break down the opposition. The idea of Hudl is to show not only where we are going wrong, but also, much more importantly, it shows where we have got it right.”

Schools and colleges in the UK and north America are using Hudl analysis across a number of sports, including football, rugby, basketball, volleyball, lacrosse, athletics, ice hockey, golf and even wrestling. The keen-eyed may have spotted the Hudl brand recently at the Autumn rugby internationals being used by the Australian RFU.

Hudl is proving to be a valuable tool, as it enables all the information that is filmed to be stored in the Cloud, from where pupils and coaches can upload and edit clips of their performance and create mini show reels to analyse and

scrutinise after the match or game. They can annotate and make comments on the finer details of their performance on the platform, as well as review the performance overall to develop new strategies and tactics.

Hudl has the ability to store four seasons’ worth of recordings and data, which means it can be adapted for long, medium and short-term analysis. It can therefore help players in the short-term with a focus on the next game; medium-term analysis for in-season changes of focus; and longer-term for coaches wanting to plan what specific training sessions or drills should be focused on next season and where further improvements can be made.

“Bringing together one of the most successful rugby players in the country with the latest sports technology is an exciting opportunity for St Albans School,” Jonathan Gillespie, Headmaster of St Albans School, commented.

“Kyran’s rugby pedigree and knowledge will be invaluable to the School and pupils and will offer an unparalleled level of insight. This, combined with Hudl’s industry-leading technology, will undoubtedly augment our coaches’ ability to understand and improve pupils’ technique and performance.”

Martin Langston, Head of Hockey and Director of Sport said: “It is exciting to see our pupils benefitting from the expertise of one of the UK’s top rugby players, both on and off the pitch. Kyran brings an insight and understanding of the game that will be invaluable to the School. Pupils are thrilled to have the opportunity to learn from an England World Cup winner. This, combined with Hudl’s sport software package, will significantly improve pupils’ performance and understanding of the sport.”

Is your school athlete friendly?

GB Olympians know what it takes to push themselves to their limits and to be the best that they can be. They have had to make many tough decisions starting when they were at school. Olympians understand the demands and challenges of training and studying which continue to face today's high performing student-athletes. Recently, several GB Olympians took part in the World Academy of Sport (WAOs) training course to become Athlete Friendly Education Centre (AFEC) assessors. Anne Louise Williams, Marketing and Licensing Manager at WAOs, was on hand to ask them about their own experiences in balancing sport and education needs.

These Olympians were Shirley Addison (SA), (Athletics, Athens 2004); Natalie Barton (Munt) (NB), (Badminton, Athens 2004); Francesca Clayton (FC), (Water Polo, London 2012); Alex Coomber (AC), (Skeleton Bronze Medallist, Salt Lake City, 2002); and Jamie Fearn (JF), (Short track Speed Skating, Albertville 1992 and Lillehammer 1994).

When you were at school, how did you balance your school and training requirements?

FC: "It took a lot of planning, doing homework on the bus, and eating in the car. I trained at lunch time while at school,

swimming on average 3,000m in that hour. I then trained from the end of school until about 8.30pm – 9.00pm each evening of the week."

JF: "It was very difficult. There was some understanding by subject teachers who provided extensions to work deadlines. But working into the night to get things done was common."

AC: "I was training in athletics while at school. My club was very near my school which was convenient. This did mean that I had to be organised and plan my day, as I often did not go home until after training at about 9.30pm."

Did you have to make any difficult choices?

SA: "I turned down a place to study Mathematics at Oxford University because there was not a diving facility nearby and because I was involved with swimming and diving at that point. Instead I studied in Edinburgh where the university halls of residence were next door to the swimming and diving pools."

NB: "There were things such as Duke of Edinburgh that I would have loved to have been involved in, but realistically knew I did not have time for. I made the difficult choice of going to university to study something I had no interest in, just so I could go to Loughborough. Fortunately, after a year, I changed from



Economics to PE, as I originally went against the advice I was given by my teacher, who urged me to peruse the subject I enjoyed.”

Did your school provide any additional support?

JF: “The school granted me absences for competitions and subject teachers provided extensions to work deadlines. There was no real distance learning or catch up support. The school had a ‘send off’ assembly for me when I left for the Games and the school band played the Ski Sunday theme [from the BBC programme]. I was presented with sportswear with an embroidered school emblem and a cheque. The money was raised through a non-uniform day in my honour.”

FC: “My school was fairly small, so it was fairly easy to obtain extensions, and catch up with missed work. The teachers were really understanding and supportive.”

If your school had been able to work with an organisation like the World Academy of Sport on the AFEC initiative, how would this have benefited your situation?

AC: “It would have made my teachers more aware of what I was doing and may have helped them to plan my timetable and homework so that there were never any pressure points.”

NB: “I think it would have been good just to have someone to talk to that could have understood my challenges. Time was always the biggest hurdle for me, what with training, school work plus working 12 hours a week.”

JF: “Hopefully it would have reduced the stress, tiredness and

loneliness/isolated feelings of trying to squeeze homework, catch ups etc., into my schedule. Working late after long days and often falling asleep with my books open at my desk at my home desk was less than conducive to achieving academic success and the best production of work.”

As an Olympian, would you have any advice for your 15 year old self about being a student athlete?

SA: “Maintain a breadth of sports for as long as possible, rather than specialising early. Oh, and I’d encourage the 15 year old me to take up Rugby in order to experience a contact sport – this would have been helpful for the TV show ‘Gladiators’ which I was part of.”

FC: “Do everything as you did, but thank Mum more often!”

NB: “It can sometimes be tough trying to balance training/competition and completing school work. While everyone else is relaxing, you have to maximise every minute of your time. Being able to push yourself independently and fit more into a day than most fit into a week is a great skill to have, and will stand you in good stead for the future. Things can be particularly tough when you are not achieving the results you think you deserve either academically or sporting-based. Perseverance and maintaining your own high standards is crucial at this time.”

Olympians who have completed the Assessor training will be working through the assessment process with schools interested in becoming Athlete Friendly Education Centres.

Most known for its significant work across the international sporting community in developing and delivering education pathways and programmes, the World Academy of Sport (WAOs) developed the criteria for AFEC overseen by its International Advisory Board. These criteria assesses a school’s ability to understand and service the requirements of high performing student athletes. The WAOs is creating a network of like-minded schools that can share ideas and best practice when working with student athletes.

A pilot is also underway with the IB where student-athletes can opt to take the IB Diploma Programme over an extended period, usually up to three years. High performing student-athletes can then better balance their sporting and academic commitments. IB schools that are successful with AFEC accreditation may be offered access to this pilot project.

Student athletes are also being positively influenced in other schools globally, including:

- UK: Ellesmere College, Plymouth College, and Anglo European School
- Jordan: Amman Baccalaureate School
- Thailand: Phuket International Academy and British International School
- Spain: SEK Ciudalcampo and SEK El Castillo
- Denmark: Ikast-Brande Gymnasium
- Australia: Trinity Grammar School
- Singapore: Singapore Sports School
- Hong Kong: all ESF high schools including KGV School, Island School, Sha Tin College, Renaissance College, South Island School, West Island School and Discovery College

For more information visit www.worldacademysport.com or email Anne Louise Williams, awilliams@worldacademysport.com



Great learning – and proud of it

Frances Mwale goes back to school

Getting and giving back marked work is fraught with difficulty. Do you single out the best for recognition and praise, or those who have made most improvement or those who have been really original? Should those who have done well be allowed to crow, or should modesty prevail as they learn not to boast? If we have a sense of pride in a job well done, do we also need the external affirmation of an A Grade or a high percentage mark? Is the learning in itself enough?

Last academic year I joined an adult education evening class to study a subject about which, initially, I knew next to nothing. I rapidly fell in love with learning and decided to go all the way to sitting AS exams, along with other adult learners and some of Farlington's Lower Sixth, back in May.

Deciding even before taking the papers that, if I did badly, I would simply keep quiet about it, I knew secretly that if I did well, I would be more than happy to tell. Yet, when the time came, my position on this altered: having done better than I had even dared hope, I wondered whether I should share my success lest it might seem rather immodest. To share only great news might skew perceptions of me: friends and colleagues might see me as some huge intellect, but only because I never confessed to the failures. What effect would this have? Would I be seen as somebody so accomplished that, when I did fail at things, I would be quite a let-down? Conversely, in keeping quiet, what am I hiding? Genuinely sharing success is a difficult idea for me and perhaps for many, so I have always defaulted to the preferred satisfaction of knowing that I have done a good job for myself, rather than feeding off the praise of others.

Anyway, after many such deliberations, I have decided to tell you that I am genuinely pleased with myself and can look back on the year as one of 'great learning'!

What exactly was this great learning and how did it come about? The process was certainly worthy of reflection and exploration in a professional capacity, and it has left me with insights that I can surely pass on to our younger learners. It all started with great teaching – not just great, but amazing. To say that the teacher had a passion for her subject would be a gross understatement. Her enthusiasm for the topics spilled over into an outpouring of self into the lessons. Deep-rooted values, opinions, humour, emotion and thoughtful debate were ever present – I can only hope some of these qualities are in my lessons, too. The teacher's subject knowledge was vast, but there was a preparedness on her part, too, to learn more: as students, we were allowed to question or even to challenge.

At the end of the first lesson it came as a surprise to find that there was homework. Was I really ready to undertake a piece of independent work so early on? But the task was matched to the skills I had acquired at that stage – some rote learning of essential vocabulary. Over the weeks, the complexity and demands of the homework increased but the level of challenge always suited where I had reached in my studies.

Marking of my essays and tasks was so helpful – regular, thorough and constructively critical. Comments really celebrated any good and original points made, but also raised questions to provoke my thinking. Anything that was wrong was gently corrected, with phrases such as, 'I wonder whether this is the case...' or 'I think you are confusing this with...', so that I never felt ashamed to have had a try. The same was definitely true when in class. All comments were encouraged and built upon, no matter how tenuous the thought. There was no 'hands up' regime, but a lively debate where every person listened to one another, occasionally policed by the teacher. Going off at a tangent was not only acceptable, but encouraged, to get the grey matter whirring. Great learning!

Exam preparation was interesting. As a scientist, many of my previous exams had involved interpretation and analysis, rather than factual recall, or at least that is how I remember it. Perhaps because I enjoyed the subjects, the facts stuck in my mind better anyway? This time, however, I needed precision. Precision of dates, facts and chronology. I had to get a whole set of alien pieces of information lodged in my brain. In the past, my *modus operandi* had been read, re-read and scribble down a few revision notes, never to be looked at again. I relied on what I could remember to get me through, rather than really paring down to the essentials and ensuring I had secure knowledge. The result was that I settled on mediocre marks.

For years in my teaching career, I have taught pupils so many ways of revising. Different methods work for different learners, but now I had to try some out for myself. My ways of old had not been particularly effective for me. I had not really been an A Grade student since I was quite young: I now know why. It takes hard work and commitment to know your stuff inside out and back to front. I condensed my notes down; highlighted parts that were so interesting that I wanted to be able to impress an examiner with them; made checklists of dates and then sheets where I could test myself, doing them again and again until I got them all right. I used flashcards to remember dates and yet there was one that annoyingly kept on escaping me. I simply could not get it right – ever! What to do? What was the solution for committing this one particular date to memory? Well, in the end, I drew a small picture of a house and then built into the fabric of the façade the date that I needed to memorise. If I thought hard, I could see that small picture in my mind and subsequently never failed to remember it. I only had to do this for the one fact, but it worked.

Interesting to me was also how my revision changed over time. During the Easter holidays, when available work time felt eternal, I luxuriated in being able to read books on my subject, write out longhand sheets of information and refresh my knowledge of work done much earlier in the year. As the examination dates loomed, however, the need to condense, focus learning and concentrate on my weaker areas directed

me to new types of learning. I found that regular chunks of time were what worked best for me. A minimum of an hour was useful, with a maximum of two at a time. Practising essay writing was my early morning task. I would get to work very, very early, and spend the first 25 minutes of my day writing. This was the time that I would have in the actual exam and when you seem to know a lot, sticking to a timeframe is a big, big challenge.

The exam days came. I wasn't so much nervous as simply wanting to get on with them. This is a feeling I remember well from 30 years ago! Exams were never daunting as such, so long as I felt I had prepared well. But waiting outside with all the other candidates, lining up in prescribed order and marching into a sparse, echoing hall brought on an adrenalin surge. I think this actually helps, but deciding whether to 'fight or take flight' can induce a few seconds' panic. Fortunate to be seated right at the front so as not to be able to see what others were doing, it was head down and writing constantly. I had little time at the end for any checking and, in retrospect, in future exams I would try to manage at least a quick read-through before downing tools. I left the hall feeling that I had enjoyed what I had written and given of my best.

Now the advice that teachers give about not talking to anybody else when you come out into natural light once again

is very sensible. As we left the area and began to share thoughts about the question paper and our responses, all those feelings of self-doubt and annoyance crept in – 'I forgot to include that', 'I chose completely different questions from everybody else', 'I wonder if I spelled that name correctly'. My advice to all examination candidates would be: 'WALK AWAY!'

As results day loomed, I was out of the country having a wonderfully sunny holiday, but as soon as I stepped on the plane to return, the thought of collecting my results the next day popped into my head. In fact, I didn't go in for results day. Nor the next. It took four days before I ventured in to get my envelope. On seeing a colleague in the staffroom and holding the envelope firmly in my hand, I said, 'I am never going to open this'. Of course, I changed my mind and was very glad that I did.

I had also made up my mind that if my results were OK, I would continue to study this year too. In fact, it was never to do with the result. The learning was so intensely amazing that wild horses wouldn't keep me away!

Frances Mwale is Headmistress of Farlington Prep and now has an A/S in History of Art!

HERE & THERE

The Chicken is second fastest in the world!

Tech minded racing enthusiasts at Bromsgrove School have taken kit-car racing to another level with their all-electric race car 'The Chicken'. The car, built by a team of 12-16 yr old students has competed in the Greenpower engineering series for the last 4 years, started its world seeded ranking at 344 but has gradually moved up to 27th. The students have adapted the kitcar to suit a variety of race circuits including Castle Combe, Silverstone, Aintree, Rockingham, Bedford Autodrome and Mallory Park.

Advances in technology have not only enabled the car to run further and for a longer time, but, having started life with a top speed of 15 mph, it now moves at nearly 30 mph with the same batteries and motor.

Team Chicken have won 6 trophies in 4 races this year, which made them the team to beat at the Kitcar International Finals, Rockingham in October, on the 15th October. Some 150 teams from as far afield as Brazil and South Africa attended the races, with the Bromsgrove team narrowly missing out on a podium place. But, at the F24 World finals, Team Chicken competed against 80 other teams for their 2017 seed ranking. The car finished 0.06 miles behind the race leader, making The Chicken the second fastest kitcar in the world!

Thanks to the car's sponsors, Gorilla UK, Bay Plastics, Digital Speedos, Trumeter and BAL Aluminium who have all helped to develop the car this year – and the hunt for next year's sponsors begins as Bromsgrove's launches The Chicken's new partner, inevitably called 'The Egg'!



Resisting the cultural recession

Penny Huntsman argues that we should cherish the Art History A level

Following the threat posed to the Art History A level last year and the subsequent call to arms to save it, we have to ask some pertinent questions. Why is Art History so important? Why did its too often fragmented body of teachers come together so forcefully to save it? Why should it be more accessible? I feel impelled to attempt to answer these questions, if only to justify why I seek to be a part of a passionate movement to retain and resurrect it.

Art History is many things which are both time and context dependent, but, above all, art is a form of communication and everyone should have the opportunity to speak its language. Denying some social classes the opportunity to engage with the past prevents them from communicating effectively in the present. Art History teaches us how to decode encoded messages and to become critical analysts. The subject has admittedly resided overwhelmingly in independent schools, but it performs all of the ideal functions that the political philosopher Harry Brighouse suggests are needed by young people to become autonomous adult learners capable of leading 'flourishing lives'. Teachers of Art History even have the privilege of avoiding the de-humanising 'banking' system of education, deemed by educator and philosopher Paulo Freire as negating creativity, and the ability to transform the world in the way young people need to. Leaning once more on the seminal work of Freire to explain why Art History is so important, I suggest that the subject offers a body of knowledge which is capable of 'demythologizing' concealed realities. Art History encourages the kind of critical discussion capable of exposing truths.

Along with many other ordinary Art History teachers, I am able to illustrate 'demythologizing' in action in most lessons. Let's take an art-historical analysis of the French artist Ingres' *Grand Odalisque*, 1819, as an example. A typical lesson would not pore over this particular nude's fleshy beauty in the same way that its 19th century audience did, but rather deconstruct

her 'femininity' and 'otherness' in such a way as to unveil both patriarchy and imperialism, thus opening up a critical dialogue about the oppression of knowledge itself.

Crucially, Art History does this with the very learners – the privileged – who tend to have the opportunity to learn in a consciously critical way from birth. Schools like mine share all that they can – including me – with state schools because, despite the government's best efforts to crush creativity, most of us still prize education for education's sake. It's probably important to share with the reader that I was state-school educated, and extra-curricular trips got me thinking about art and changed my life course.

Tired of telling people how big the subject could – should – be, I used a recent taster lesson in a state school to experiment with the idea of Art History as a vital body of critical pedagogy and to dispel some myths. It was the best two days' voluntary work of my life. I created a lecture 'Art as Protest'. I started with a timeless classic, 'The Arnolfini Portrait', – well it's prettily painted graffiti to be precise – and then moved on to Banksy's rebellious youth-pleasers and JR's posters in the favelas of Brazil. Shamelessly, I selected them because they chimed with the students' geography project on the Olympics in Brazil and demonstrated the relevance of Art History today. It had to be juicy, but then Art History can be whatever you want it to be – it's the history of everything. The students' enthusiasm was palpable, their gratitude disproportionate. Horrifying was the revelation that not a single student had any idea of what Art History was about. Now that they knew, they wanted more of it. Young people rejecting Art History is fine by me, but young people not being given the chance to even know of it is not. This is a social justice issue, and, as well as teaching social justice, this characteristically inter-disciplinary subject can also teach global citizenship in a world where tolerance and understanding need, more than ever, to underpin every facet of a child's education.



Royal Academy promoting art through education



Death of a subject

The History of Art A level was introduced in 1974 and has been dominated by elitist discourses to create an unjust academic landscape ever since. Ironically, Art History's self-perpetuating elitism unwittingly nearly brought about its demise: it's a numbers 'game', to use a consciously Bourdieusian term, and social class inclusivity is inconveniently essential to Art History's commercial viability. But if the problem with Art History is a numbers problem, the solution seems to be straightforwardly numbers based too – increasing participation in Art History will provide sufficient financial return to ensure its ongoing survival.

Art History is characterised by contradiction. The Warwick Commission, 2015, estimates that the arts sector 'contributes almost £77bn in value added, equivalent to 5.0% of the economy'. This positive economic and political landscape contrasts starkly with the reality of what we have been faced with this week.

The Association of Art Historians (AAH) sponsored the first dedicated textbook for the subject; the Worshipful Company of Art Scholars continues to sponsor tickets for state school pupils to attend the AAH's annual 'Ways of Seeing Conference'; a new charity, 'Art History in Schools', has been launched to support the subject's uptake in schools and the training of teachers; galleries and museums have dovetailed resources with the needs of teachers in order to enrich student learning. Following the threat against its future, everyone has unified around a common cause, as never before.

It seems that the swell of rebellion which formed against an unjust situation shocked decision makers. The rebellion, from my perspective at least, was not aimed against individuals or even examination boards, but against the perpetual failure to recognise the enormous value of the subject, not least in such an image-saturated world.

For the disastrous consequences the decision could have brought, the crisis nevertheless shone a full-spectrum light on a subject in need of serious media attention. As teachers, we've all bounced up and down in desperation to be heard, but, as in any

great tragedy, it took the subject's death (or near-death) before anyone listened.

Perhaps unexpectedly, I suggest that resources alone are not good enough: the art-history textbook I wrote – *Thinking about Art* – is not good enough; free entry to galleries and museums is not good enough; myriad initiatives from Russell Group Universities are not good enough. There's an unexplored space, another dimension: young people have to feel as though these opportunities are theirs to take. It's not always about being given the opportunities to achieve what we want, but about knowing what we have to choose from, and not feeling like a 'fish out of water' if we do.

I suggest we need to reframe the questioning: we can have a free textbook if we want one, but *why* would we choose to want one? We can go to look at great paintings for free if we want to, but *why* would we want to? Currently, most young people are denied the opportunity to know what Art History is or what difference it can make to their lives. It's not all doom and gloom, we simply have to seize this transient spotlight to make this subject accessible to all. Then, an army of young people from every walk of life will take full advantage of the truly wonderful opportunities great institutions have lined up for them.

It has long been recognised that cultural capital is the vehicle for social mobility. Art History is a ready-made body of cultural capital, and there never has been a good reason as to why it cannot be made available to everyone. We can all do our bit for social justice, and I am in awe of my peers, many of whom had dedicated their professional lives to this cause long before I arrived on the scene, but in the end, learners will only flourish through education if the government enables them to.

Penny Huntsman teaches Art History at Farlington School



Some subjects are harder than others. So what?

Kevin Stannard studies 'Studies'

"Every subject which is taught at all in a secondary school should be taught in the same way and to the same extent to every pupil so long as he pursues it, no matter what the probable destination of the pupil may be, or at what point his education is to cease."
(Recommendation of the US 'Committee of Ten' 1892)

Comedians Mitchell and Webb set one of their best sketches at a suburban house party. Lionel is a brain surgeon who asks other guests what they do for a living, just so that he can say their jobs aren't as demanding as his – "I mean, your job isn't exactly brain surgery!" This goes well, from Lionel's point of view, until he meets Geoff, a rocket scientist.

It's human nature to compare and contrast; and judging the relative difficulty of academic subjects is not a pastime confined to secretaries of state and the architects of the Russell Group's list of facilitating subjects. Last century, as head of geography at Eton, I was well aware that my subject occupied a pretty modest place in the pecking order, so I was not particularly surprised to learn that when the new post of geography master was created in 1961, the appointment notice had made clear that the successful applicant should not expect to teach the brighter boys. Those taking geography "would not be at all advanced academically", but they were, one was assured, "boys of considerable personality and with standing in the school."

Michael Gove was not going out on a limb when he sought to drive a wedge between hard and soft subjects at A level. He was part of a long tradition of suspicion toward subjects the name of which ends in 'studies'. The ultramontane view of what constitutes disciplinary respectability doesn't quite reach back to the trivium or even the quadrivium, but it does remain in close touch with the recommendations on the US high school curriculum made by the (all male) Committee of Ten as long ago as 1892.

Subject provenance and breeding overlap with judgements about relative difficulty of disciplines. Common sense allows that some subjects are harder than others. But, as C. E. M. Joad would have said, it all depends on what you mean by 'hard'.

As far as examined subjects go, hardness may be defined in several ways. The first is size – the sheer volume of content covered in the syllabus. This should, in theory, be constant across a suite of subjects, and at A level the required number of 'Guided Learning Hours' is consistent across the suite. (This is no longer true of GCSE, since the reformed maths specifications are a lot bigger as well as harder than before).

Then again hardness might be found in the administration of assessment – particularly the criteria used to allocate marks; and, once the marks are in and added up, the decision on where to draw the grade boundaries. An interesting feature of essay-based subjects is the capacity to ask the same question at different levels, and to expect answers with different levels of sophistication. The causes of the Second World War could be

analysed at any number of levels. Plate tectonics, once cutting edge and taught in revelatory style to avid sixth formers, quickly became a staple of lower school geography.

As long as it is possible to rank answers, then the establishment of grade boundaries becomes, in a sense, an entirely arbitrary decision. If you want to make an exam hard, ask a difficult question. It's not unknown for a very tough maths exam to have grade boundaries set very low, so that a mark around 40% can still get you a good grade. Alternatively, ask a perfectly accessible question and then set the top grade boundary really high.

Can a subject be considered harder if fewer candidates get an A*? The opposite appears to be the case. At A level in 2016, the highest proportions of A*/A grades were recorded in maths, followed by natural sciences and MFL. Top grades were less frequent in English and history, and rarer still in drama and media studies. But it is difficult to read subject hardness into these figures. Many more candidates gained at least an A in French than in biology, but A*s were less freely awarded in French. That seems to say more about the incommensurability of the assessments than it does about the hardness of the subjects.

Studies by CEM at Durham University have found that the natural sciences are consistently harder than English or RS, and much harder than drama, sociology or media studies. A more recent Ofqual study finds that among the harder A level subjects are chemistry, physics, biology, maths, French, German and history. The hardest of all are Latin and further maths. The easiest subjects include film studies, media studies, photography, drama, English literature and geography.

Those statistical analyses were based on the probability of a student of a given ability (as defined by prior achievement and other subject scores) gaining a particular grade in a given subject. It may well be that in these terms a high grade in one subject is easier to get than in another, but this has to be balanced by the differential value that universities place on some subjects over others – as evinced by the lists of preferred subjects published by universities such as LSE. In any case, even if it can be shown that it is harder to get a top grade in one exam compared with another, that does not mean that the subject itself is harder.

The locus of hardness surely lies in the level of demand of the content and concepts in the syllabus. Yet it is difficult to compare subjects when an individual's capacity to master a discipline depends on factors that are not easily weighed, or readily related to any commonly accepted definition of 'intelligence'. Proficiency in a foreign language depends on background as well as brightness. A maths or a music prodigy will, by definition, find her subject pretty easy, but might struggle in constructing an essay.

The 'Go Compare' focus on the relative hardness or softness

of school subjects seems to be driven by one of the peculiarities of the English education system – in particular, the way that the curriculum is dominated by high-stakes exams, and the fact that the exams are of a size that only allows a handful of subjects to be studied post-16. The need to adjudicate on the competing claims of physics, French and photography only

arises if students are forced to choose. A broad and balanced pre-university curriculum, modelled on the components of a properly *liberal* education, would find no difficulty reconciling incommensurable epistemes.

Kevin Stannard is Director of Innovation and Learning at the Girls' Day School Trust

HERE & THERE

Golden moment as Olympic champion does the honours

On Monday 19 September Saskia Clark, GB Gold Medallist in the 470 Sailing at the Rio Olympics, opened the newly refurbished indoor sports facilities at the Royal Hospital School, Holbrook. Saskia is now based in Weymouth but continues to have strong links with her childhood sailing club on Mersea Island, where many RHS parents and pupils sail.

The facilities include the refurbished sports hall, additional indoor cricket nets as part of the Graham Napier Cricket Academy, a strength and conditioning room, fitness suite, martial arts and dance studio, and one of the most impressive indoor climbing walls in the region, befitting the school's accreditation as a National Indoor Climbing Achievement Scheme centre.

After unveiling a plaque to commemorate the occasion, Saskia Clark spoke to the 750 pupils and 200 staff about her Olympic experiences, the importance of a healthy body and healthy mind and having the determination and commitment to get to the top. Sailing scholars had the opportunity to ask questions ranging from nutrition advice to technical tips, as well as trying on her gold medal.

Saskia then visited the School's youngest sailors who were taking part in the School's Year 7 Sailing Week during which they learn the basics of sailing and work towards their RYA Level 2 qualification. Andy Nutton, Director of Sailing, said "Whilst Alton Water Reservoir is the natural home for RHS sailors, the team squads and those competing in national and international fleets and following the Olympic Pathway will be using the new indoor sports facilities for strength and conditioning, fitness and yoga on a regular basis".





The Gold Standard: The One-to-One Tutorial

Catherine Brown celebrates the survival of the best

'It is the gold standard', Professor Anthony Grayling says frequently of the one-to-one tutorial. He founded the New College of the Humanities, London, in part on the basis of this belief. Every week at NCH, each student receives a tutorial on their own with a qualified tutor.

Research shows that most school leavers believe that they will receive considerable individual attention during their time at University. They are, mostly, wrong. The one-to-one tutorial was always rare, and is now a dying breed. In fact, it hardly exists. When I took my BA at Cambridge just before the Millennium, I received only a few one-to-one tutorials, nearly all when I was working on dissertations. When I then taught at New College, St. Hilda's, and St. Catherine's, Oxford, nearly all the tutorials that I gave were to two or three students. I gave one-to-one tutorials only to those who were working on dissertations, or to visiting American students who were paying a considerable sum for the privilege. Even the one-on-two or one-on-three tutorial is hardly known on a weekly basis outside Oxbridge; and inside Oxbridge, graduate students are heavily relied on.

I confess that when I joined NCH I was sceptical about the vaunted 'gold standard'. Would not the students lose a huge amount in not experiencing the common and mutual learning of shared tutorials? It turned out that I need not have worried. First, NCH also gives what it calls 'group tutorials' to between two and four students (and NCH lectures are what anywhere else would be called seminars, involving as they do no more than around twenty students). Second, there are a host of benefits to the one-to-one tutorial, of which I had not previously been aware. In the one-to-two or one-to-three tutorial, which I had used at Oxford, I was always struggling to hold the

attention of all the students. One student might read out the essay that she or he had written during the previous week, but – because of the freedom of topic choice that students tend to have under the tutorial system – this might be on a work of literature that the other/s had never read. I might get the first student to summarise this work, but this would rarely be enough to fully engage the other/s in the essay. Either I would have to move away from the essay as a basis for discussion – thus invalidating the main point of an essay-based tutorial – or I would have to sacrifice the interest and engagement of one or more of the students for much of the hour. If I had marked the essays in advance of the tutorial, then the giving of feedback to each student would disengage the other/s even more, because they had neither heard nor read the essay that was being commented on. The tutorials that worked best were what Cambridge calls 'practical criticism' tutorials, with both students working simultaneously on a passage that neither of them had seen before. But such work inevitably forms a minority of literary teaching. The discussion of student essays is also necessary, and it cannot be conducted wholly satisfactorily with more than one student in the room.

In the one-on-one tutorial I have the liberty to concentrate on an individual: their essay, the type of critic that they are and are becoming (whether inclined to history or philosophy, psychology or linguistics, poetry or prose, page or stage), and on their own areas of weakness. Freshers arrive at university from many different school backgrounds and prior levels of attainment and experience. Some have dyslexia; some are weak on history; some are weak on abstract thought; some know little about religion. In the individual tutorial the student can be met where they are. The tutor can assess the kind of help they may need, and give it, without this being witnessed by fellow students. For this reason, although tutorials leave a student with nowhere to hide, they are good for students who may initially lack confidence. As with an individual appointment with a doctor, problems may be discussed, and addressed, in complete privacy. Confident and gifted students, on the other hand, can be pushed hard and as far as possible, without the tutor being concerned that other students in the room are being left behind.

If New College of the Humanities is in part a zoo for the endangered species that is the one-to-one tutorial, it is also a zoo for the endangered subject species that are the arts and humanities – and the two are made for each other. That is, the one-to-one tutorial is particularly well suited to subjects in which the best work is – in the words of our Visiting Professor Sir Christopher Ricks – 'both new and true'. In subjects such as medicine, where there are more definitively and objectively right answers, individual teaching may be less important. In subjects such as English, philosophy, politics, and history, what is rewarded is saying something that is both 'true' to the matter in



hand, and 'new' because nobody has ever made quite that point before. An hour's conversation between a tutor and a tutee is supremely adapted to fostering the skill at finding the 'true', and the independence of thought that is needed to generate the 'new'.

Several of our students come to us from universities from which they dropped out because they were unhappy with how little individual attention they had been receiving. They had been anonymised in large lecture theatres, and received feedback only in written form (on the occasional essay, and as exam results). Those students, who have experienced the norm as a standard of comparison, are particularly appreciative of what they find at NCH. What has happened at most UK universities over the last two decades is that academic appointments and promotions have become dependent on research output. This has given academics every incentive to spend as little time as possible teaching, and as much time as possible researching. Over the same period, tuition fees have rocketed. This has created a contradiction into which our country's students have fallen. They have been paying ever more for ever less individual attention. New College of the Humanities exists to resolve that contradiction.

It offers unrivalled attention not just from its full-time academics, but also from its visiting professoriate. I was teaching at St. Catherine's College, Oxford, when Sir Trevor Nunn happened to be there as a visiting professor and I heard him give lectures to packed audiences. Most students, and even most academics, were never able to speak with him; I was only able to do so because we happened to be seated proximately at a dinner. We became friends and, when I joined NCH, I invited him to become a Visiting Professor there. At NCH he has been speaking to groups of around thirty students. He has given individual advice to students thinking of making a career in theatre. Sir Christopher Ricks has taken our students out for pizza. Howard Jacobson has taken our students down the pub. It is through such individual contact that students grow. The admissions interviews at NCH give a taste of the one-to-one tutorial that we offer. Some may find that it is not for them. But for those who take study seriously – there can be nothing better.

Dr Catherine Brown is Head of English Faculty and Senior Lecturer, New College of the Humanities

HERE & THERE

Music in Unexpected Places

On Sunday 9th October, seven unusual Oundle School venues played host to a variety of music ensembles. As Quentin Thomas, Director of Music, explained, "These aural *amuses-bouches* flowed seamlessly every quarter of an hour as groups were given a little history of each building, a musical performance and a carefully considered walk to the next venue, led by pupil guides."

Performance spaces included both large and intimate arenas, and a few off the beaten track. The black walls of the Fives Court were dramatically lit in subdued colour with a water-like effect projected onto the roof as Schola Cantorum sang Duruflé in an acoustic worthy of a cathedral. For their second piece, Whitacre's *Lux*, the singers placed the lights of their mobile phones on the floor in an otherwise pitch-black space – a magical effect.

Michael Woo offered Schubert's *G flat Impromptu* on the piano in the impressive Library in Crosby House, the School Chapel was host to OSJO2, and the Yarrow Gallery, with its First World War associations was a heart-moving bubble of three war songs, with art-work by pupils hanging purposefully in the background.

Oundle's recently extended SciTec building was home to a punchy number from a Brass ensemble, accompanied by cool blues and greens around the swirling staircase, followed by the Cripps Library hosting a Moldavian Folk number performed by bristling strings. The audience assembled in the newly refurbished Patrick Engineering Centre with the OSJO1 offering a rousing and impressive finale from the Car Pit, much to the delight of all.

Quentin Thomas concluded, "This was a chance to celebrate our glorious surroundings with our music, and for the ensembles and pupils to experience acoustics and atmospheres wholly different from the norm. We are grateful to every member of staff who allowed us to roam so freely in to their work-places. It must happen again!"





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Academic leadership in schools

Graeme May explains why the senior leaders formerly known as Directors of Studies and their schools need a Director of Teaching & Learning



It is a noticeable trend amongst independent schools that the traditional Director of Studies role (more often known as the Deputy Head Academic these days) has been supplemented by the addition of a Director of Teaching & Learning. My own school, Abingdon, made this move nearly two years ago and it is difficult to imagine, as it always is, how we did without it previously.

When I speak to colleagues in other schools who do not have this role on their staff, the most frequent response is 'Isn't that your job?' or actually 'That's my job at my school but I don't have the time to do it properly'. It is the case that ten years or more ago the role of the DHA/DoS probably had an expectation that the job carried a degree of quality assurance/control when it came to teaching. To an extent, that is still the case, but the big difference is for those schools who are making a real commitment to the idea of proper, effective *development* of teaching as opposed to just monitoring. Development has often been seen as what INSET days and courses are for, but I am far from alone in my teaching career in seeing external CPD as largely ineffective and/or not very good value for money. This has been for three main reasons:

1. The quality of external CPD on Teaching & Learning, most often bought in for termly INSET days, is very variable. It is common for colleagues at other schools to send emails

round asking desperately for recommendations as they realise they have to book someone and I've certainly been the victim of some really terrible ones. Even when they're decent speakers, they don't know your particular context and at least part of their time gets spent introducing themselves and talking about things that aren't relevant or could have been done more quickly.

2. External CPD for INSET days is often not tied into any meaningful follow-up, so even the best of them can leave staff saying 'Well, that wasn't as bad as it might have been' or even 'Thought-provoking stuff', but if the theme being discussed on that INSET day isn't seen as a theme for the term/year and built into what happens next (in terms of school priorities, structures, HoDs meetings, departmental meetings etc) and actually *changes practice* in some way, then the INSET was a somewhat expensive way of reminding your staff that they have to start getting up early again after weeks of lie-ins.
3. External INSET courses that staff go on during term can be just as variable and just as short term in their impact. Rarely does a member of staff actually 'cascade' in any worthwhile way what they've picked up and often who goes on what INSET is rather uncontrolled and certainly tends to be unmonitored (e.g. by the expectation of a follow up report for example). I exclude from this external INSET when the

Academic

member of staff is studying towards a qualification of some kind (e.g. a PGCE or a Masters) or specification-focused INSET such as exam boards habitually lay on.

Abingdon's move to having a DTL has addressed much of the above and, consequently, paid for part of the cost of the role by limiting our use of external speakers. INSET on the theme of teaching practice has largely been led by the incumbent and, though we may still buy in some selected speakers for INSET days, it's less frequent and the position of the DTL ensures that the theme is consistent with what the Senior Team has agreed as the school priorities, and that it is carried forward throughout the term/year.

Alongside this, the DTL at Abingdon spends a large proportion of time observing lessons, conducting learning walks and coaching staff, either one to one or by forming small group clusters to focus on specific aspects of pedagogy. This is the crucial heart of the role, because a school that says it is committed to developing its teachers also needs to be committed to how it's going to do that. If external INSET is not the answer to this (and it isn't), you need to have someone on staff whose job it is to spend time with colleagues helping them to improve their practice. All teachers should be relaxed with the idea that suggesting they can improve is not a criticism of what they're currently doing, but an acknowledgment that we all have further to go and need to continue the pursuit of developing our art until our last day in the classroom. We all know the danger and the damaging effect of the teacher who thinks they've learnt all they can about teaching and spends the final years of their career coasting their way to retirement,

eliciting smaller and smaller returns from their classes. Staff at Abingdon have appreciated having someone who is not a member of the Senior Leadership Team but who is still a senior member of staff taking a real, practical interest in the subject of teaching; and I have definitely appreciated having someone else to bounce ideas around with and shape the academic direction of the school.

And whilst all this is going on, what is the DHA/DoS doing? Well, making sure that the DTL's role is as purely focused as possible by taking on the majority of the other academic work: the line management of the HoDs; the recruitment of staff and pupils; the formation and implementation of policies, ever-ready for the ISI call; attending countless committees and meetings, all no doubt essential to the running of the school; dealing with parental enquiries; making sure things like parental reporting happens properly; writing strategy papers for proposed changes to curriculum, property usage, size and shape of school; overseeing the various partnership activities the school is engaged in; analysing internal and external data and forming plans as a consequence; certainly enough to keep them going! And when I write that not exhaustive, though perhaps exhausting, Academic leadership in schools list out, it is no surprise that the time I have had to spend coaching teachers on their teaching has been desperately limited. Not forgetting too, that both the DHA and the DTL have teaching loads of their own, reduced from the standard no doubt but still important, as well as the other typical commitments of school life, such as tutoring and extra-curricular activities. In fact, now I think about it, perhaps my academic team is due for another expansion soon ...

Graeme May is Deputy Head of Abingdon School



Very Short Introductions – the latest in a very long list

Tom Wheare celebrates the continuing contribution of the Oxford University Press to the family or school library.



In 1901, a go-ahead young publisher, Grant Richards, launched a series of out of copyright re-prints to which he gave the title World's Classics. Although these books were readily available under other imprints, the new collection made a point of high production values and rapidly became immensely successful. Unfortunately, this caused Richards to over-extend his business which became bankrupt in 1905. The series was acquired by the Oxford University Press and the 'pocket-sized hardbacks', as they were described, became the foundation of many home libraries. The introductions were written by established authorities, some of whom featured elsewhere in the collection, and there were attractive dust-jackets, although in our house at least, these often seemed to go missing, revealing the Oxford blue binding, inside which they still remain in perfect

condition. In 1998 the series was relaunched in paperback as Oxford World's Classics, now the regular format, although some titles are still published in the 'traditional' hardback form. Collecting these books genuinely does provide a library of great literature, in which one can cherry-pick or explore the lesser known works of the more prolific authors.

In 1940, OUP also acquired the Home University Library of Modern Knowledge, when the offices of the publishers, Thornton Butterworth, were destroyed in the Blitz. This added non-fiction to what was, effectively, the OUP's outreach programme, and both series were immensely popular during the war. Whilst Trollope and Jane Austen evoked essential and historic decencies, the popularity of the HUL may be seen as part of the stream of enlightened thinking that produced the

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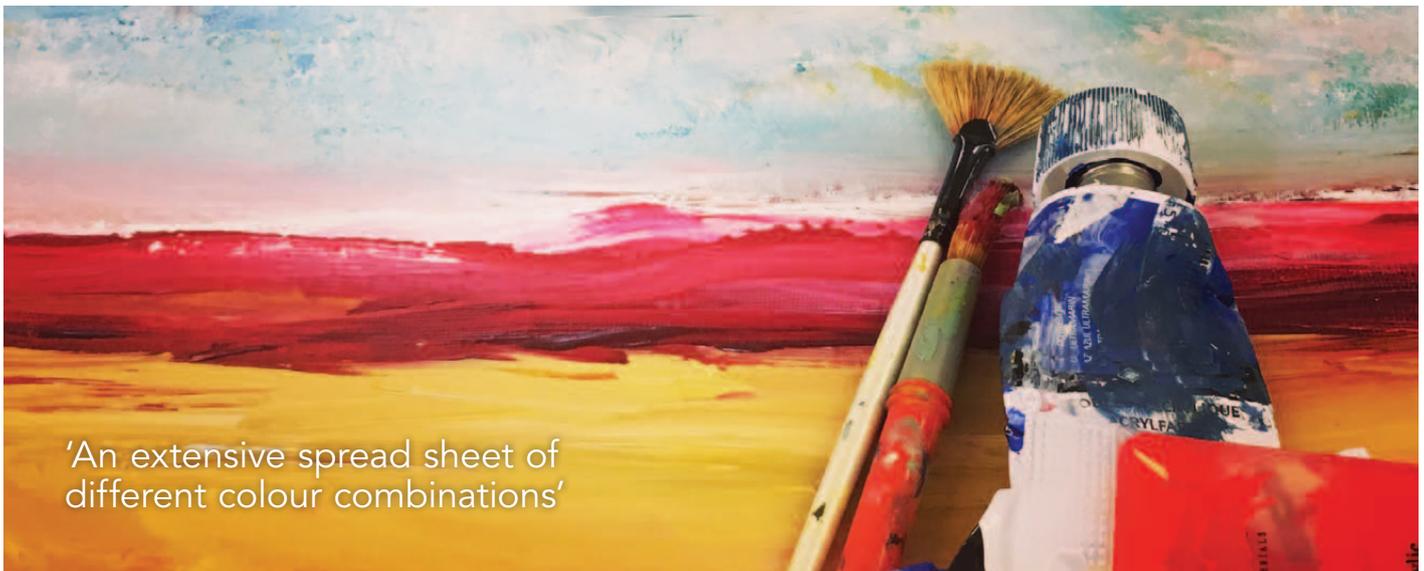


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'An extensive spread sheet of different colour combinations'

post-war Welfare State. It certainly reflected the massively increased interest in the education of both the individual and the nation that led to the essentially bi-partisan 1944 Education Act. The series continues, having been renamed Opus Books in 1966.

Grant Richards grew up in Oxford, where his father was a Classics fellow of Trinity, so it was appropriate that it should be the Oxford University Press that adopted his orphaned series. In 1995 the OUP launched another series, Very Short Introductions, and here is their own description of the project.

These books offer concise introductions to a diverse range of subject areas from Climate to Consciousness, Game Theory to Ancient Warfare, Privacy to Islamic History, Economics to Literary Theory. Since the series was launched, it has continued to offer new books each year for students, scholars and the avidly curious, providing a bridge between reference content and higher academic work. All titles provide intelligent and serious introductions to this huge range of subjects, written by experts in the field who combine facts, analysis, new ideas and enthusiasm, to make challenging topics highly readable. The online platform for the series allows unprecedented access to the wealth of knowledge contained within it, allowing the reader to search for information across all titles. Many schools have subscriptions to *Very Short Introductions Online*, whilst some have taken the more traditional approach of buying each copy in print form for their libraries.

The books are easily identifiable by their beautiful and original covers, the concept for which was created by the late Philip Atkins. Freelance and in-house designers create the paintings in their own space, before logging them in an extensive spread sheet of different colour combinations for the editors to choose from.

In October 2016, Oxford University Press published the five hundredth title in the series, *Measurement: A Very Short Introduction* by David J Hand. 2016 also marks the twenty-first birthday of the series, which has now sold over 9 million copies worldwide, featuring, amongst other authors, the philosopher A. C. Grayling, the classicist Mary Beard, the eminent Shakespearean Stanley Wells, and the art critic Dana Arnold.

Very Short Introductions are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly, with expert authors combining facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas and enthusiasm to make

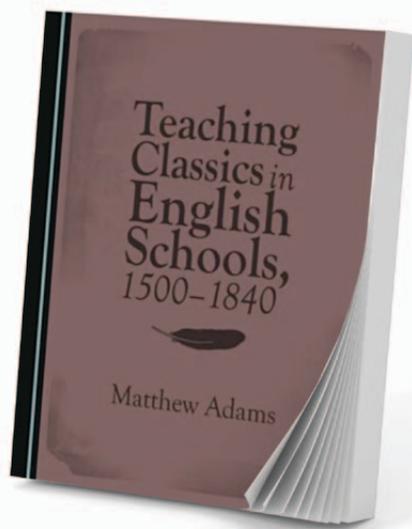
interesting and challenging topics highly readable. The average length of a Very Short Introduction is 144 pages and 35,000 words, covering a wide range of major subject areas such as History, Science, Philosophy, Art and Religion. Over three-quarters of the 500 titles have been translated, with the top three languages being Arabic, Chinese and Japanese. The most translated titles are *Mathematics* by Timothy Gowers, *Psychology* by Gillian Butler and *Social and Cultural Anthropology* by John Monaghan and Peter Just.

Series editor Andrea Keegan comments: "The five hundredth title is a significant milestone in the history of the Very Short Introductions series. When the series began in 1995, I don't think anyone could have envisaged that 21 years later, the series would have sold over 9 million copies and would still be going from strength to strength, continuing to produce thoughtful and thought-provoking short books on an ever-growing number of important topics.

"We chose Measurement as our 500th book because measurement is a fundamental concept that underpins almost every aspect of the modern world. It is central to the sciences, social sciences, medicine and economics, but it also affects everyday life. We measure everything – from the distance of far-off galaxies to the temperature of the air, levels of risk, political majorities, taxes, blood pressure, IQ and weight. The wide-reaching scope and significance of this title reflects the ethos of the Very Short Introductions, which offer insight into a huge range of concepts and ideas across all disciplines. We also consider reaching 500 titles a measurement of the success of the series!"

The book's author, David J. Hand, says: "Measurement underpins human progress, in the physical sciences and engineering, in medicine, and in the social and behavioural sciences, as well as in domains such as public policy and government. For a series such as the Very Short Introductions, one very obvious measure of how well it has done is the number of books in the series, and, however one looks at it, to have reached the five hundredth book is a sign of extraordinary success."

For more information about the series please contact Katie Stileman (E: Katherine.Stileman@oup.com, T: 01865 353344) and, for a full list of titles, see our website <https://global.oup.com/academic/content/series/v/very-short-introductions-vsi/>



Lily and the lineout calls

Hugh Wright reviews

'Teaching Classics in English Schools 1500-1840'
by Matthew Adams

Published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing
December 2015

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Matthew Adams, the author of this erudite but highly readable study, is an Old Boy of Bradford Grammar School, and, in his acknowledgements, he thanks no less than eight who taught in the Classics department while he was there. Their influence was more widespread than might be imagined, since the lineout calls in my college Rugby team were those ordained at BGS by Eric Ewbank, the classicist in charge of their First Fifteen. A good many in The Queen's College team had been coached by him at school and were also reading Mods and Greats: the rest of us bowed to their wishes. Matthew Adams traces a 'remarkable continuity of educational practice from the sixteenth century to the end of World War One'. There is a good case to be made for this end date to be moved to a point in living memory, as both Matthew Adams and I can attest from personal experience. The two World Wars slowed up change in schools, and academic standards were often maintained right into the 1950s by doing things as they had been done before, certainly in the study of classics. Though himself a brilliant classicist, Maurice Bowra, when a governor of Cheltenham College in the 1930s, advocated the abandoning of Greek there. The change was widely interpreted as signalling a drop in academic standards and Greek was quickly reinstated, with Bowra readily acknowledging his mistake.

Teaching Classics in English Schools has as its end point 'the Rugby School of Thomas Arnold's prime years'. The author had to finish somewhere, but Classics remained strong and in a wide variety of schools long after the 1840s, not least in the great grammar schools which get their name from teaching classical grammar above all else. Many are mentioned by him, if not in the text then in the 568 notes printed after it. (This book with its fourteen pages of bibliography is nothing if not thorough!) The author's obvious love of his subject is doubtless fuelled by the annual reunions of the Classics department from his school, where the Classical Sixth would often top forty members. Such a tradition certainly deserves this special study of its origins and its contribution to education in England. The story in Wales, Scotland and especially Ireland is important also, but Adams wisely confines himself to England.

There are ample reminders in this book that the teaching of Classics was not only noteworthy in Thomas Arnold's Rugby. Shrewsbury School was the birthplace of headmaster Kennedy's

amazingly successful Latin Primer, first published in 1843 and still alive today. The schoolboy mind rejoiced in the fact that its title can so easily be changed, with two strokes on the capital L, to Kennedy's Eatin Primer. Shrewsbury's proud classical tradition goes back to its foundation by King Edward VI in 1552, and Adams gives a full account of its Classics department in the 19th century. He quotes Charles Darwin telling how he learned his lines of Homer in morning prayers. Amid all the praise of the benefits of this kind of learning, we should not forget Darwin's comprehensive condemnation of it. 'Nothing could have been worse for the development of my mind than Dr Butler's school as it was strictly classical, nothing else being taught except a little ancient geography and history.' That chimes with what Adams tells us about Eton in the 1860s when, of its 31 staff, 26 taught Classics. Despite Darwin's opinion, as Adams points out in his Introduction, 'It was widely accepted that an intimate association with the finest minds of antiquity could only improve a pupil's appreciation of taste, elegance and beauty of mind.' This was the view of Edward Thring of Uppingham, whom he quotes, and of numerous others.

Throughout the period covered by the book, Latin was the *lingua franca* of the educated world. Academics, priests and doctors would converse in the ancient tongue in which the serious work of scholarship was written. Fluency in it was therefore essential for promotion in Church and state. Discussion of this is not a declared subject of this book, but much about it can be read between the lines, and the study of Classics retained a close connection with the clergy of the Church of England beyond 1840. This link was personified in the high priest Headmasters of the great Victorian schools, especially those that became princes of the Church. James Prince Lee, for instance, was thought to be the most brilliant of Arnold's proteges. He became Chief Master of King Edward's School, Birmingham in 1838, and in his ten years in the post produced two future bishops of Durham and an archbishop of Canterbury, Edward Benson, who had *en route* been the founding Master of Wellington College. In his turn, Prince Lee himself left teaching to become a bishop, when the new see of Manchester was carved out of the diocese of Chester.

Adams has chosen the year 1500 as his starting point, the beginning of the century in which the Renaissance and its



rediscovery of classical civilisation achieved momentum. Dean John Colet, founder of St Paul's, and the other humanists who founded the classical tradition in our Schools were very much men of that time, dedicated to the twin aims of inculcating the Christian faith and training young minds by the study of Latin and, as time went on, Greek. 'Biblical texts might be used to teach the ancient languages, just as much as the languages themselves were learned in order to read the texts.' The sacrilegious content and downright obscenity of some classical works was tolerated to a surprising extent, much to many a schoolboy's delight and in some cases instruction, then and later.

The book has much to say of great interest about the curriculum and teaching methods, which changed very little in the three hundred years after 1500. Adams bases his study on research in the archives of Harrow, St Paul's and Winchester, and the founding statutes of a large number of schools, particularly those dating from the sixteenth century. The book is arranged in nine chapters, each of which stands alone and can be read separately. Chapter Five is on Violence and Rebellion in the classroom, a topic which will be familiar to many. Much has

been written about all that beating, though Adams describes it well and in detail, whilst the teaching of groups in one large room or Big School, clearly created some of the problems. This makes it surprising that the founders of Cheltenham College in the 1840s kept this model in their new building, with a large room for all classes called Big Classical, though they had a room of equal size next to it called Big Modern. The frequency with which pupils barricaded themselves into the school on the last day or two of term was unfamiliar to me.

The study of Colet's foundation of St Paul's is especially thorough and very interesting. Dean Colet was clearly a visionary and a passionate advocate of his educational principles. He denounced the reading of the debased Latin studied in schools at that time – 'That filth and all such abuse which a later blind world brought in which more rather may be called bloterature than literature.' His school was to be double the size of even the largest school in the country. Its pupils were to study classical authors to the exclusion of all else, though this was later broadened to include a wider range of authors and other exercises. William Lily (c1468-1522), the



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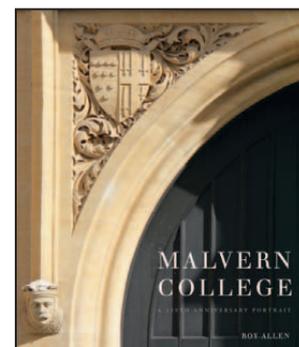
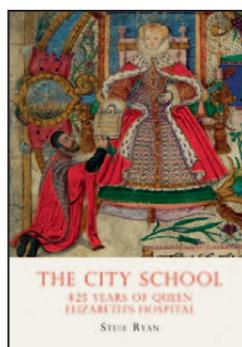
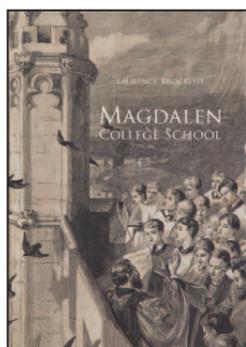
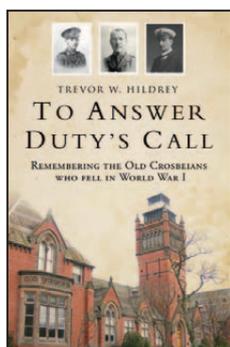
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first High Master of St Paul's, appointed after Erasmus turned the job down, emerges from this account as a pivotal figure in English education and Adams is to be congratulated in bringing him out from the shadow of other more famous figures. Cardinal Wolsey no doubt drew on his experience as Master of Magdalen College School and Lily's reforms at St Paul's when he re-endowed Ipswich School and provided the first curricula of any Renaissance School.

Adams demonstrates that the teaching methods fixed by that generation of schoolmasters in a few schools were universally adopted by those who came later and remained unchanged for three and a half centuries. It is hard to get used to that idea. In every lesson passages were construed or parsed. This involved an exact description of the grammar of each word and the syntax of each sentence. The study of grammar was paramount and controversy raged as to whether the grammar should be taught before reading passages or should be derived from reading them. This battle had to be decided by Henry VIII himself, it was so fierce. He ruled in favour of reading before the learning of grammatical rules – he deserves more credit for this than he has received! Each passage was read in Latin and not translated. Spoken Latin was encouraged at all times and sometimes laid down for private conversation also – the direct method used to teach Modern languages now. This element had largely died out by the end of the 18th century in the study of Latin and Greek, though it survived in single words such as *cave* when a master was seen to be approaching!

Most importantly, the passage had to be learned by heart each night and recited the next day, hence Charles Darwin's recalling his learning passages of Homer in morning prayers. He had not done his prep the night before. I was surprised to discover that translation played little part until modern times, and that the writing of prose and verse in both Latin and Greek was original composition and not translation from English. This explains the great facility many had in writing in Latin rather than in English. In 1649, for instance, Milton was employed as Secretary for Foreign Tongues by the Council of State, which effectively meant writing their letters in and translating the replies from Latin. This approach continued in France until the last century, as I discovered when I did a gap year in a French school. Learning that I was to read Classics at Oxford, they kindly found me an elderly Greek tutor who had been taught to translate Homeric Hexameters direct into Virgilian hexameters at sight.

It is remarkable how much of all this survived into the mid 20th century. The curriculum may have changed as more subjects were introduced from the 18th century onwards, but many schools remained extremely conservative. My school, Kingswood School Bath, was founded by John Wesley who wrote text books for it as John Colet had done at St Paul's. In the 1960s it was still following a curriculum developed in the early 1930s. Pupils aged 14 were divided into those who were to specialise in Science, not the majority, and those who would devote most of their time to Arts subjects. As one of the latter, I therefore did no Physics or Chemistry at all and the little Biology we did was not examined. Ironically, people like me only went into the science department to use a lecture theatre for Robson Fisher's English classes in the 6th form. In these we had to recite poems and prose learned by heart each week – shades of Charles Darwin! His was a cumulative method whereby you could be asked to recite passages set at any time

during that academic year, maintaining a tradition of learning by heart that was at the core of Classical studies.

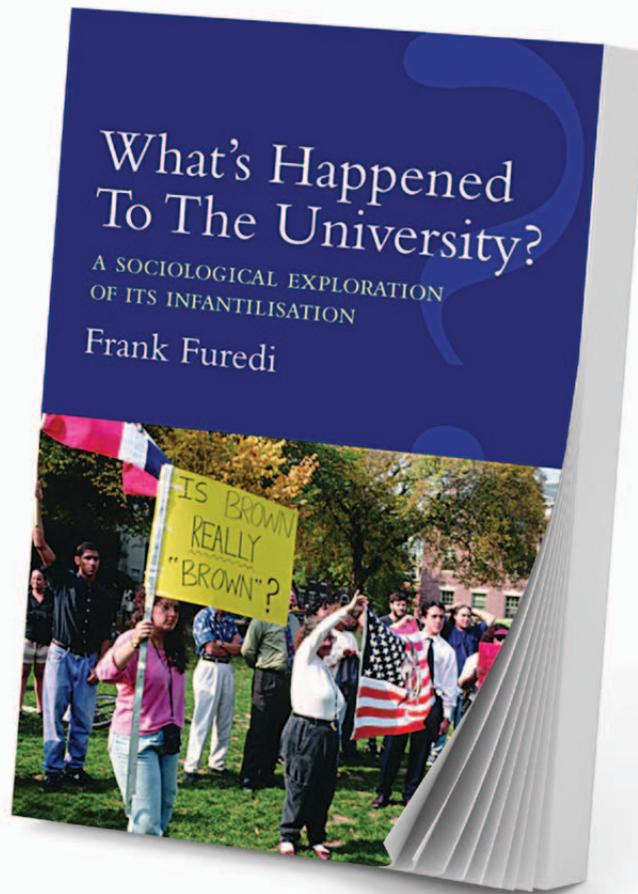
The Classical Sixth was large, with weekly proses and unseens and daily study of texts in both languages. Our proses and verses, though, were translations of English passages and no longer our own compositions. For verses, rendering Shakespearean sonnets into Elegiac couplets were what I remember most, and in Greek prose there were purple passages from eighteenth century speeches in parliament to be translated into the prose of Demosthenes. We might also be required to write in the style of a particular author, Cicero, Tacitus and Thucydides being popular prose models, with Ovid or Virgil among the poets. Colet and Lily would have approved and we were not alone. At Queen's, my first tutorials were shared with a boy from Manchester Grammar School who, by the age of sixteen, had read all of the Iliad and the Odyssey at school, which was useful because they provided the set texts for Classical Mods. He was not quite in the same league as Benjamin Hall Kennedy, though, who won the top classical prize offered at Cambridge while he was still a boy at Shrewsbury!

Thomas Arnold opposed ideas of educational change or utilitarian reform because it was his increasing conviction, Adams tells us, that it was not knowledge but the means of gaining knowledge which he had to teach. Those are sentiments that would be echoed by many headmasters for the next one hundred years, not least by AB Sackett, my Headmaster at Kingswood, who drilled them passionately and sincerely into his school. Most of the pupils who sat at his feet went into jobs and professions that do not pay well but are strong on service. John Aubrey, the great 17th century antiquarian, detested the way Latin was taught in schools, but recognised its validity because, he said, even at a very basic level it was a fashionable requirement. This is quite obviously no longer the case, but this study of the teaching of Classics in English schools is nevertheless of interest to a wider readership than would perhaps normally think about such things. His concluding sentence is worth quoting in full: "The training and education offered to pupils prior to the 19th century made classics a part of men's lives they have not been since and will not be again." Even so his book is thought provoking. It cannot be described as required reading, but it is highly recommended to anyone interested in the history of our schools and of education in England.

Matthew Adams is Head of Classics at Pocklington School and also teaches Latin at the Centre for Mediaeval Studies, University of York

Hugh Wright read Greats at Oxford and was Head of Classics at Cheltenham College before taking up the first of his three HMC Headships.





Tolerance has become a negotiable commodity

Ralph Townsend reviews Frank Furedi's *What's Happened to the University? A sociological exploration of its infantilisation.*

Published by Routledge 2016
ISBN 9781138212930

In March 2016, the Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Rebecca Blank, circulated an open letter in which she outlined her comprehensive programme of behaviour management. *We've seen a troubling string of incidents reported through our hate & bias reporting system that have frequently affected and hurt members of our diverse community...these incidents affect each and every one of us and reveal that we have not made much progress as needed on building an inclusive and welcoming community.*

So reports Professor Frank Furedi, who in this book explains how and why the culture that dominates higher education has dramatically changed. There was a time when members of the

university understood that the potential for understanding and truth-seeking required a no-holds barred robust attitude towards criticism and the exchange of competing views. The ideal of tolerance for dissident views was always subject to conformist pressures, but until recently the moral authority of academic freedom and freedom of speech ensured that an open-minded liberal ethos prevailed in campus life. Reading as a risky activity, the psychologically-disturbing impact of the written text and the upheavals that it can cause, give reading its authoritative power and appeal. Now students argue that some books are dangerous to their psychological well-being or that some arguments and criticisms are so toxic that it can

traumatise them. Increasingly, students appear more passionate about arguing for limiting the freedom of speech than in defending it. Unlike past generations, their youthful idealism expresses itself in the certainty that freedom of speech needs to be curbed rather than extended. What is more, students who possess an open-minded and tolerant attitude towards debate are increasingly on the defensive.

Furedi assesses the situation with clinical vocabulary and the microscope of the academic sociologist. University culture is now the infected victim of “paternalisation”, “infantilisation”, “deification of safety”, “trigger warnings”, “the weaponisation of emotions”, “medicalisation”, “verbal purification” and “microaggression”. The prose is dry and replete with examples, some alarming, some surreal, some hilarious, mostly from the USA, but a few from the UK as well, to support his analysis. He could have written a shorter book and won the argument less repetitively.

Here is the essence of his case. The values of experimentation, risk-taking and openness to new ideas, which influenced the 1960s and 1970s, have given way to a climate of moral regulation and conformism. In the 1960s radicals organised free speech movements and regarded any form of censorship as unacceptable. It is no longer merely the illiberal media and intolerant politicians who call for silencing dissident academic or banning controversial speakers. Such calls are likely to emanate from inside the university, and their most vociferous proponents are often students who demand “safe spaces”. Rule-makers are in the ascendant and assume that more rules are needed and a moral crusade is rarely able to accept that a problem has been solved. Academics are increasingly under pressure to subordinate the university’s commitment to free expression to the demand that students should be protected from being offended. Tolerance has become a negotiable commodity. The criminalisation of offensive speech and thought and the subjugation of campus life to the exigencies of identity politics frequently relies on lazy and tired old terms like “political correctness” to make sense of the dispiriting consequences of the politicisation of culture and personal behaviour. The slogan of the 1970s, “the personal is political”, has given way to the infantilised rhetoric of “it’s all about me”. Emotions are mobilised to make a statement of outrage. Criticism and hard-hitting arguments are countered with the statement “I am offended”.

Readers of this journal will recognise the accuracy of Furedi’s observation that parents and schools have for some time now been struggling with the transmission of values and rules of behaviour to young people, in part caused by the lack of confidence of older generations in the values into which it was socialised by their parents. Furedi is right to claim that the project of affirming children and raising their self-esteem has been actively promoted by parents as well as schools, and that this emphasis has run in tandem with the custom of a risk-averse regime of childrearing. The unintended consequence of this has been to limit opportunities for the cultivation of

independence and to extend the phase of dependence of young people into adult society. In contrast to times past, students now arrive on university campuses to be interviewed accompanied by their parents. The idea that undergraduates are biologically mature children, rather than young men and women, marks an important departure from practices of the recent past.

Even so, Furedi acknowledges that, in the UK at least, the social construction of a toxic and risk-averse university experience does not mean that most students live a life of fear and anxiety. Most undergraduates get on with their studies and participate in the kinds of activities that have characterised student life for generations. But he warns that, even when their activity and behaviour contradicts the “better safe than sorry” philosophy promoted on campuses, they are expected to accept the intensely policed etiquette that increasingly prevails. With the intensification of commercial competition for students, many universities have gone to great lengths to make themselves attractive to young people. In the UK, “the student experience” is deemed to be of fundamental importance by university administrators: universities are rated according to the quality of student experience they provide. Ensuring that undergraduates have a problem-free and pleasant life is the precondition for gaining a high ranking in the university league tables.

Furedi’s commitment to and preference for the risk-taking of genuine intellectual openness and social tolerance over what the Australian art critic Robert Hughes called “the culture of complaint” accords with this country’s tradition of liberal secondary education. Schools can still be laboratories of the spirit, where students are not disproportionately concerned with their personal identities, but develop as members of a community preparing them for the challenging exercise of mature citizenship, living and learning together about religion and cultural inheritance and helping one another. The bracing events of Brexit and the result of the American election provide schools with an incentive to renewed focus on their main educational objective, which is to form intelligent and committed citizens aware of their system of government and the major forces and events in their history, emphasising that democracy is not only about rights but confers the citizenship duties to think broadly and generously, keep informed and vote. That way we shall have little need of hate and bias reporting systems and the policing services of Rebecca Blank.

Dr Ralph Townsend was Headmaster of Winchester College from 2005 to 2016. The Ralph and Cathy Townsend Bursary Fund seeks to continue his work in widening access at the school.



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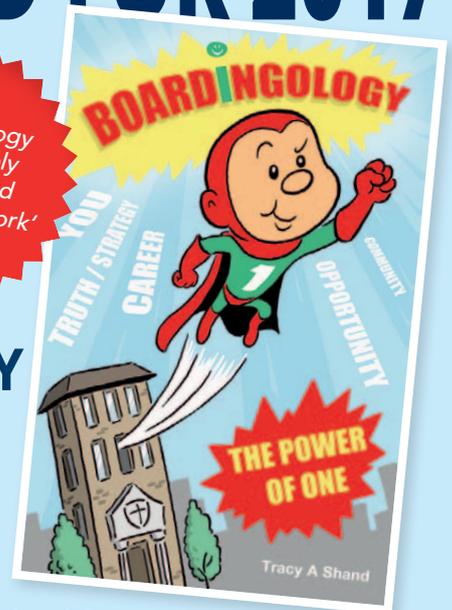
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Trick or Treat or Trump

Jason Morrow reports from Manhattan after the US Presidential election

Halloween was once more an explosion of creativity in school with a mix of amusing, heroic, nostalgic and scary characters for our annual parade. My favourite costume this year was the Year 7 who dressed as the briefly celebrated red jumper wearing Ken Bone from Presidential Debate 2 in an election season that did at times come to resemble a Halloween Parade.

Former British Prime Minister Harold Wilson famously observed that “A week is a long time in politics” and we all had a very dramatic reminder of that in early November. The result was a shock for many and it will inevitably take time for people to move forward from the rhetoric and acrimony of what was a bitter and divisive campaign. Many are already hoping that the more constructive and conciliatory tone of the early transition

is also central to the ethos and values of the institution. It is testament to the strength and integrity of the IB approach that it does also require us as educators and learners to reflect on and sincerely try to make sense of the world from the perspective of others. I have mentioned previously one of the IB Mission elements which I find particularly challenging to embed and ensure and that seems even more relevant at this juncture in US politics: “These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.” This is another of those areas in which learning in a school is so much a joint enterprise among teachers, students and parents.

A number of New York schools found themselves embroiled in controversy in the days after the election as some had cancelled lessons or brought in counsellors to help students and staff deal with the election result. There is a genuine level of fear and anxiety among many communities and for individuals who are struggling to reconcile the values and approaches they had assumed were more deeply shared across the country with some of the rhetoric and policy proposals floated during the Trump campaign. One Head summed up the response to the election as being “aghast at the election’s affirmation of fear, bigotry, racism, sexism and hate.” It has undoubtedly been a difficult and at times painful experience to observe the 2016 election while trying to help students make sense of the process. One of the challenges presented by the election result, as with the Brexit vote in the UK, is to understand and seek to address



period can be translated into a genuinely inclusive, respectful and co-operative approach over the coming years. It may be partly due to my conditioning as a historian that I tend to look back at moments like this to see if there are other observations or episodes that might offer a different perspective or insight. One that keeps coming to mind, which some of you might appreciate, is from another former British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, who commented in 1947 as the world confronted the uncertainty and fear of an emerging Cold War:

“No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.”

In working with students, however, there are so many reasons to be optimistic and confident about the understanding, mutual respect and sense of fairness they bring to examining and discussing issues. It is one of the great benefits of working in an IB school that being principled, open-minded and caring



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some of the underlying fears and worries so many across both countries are clearly feeling as they look to the future. There was also an interesting article on this recently which wondered if the “winner take all” electoral system in some countries was exacerbating a worrying “them and us” mentality across various countries.

Public discourse, expectations for debating, confidence in elections and valuing civility have all suffered throughout the long road to the 2016 election and it is not surprising that many school leaders and schools are wrestling with how best to handle this legacy over the coming months and years. We have, of course, discussed at the British International School that one of the things we must guard against is slipping into partisan assertions or using our position as teachers to advocate for or against particular politicians...tempting as some of them make it!

One of the disconcerting footnotes to Decision 2016, as it was called across the US news outlets, is the announcement by Oxford Dictionaries that the Word of the Year is “post-truth”, as its usage has increased by over 2000% in recent months. The definition of that term and the extent to which being accurate or honest seems to have slipped down the rankings for what to look for or value in those we trust with leadership or responsibility is sobering. The definition is: “objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief.” The dangers of such an attitude or electoral tactic for democracy and public discourse are obvious and reinforce the importance of laying secure and deep foundations for inquiry, investigation and evidence-based analysis in our schools. Regular referrals to “fact checkers” to evaluate the extent to which candidate assertions were truthful or misleading was a surprising and odd feature of the electoral cycle which reflected an erosion of trust which is certainly not unique to US politics. It was most forcefully driven home for me, however, in an article on CNN in mid-October, exploring the supposed differences between bullshitting and lying and how the former was viewed less critically by potential voters. Mischievously, and perhaps not entirely accurately, the journalist traced the origins of that approach to a term in the 1400s referring to trickery and scamming – the word was “trumpery”. No comment.

I hadn't intended to say so much on the impact of the campaign and elections when I started this piece. Perhaps it has been partly cathartic to try to think through a number of the issues and challenges raised and I hope it has given some insight into these interesting times in America.

As a tonic I'd like to finish by mentioning a few of the highlights of recent weeks which help to maintain optimism and confidence about the future. We are celebrating our tenth anniversary as a school and, while that doesn't seem very old by UK standards (the oldest school I worked in traces its foundation to 1432), it does feel like a significant milestone in New York and has been a great opportunity to reflect and discuss with staff, students and our community the next stages in the school's development. As part of the celebrations, we were delighted to receive a Proclamation from the Mayor of New York declaring 21st October 2016 officially “British International School of New York Day” in the city. Some very practical students wanted to know if this gave them any particular rights or privileges for the day – I'm not sure if cupcakes with the school logo quite met their expectations.



We were delighted to welcome a United States Congresswoman to the school to mark the occasion and I'm not sure who was more impressed – Congresswoman Maloney or the teachers – when one of our astute Year 5s asked if it was fair that Americans couldn't trade with Cuba because they had a different political system. In a similar vein, and thanks to another of our eager and inquisitive Year 5s, I was so pleased when one interrupted a presentation on the Electoral College system in US elections to query the assertion that the 1860 Elections had arguably been more bitter and divisive than those of 2016 – not least because they precipitated the Civil War. The student very politely interjected: “I'm surprised to hear that about the 1860 election as I thought the Lincoln-Douglas debates were considered to be a high point in political discourse.” It was, I think, the first time since my university days that I'd had reason to refer to the 1858 Lincoln-Douglas debate for the Congressional elections of that year, but it filled me with confidence that while we have students with such enthusiasm and appetite for learning and understanding, we still have much cause for hope looking forward.

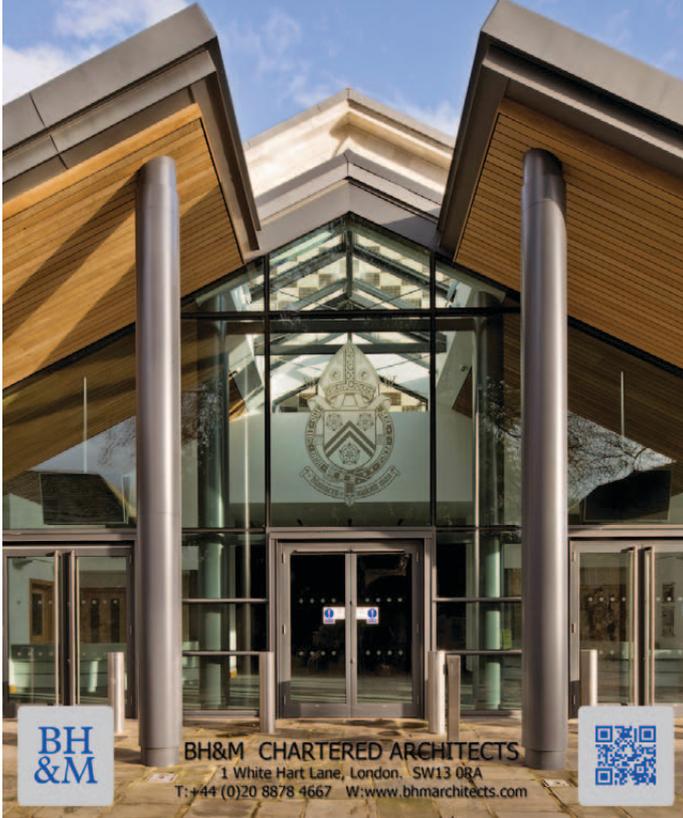
Another tremendous source of inspiration and motivation over recent months has been the chance to continue to work with other Heads from across New York. The theme of this year's Heads' Conference at the start of November was ‘Equity and Justice’, and a number of the speakers and workshops took forward the discussion from last year on issues of race in schools to explore how we can also seek to agree and have in place clear policies and procedures to ensure that transgender students and others dealing with questions of identity can be made to feel secure, valued and included in schools. For me, this was a powerful demonstration of that strand in American society and culture which does genuinely try to understand and address diversity in building a fair society. The USA certainly remains a nation of contrasts.

Jason Morrow is Headmaster of the British International School of New York

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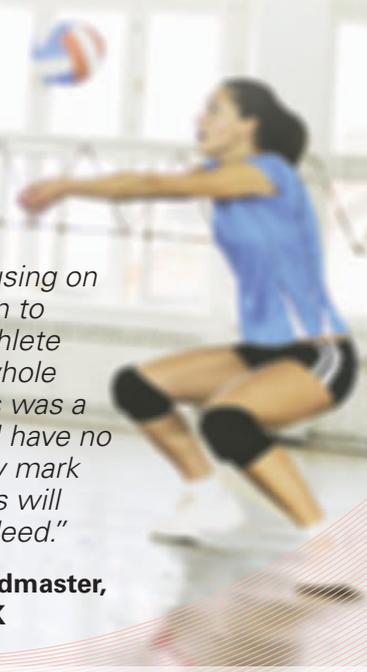
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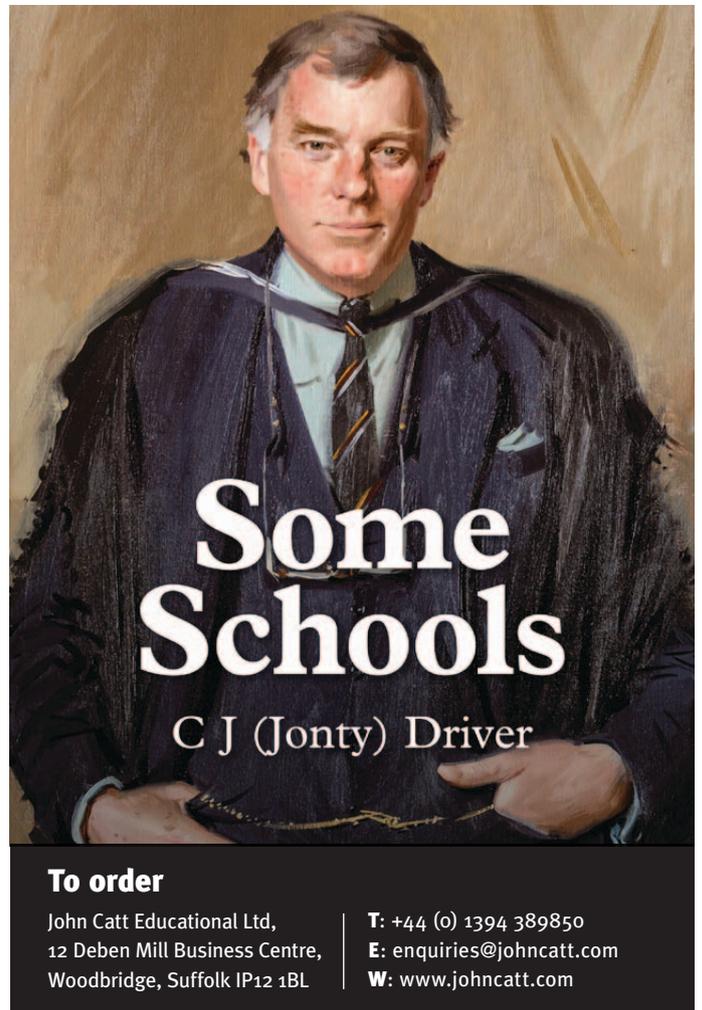
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Happy New ... You

Tracy Shand has a fresh approach to New Year resolutions for school leaders

Being successful in the independent sector today is a question of capital management, innovation and marketing prowess. These are challenging times when your limited resources are required to be maximised to survive. Your biggest cost can become your best asset in 2017 when you empower the human capital working in your school.

Your success is based on one thing – YOU, how you act and react. You are where you are today because of the personal and professional choices that you have made. If there is a problem anywhere in your life – the day that you wanted to have never happens, the job that you love becomes a challenge not a joy – choices can be overwhelmed by emotions kicking in and things change. It is the same for everyone you manage. To move forward in 2017 you need to unleash the power of one. When it comes to any aspect of your life – accepting a job, proposing to your love and especially your well-being – all it takes is one person to change your life for the better.

One hand – yours

Now we all know that under the senior leader disguise there is an inner child itching to come out, so let's go back to the future and start planning. Grab a pen now, armed with the curious nature of a child, and away we go – it's playtime.

Do you have a pen yet?

Your future is in your hands. Gimme Five!

Get some paper and draw round your hand. Yes, draw round your hand. OK, the resulting image is not perfect, but did it make you smile? This is the resource that you need to build your tomorrow. Now write down the five things that you want to be able to say on 31 Dec 2017 – one on each finger. Glue this onto an A3 piece of paper and write 5 steps above each finger about how to get there. I love this one and do it every year as my New Year resolution and have lost no fingers yet! Will you?

One space

Look at these words:

Career	Care er	Impossible	Im possible
Impressed	Im pressed	Weekend	Week end

If you reflect on the emotions associated with these words, what a difference a space makes. Which ones are you drawn to in the pair? Thoughts drive emotions. Emotions drive behaviour. Behaviour drives the school culture you are living in today. So, what one change can you make now to create a positive space to move forward? One action is all it takes. What could that be?

One action

Two Words + One Action

Two words can stop you in your tracks –

NOT AGAIN (your staff when the senior team announce a really good idea)

NOT NOW (when you are your most tired and something happens)

- but they can also be a kick-starter.

To be successful, choose two words and one action to improve your tomorrow. You could have 'keep learning' or 'what if', or, to get you started, what about -



Endpiece

HELP ME to manage my work life balance.

ACTION write what it looks like and feels like. What **one action** can you take to begin?

It is as simple as that – actions speak louder than words. Small or big, action is still an action. Take one today and then another: you have 365 days a year, what a lot of ground you can cover.

One future

Is your wellbeing or other people's your number one priority? Leader, are you building for tomorrow or just surviving today? Let's see if your answer matches your behaviour. Take a moment to reflect on your day – your challenge is to answer these questions truthfully.

1. How much sleep have you had? Did you wake feeling well-rested?
2. Did you miss breakfast? How many meals have you had today? Did you eat fast or slow? Did you eat at your desk or take your time?
3. Describe your day in THREE words.
4. How much time today have you had just for you?
5. How much time today have you done nothing? Yes, nothing.

Are you shocked by your answers? What would you say to a young person or colleague that told you this was their life? What

one change would you suggest for them to do immediately? Yes, it's time to take your own advice and you need to do it now

One time machine

Sometimes you need to step back to move forward. They say writing a letter is a lost art. Not today! It is time to step into your own time machine.

Write a letter to your 16 year-old self. (If you want to get in character it's best just to put on some old music rather than change your hairstyle or clothes!)

Write a letter to your 60 year-old self. Now, what do you want to be able to say?

Put them both away for 24 hours then read them together. What is missing? What one action do you need to start today?

It is time to **Believe in Yourself** to achieve your definition of success. To build your community for tomorrow, you need to empower your human capital today. Put the 'I' back anywhere into your life starting now, as you have all the resources to be successful. Do something today that your future self will thank you for.

Good luck this year!

A published author and thought leader, Tracy's mission is to put the 'I' back into your boarding life. More recently her book Boardingology was reviewed by boarding professionals as 'motivational and inspirational' on Amazon. All royalties from the book go to support young people who need boarding to move forward in their life.



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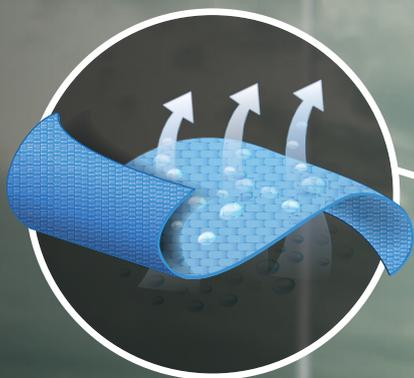
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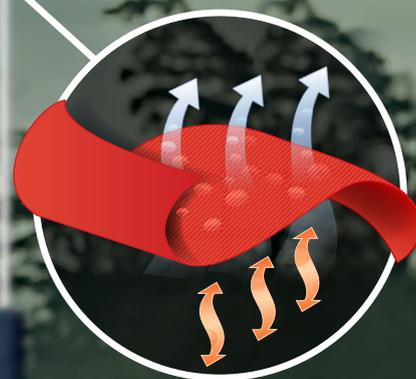
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