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satips
support and training in prep schools

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From the editor

I hope this autumn issue (and my first) of *Prep School* finds you returning to school refreshed from your summer break and looking forward to a new school year.

Preparatory and junior schools play a vital and formative part in children's educational lives. This stage of education is also blissfully free from the constraints of examinations. I have taught in both the maintained and independent sectors and I know how fortunate we are in this sector: we have some of the best facilities and some of the most inspiring teachers. We are also spared

the need to respond to ever-changing government educational policy. In summary, the most wonderful thing about being independent is just that. We can develop our own curriculum, teach 'off timetable' when required, and use the passion and expertise of staff to enrich the minds of our students.

The preparatory and junior school sector is diverse, encompassing nursery schools and senior school junior departments; single-sex schools and co-educational establishments; boarding schools and day schools; rural and urban locations; faith, interfaith and no faith centres. Some are large and others tiny. Importantly, there is no mould that these schools come from: each is unique.

From the moment children are born they are programmed to find out about the world around them. They are inquisitive, imaginative and energetic. They tackle everything with passion and enthusiasm. Our job, in the years that lead up to senior school at either 11 or 13, is to keep this hunger and passion for learning alive through exciting and stimulating teaching. Our duty is to teach good life skills and instil in them a genuine love for learning and life. Tests will need to be passed, but education is so much more than passing examinations. We all know this, but sometimes it is not always easy to put our best intentions into action.

What better time to start than the beginning of the academic year? And what better way than by getting your students outside? I hope this issue of *Prep School* will inspire you to use the outdoors as a valuable and – importantly in these financially leaner times – free resource. In this issue many teachers from across the sector have written about the ways they have used the outdoors to enrich the educational experiences of their pupils.

Prep School intends to celebrate the different experiences and expertise that make up our sector. By supporting and learning from each other we can share our successes and help each other meet the challenges of shaping young minds in difficult times.

Prep School magazine is your forum: we want to hear from all areas of this vibrant, diverse and important sector. We want to hear from support staff, teachers, student teachers, governors, senior management teams, and head teachers. Please read, share and discuss. Make it part of your professional development, and an enjoyable part of your teaching.

Michèle Claire Kitto

"If you have an idea for an article or viewpoint for the next issue of *Prep School*, or any news from your school, please don't hesitate! Email me at editor@prepschoolmag.co.uk"

A thought for the term



The Revd Kim Taplin is an Anglican priest and is the Chaplain of Clifton College, Bristol. He has taught religious studies and games in four independent and maintained schools.

Time after Time

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.
(Ecclesiastes 3. 1)

The writer of the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes dispenses wise advice – our actions should not be prompted simply by opportunity, but by moral expediency and the appropriateness of a situation.

Thus, there is 'a time to weep, and a time to laugh... a time to keep, and a time to throw away... a time for war, and a time for peace' (Ecclesiastes 3. 4, 6 & 8).

I offer some contemporary additions:

"There is a time to consume, and a time to abstain;
a time to measure, and a time to refrain from measurement;

a time to choose, and a time to be directed;

a time to be safe, and a time to take risks;

a time to email, and a time to speak;

a time for celebrity, and a time for anonymity;

a time to feast, and a time to fast;

a time to change, and a time to stay the same;

a time to word-process, and a time to write;

a time to demand rights, and a time to take responsibility;

a time to do, and a time to be."

A brief history of satips:

E R Andrew Davis, general secretary of *satips*, sheds some light on the organisation

satips: the Society of Assistants Teaching in Preparatory Schools, but known as Support and Training in Prep Schools. Quite a mouthful! Founded nearly 60 years ago, ***satips*** (www.satips.com) exists to provide the best possible training for teachers in prep schools.

Garrets? Prep school masters (and they usually *were* masters!) often lived in the cold, sparsely-furnished garrets of moth-eaten country mansions housing struggling prep schools. Board and lodging were provided – but only in term-time. Paid termly, sometimes grudgingly, in arrears, these dedicated teachers somehow didn't quite have the cachet of their public school colleagues. Jennings and Molesworth ruled!

Always a forward-looking organisation, however, ***satips*** quickly emerged in the 1950s from early discussions about conditions of service. Innovative training conferences were held – and in a number of subjects. The great thing was that the conferences were addressed by real practitioners – those who were known to be exemplars of 'best practice'.

This is what the Society still does. As we enter the second decade of the new century, we are proud of the *practicality* of our courses. We don't deal in 'modish orthodoxies' unless they are proven and good – in which case we promote them energetically and offer our members access to the best practitioners. Bandwagons R'nt us!

We are, however, forward-looking. Our current council (the Society's governing body) includes a particularly strong mixture of very experienced prep school teachers and younger, inventive (and 'off-the-wall'!) thinkers. We are run BY teachers FOR teachers. Among our current council members and others in the team who run our courses, competitions and events we have teachers from some of the very top prep schools in the country.

What do we actually do?

Broadsheets

For over 50 years now we have produced termly subject Broadsheets. They are a superb resource for prep school teachers: practical, up-to-the-minute, readable. Our half-century archive is a fascinating record of educational practice.

In this digital age, we are aware that our instantly-recognisable low-tech documents on their sand-coloured paper (so often absolute gold in terms of content), though

read so avidly in many prep school staff rooms, may lack visual appeal. This is, therefore, one immediate area for development identified by a confident, trusted Society. How can we most efficiently deliver news of the most recent, the best, professional practice to our members?

Courses

We run a wide range of conferences and practical inset courses. ***satips*** has its role to play here as our courses are not only cost-effective (for schools) but superbly practical. We love meeting fellow prep-school teachers, making them welcome at our conferences ... and sending them away with brilliant ideas which they'll want to use in their own classrooms tomorrow.

LOOK OUT, pupils! After a recent ***satips*** modern languages training day a delegate was asked by his Year 8 pupils "what he was on" when he immediately adopted one particular 'kinaesthetic' teaching strategy in his own classroom, the very next day!

But we are also up-to-date. We were leaders in addressing the 'ESD' agenda – Education for Sustainable Development. We continue to believe that whatever we do, certain global imperatives will, *must*, take precedence.

Competitions, events

We run a number of competitions and events which allow our member schools to 'showcase' particular talents/strengths.

- ***satips*** still promotes good handwriting. We run an international competition each year: see our dedicated website: www.handwritingcompetition.co.uk.
- Our annual, national Art Exhibition is a vibrant, consistently moving, showcase each year for some of the amazing work produced in our ***satips*** schools.
- Our annual Songfest celebrates SINGING! Choirs from all over the country meet to sing together: we've commissioned new works from leading composers in the field for these great days.
- Poetry ... Skiing ... General Knowledge: we run plenty of annual events and competitions.

And the future?

We are so aware that nothing seems to be fixed nowadays: schools change; technology changes; money changes.

We are therefore at something of a crossroads but ***satips*** is

a lively, confident organisation and we look forward to serving, encouraging, supporting, training in the best possible ways the teachers of prep school children entrusted to us for a good number of years to come.

*satips membership is open to schools and individuals in both the maintained and independent sectors of education worldwide. If your school is not a member of satips please contact:
Pat Harrison (administrator) +44 (0)1371 856823*

Welcome to our new chair

Jan Rickman, new chair of satips, explores the beginnings of an exciting new era of change and innovation.

I have been teaching art now for 28 years. How time flies! I started off my teaching career in a big comprehensive in Horley, near Gatwick, but after a year moved back home to get married and got a job in a secondary modern school called Kemp Welch in Poole. This was an 'interesting' school where normal teaching and discipline rules would not work, and whilst it was hard, it taught me so much about children and how to discipline them effectively without resorting to shouting: that would only have earned me derision at Kemp Welch!

Whilst I was there I had my first child and, when I was pregnant with my second, I decided that it was time to move schools. Brett, my son, was already attending the pre-prep part of Durlston Court Preparatory School and one of my friends who was a Year 4 teacher there told me that the Head of Art was retiring and would I be interested in the job. So it was that I started a 15-year career as head of art at Durlston. Initially it was a boarding school, so I was involved in caring for boarders from all round the

world. Much later Durlston took the decision to become a day school, as many others did at that time. The numbers of boarding pupils were dropping, particularly due to the change in the Armed Forces policy; they were no longer financing the majority of children's fees in private education for servicemen serving abroad.

It was at Durlston that I first became aware of **satips** and in fact we hosted the **satips** Art Exhibition for three years. I went on many of their excellent local courses and enjoyed the area meetings hosted by numerous teachers, one of them being Moira Laffey, currently president of **satips**. When the head of art position at Ballard School came up, I felt it was time for a change and I yearned to go back to teaching older pupils again. So I applied, was fortunate to get the job, and I moved schools.

Ballard is a rather unique school in the sense that it starts at 18 months and finishes at 16 years. During my six years at Ballard I have slowly taken on more responsibility. As director of form tutors I am part of the senior management team. However I have been able to continue to enjoy what **satips** offers through the prep part of the school and,

having gained so much from the organisation, I became interested in how it worked. It was during one of the **satips** art exhibitions at Port Regis School that Michèle Kitto introduced me to Andrew Davis, general secretary of **satips**, who, after some discussion, invited me to join the **satips** council. Four years down the line and here I am as chair.

So, how do I see **satips** and what it stands for? As chair, I see my job as being to develop **satips** into a world class community, enhancing prep school education to be the best in the world. I need to build on its reputation and capability, but also need to pay attention to some of the challenges that recessionary times bring. To that end I have conducted a strategy event where council members have assisted me in the creation of a new and exciting vision and strategy for the future. I also realise that **satips** will have to come out to its members and find out what we NEED to do for you. That will be part of my key agenda in the next few months. In the meantime I want to hear from you. Please give us your thoughts and views on what we can do for you. I want an 'open door' policy for our members.

chair@satips.com

Enchoiring minds

Robert Gullifer, Headmaster of New College School, Oxford, looks at the benefits for all pupils of being in a specialist choir school



William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, was one of the most powerful politicians in England in 1379 when he founded New College, Oxford, to complement his foundation at Winchester. Like many politicians before and after him, he had an agenda. He was concerned that the Black Death had not only diminished the population but in turn lowered the quality of applicants for the Church. So his foundations were set up to raise standards in learning and liturgy, including a requirement that both New College and Winchester maintain a choir to sing daily services to high standards. The boy choristers were to be instructed in singing and grammar; and so New College School's dual

purpose was set. Like many such foundations, there grew up by the eighteenth century a tradition of taking pupils who were not part of the original foundation; and so the School became the fully-fledged prep school it is today, but with a distinctive specialism.

One of the questions I am most often asked is how the choral foundation, aside from the work of the choristers themselves, impacts on the daily work of the School. In reflecting on this I have become more and more conscious of how a group of gifted and talented pupils in whatever sphere can engage and inspire the whole school. Choristers at New College School spend 12 hours a week

during term-time practising for services, recordings and tours: they work with international orchestras and soloists and are expected to have a professional discipline in all they do. And so, one of the most evident examples they set is that careful time management means you can fit a lot into the day: homework is completed within set times; breaktimes and activities get off to a prompt start; books/equipment are generally in the right place the first time round. Many other pupils see the benefits of operating in this way: it's not geeky, it's just efficient; the example is pupil-led, rather than teacher-led.

Many educationalists would find it hard to believe the

standards that can be achieved by children of this age within a pretty standard day prep school setting. The key to it, for me, lies in setting their aspirations high and not imposing our own (adult) artificial ceilings. The choristers see professional musicians in action and these are role models from an early age; the younger choristers see that the older choristers can sing with confidence and they in turn adopt the role model of the older boys. There is a healthy mixture of competition to be at the top and the real understanding that the whole enterprise would fail if it were not for the support of the whole team. There is also a sense of being healthily self-critical: it's no shame to raise your hand to acknowledge a mistake in choir; it merely means that time is not wasted for the whole group and each boy learns to take responsibility for his own performance. Again, with a little care, this model can be applied to sport, drama, and academic work.

It might be thought that having a group of gifted and talented musicians would discourage others from approaching these standards. My experience has been quite the reverse. Partly because of the more celebrity aspect of what choristers do (award-winning recordings, foreign travel, for example) and partly because they talk about it with unaffected enjoyment, it's 'cool' to do music here and all want to join in the experience of music-making at whatever level and, crucially, from an early age. It's a question of valuing all contributions. Equally, we can recruit outstanding music teachers because they want to be part of the New College musical experience. The result is that over 90%

"It's 'cool' to do music: all want to join in the experience"



of the school learns a musical instrument and we have two school choirs in addition to the College choir. We've also worked hard at fostering appreciation of each other's talents; it's a mixture of aspiring to high standards, but also recognising that these can be achieved in a variety of ways in the musical world, as in all aspects of school life.

As is the case in most choral foundations, the choristers enjoy a privileged role at the heart of an ancient institution. They attend all sorts of special services and ceremonies which give them wonderful insights into history and culture. But, with the encouragement of the College, all pupils are now given opportunities to attend many of these events or to have privileged access to College facilities to perform a play or give a concert or play a sports match. The sense of occasion



and commensurate raising of standards is palpable. After a recent performance of Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* in New College Chapel, a Year 8 pupil told me firstly that he thought the play would be very difficult, but he was spurred on

because his teachers said it was possible, and secondly that it was the most spectacular setting for a school play he could imagine and he wanted to make sure his acting lived up to it.

Once you've gained acceptance in the school community that the chorister experience is not to be envied nor packaged away, but genuinely integrated, all sorts of unexpectedly rich moments follow. A visitor to the School asked me why a

geography class seemed so knowledgeable about Latvia. I explained that the choir had recently returned from a tour there. "But", said the visitor, "the whole class seemed to have found out something about the place." At once I realised that the teacher had capitalised on the choir's experience and had used it as an effective teaching aid. And, of course, there's never any problem about finding a last minute Christmas present at the Christmas Fair: there are always New College CDs on offer and how good it is to tell your friends and relations that at least four of the boys on the recording are in your class and are demons at playground football.

www.newcollege.oxon.sch.uk



Spreading our wings and flying away!

Loren Fenwick, head of art at Aldro School, shares her experiences of organising trips with groups of prep school boys

The very idea of taking a group of pupils to a different country and being ultimately responsible for them every moment of every day while you are away may strike fear and dread into even the most seasoned of teachers, but really, with a bit of careful planning (and yes – essential paperwork) this does not need to be the case.

One of the highlights of my year is taking a group of boys on an art trip to Europe. I have taken pupils to Prague (twice), Holland, and this summer will be my second trip to Rome. The benefits to the boys are obvious – cultural enrichment, a chance to bond with each other outside the school environment and interact with teachers outside their natural habitat.

The thing that keeps me doing it, year on year, is the personal enjoyment I get from going abroad and seeing a favourite city through their eyes, spending time with them outside the school environment and getting to know them in a completely different context.

It really is not as daunting as you may think! There are many tour companies that specialise in school trips – you have probably had many brochures passed your way. The benefit of using a tour company, especially the first few times, is that it will hold your hand (metaphorically speaking!) through the whole process, from the first idea, through the planning and preparation, including the risk assessments, which are not as frightening as you would expect them to be, just common sense and proof that you have considered all eventualities.

A tour company will also book flights and accommodation and help with the planning of your itinerary. They will often have good suggestions for activities, galleries and museums in the city of your choice and be able to advise you

beforehand about entrance fees and other costs. Many tour companies will also throw in free accommodation so that you can do a recce. Another big advantage is that tour companies offer broad insurance for every aspect of your trip and assistance, should anything go wrong.

Doing a recce, or pre-tour visit, is absolutely essential, even if you are visiting a place you have been to many times before, because everything changes when you have a group of young people in tow. You find yourself noticing how long train/tube doors stay open; you make note of good public toilets; and good places to stop for lunch. You will notice areas that would be good to rest awhile and let pupils sit and sketch safely. You find yourself noticing how easy or otherwise it is to get from point A to point B and you become aware of just how overcrowded some tourist hotspots might be as well as the perils of deserted backstreets, which might not occur to you when you are in adult company.

Your risk assessment will ask specific questions which you will not be able to answer accurately from memory, so take a copy with you or read it beforehand. Things change. On a pre-trip



visit to Prague, we found a good place to have lunch, and when we arrived there with 13 boys a few months later, it had been reduced to a pile of rubble to make way for a new road. If you have been on a pre trip visit, you can be flexible and deal with the unexpected.

One of the drawbacks of using a tour company is that they usually only offer free accommodation for a pre-tour visit after you have booked and paid a deposit, so if the accommodation is not ideal, there may be little you can do about it at that point. Bear this in mind and check with the tour company before parting with any cash.

Another alternative is to make all the bookings yourself, without using a tour company. If you already know where you want to stay on your trip, then this may be the way to go. If you prefer to plan the itinerary yourself and you are using a tour company simply to book accommodation and flights, then it may be much cheaper to do it yourself. In that

case you would need to do the recce as the first step.

If you decide not to use a tour company, then the key thing will be finding suitable and affordable accommodation. Recommendations from other teachers are very valuable so put out the word and see what the grapevine delivers. Your school probably already has comprehensive insurance for taking pupils off-site and your health and safety representative should be able to assist with risk assessments.

It is worth noting however, that if you are stranded abroad due to volcanic activity or similar, and you have not used a tour company, your school will bear the financial burden of getting pupils back home – so ensure that your insurance makes provision for this.

When considering the cost, I draw up a budget for the entire trip, including flights, accommodation, meals and snacks as well as all the costs of activities, and divide it by





Boys from Aldro School on an art trip to Prague

take the joy out of the whole experience. Plan to do a visit to a gallery or attraction in the morning and another in the afternoon, with the rest of the time spent sketching in suitable locations, stopping for refreshments and just taking in the sights.

Pupils will want to buy souvenirs so find some suitable shops on your pre-visit and tell them when the shopping spree will happen so that they do not pester you every time you pass a shop. Be aware of the interests of the pupils in your group. If they are all art scholars for example, then your trip may have more

of a fine art flavour than if you have a mixed bunch.

My last piece of advice is to be flexible. By having a framework of what you want to achieve every day, without planning everything down to the last minute, you will be able to allow for the unexpected, like delays in transport, bad weather or indeed enjoying a particular activity or venue so much that you want to linger a while. Decide on your 'must do' activities every day and have a couple of less essential activities to fall back on if time and energy permit.

Enjoy it. Once all the hard work has been done, relax and share the adventure with your pupils. Be vigilant at all times, of course, but don't let yourself get caught up in trying to orchestrate and control every second. Provided you have done a thorough pre-trip visit and sound planning and preparation, you should be able to get as much out of the tour as your pupils do, making the experience thoroughly unforgettable for all the right reasons.

the number of pupils I am taking. I always include a small contingency fund to cover any unexpected expenses. I prefer to budget generously and often have money left at the end of the trip which I refund to parents. They are always grateful, and most surprised.

Budgeting in this way allows the cost of the adult places to be shared among the pupils. Considering that the adults on the trip will be giving up their time and sharing an enormous responsibility, effectively on duty for the whole duration of the trip, I don't think it's unreasonable for their costs to be shared by the pupils.

I prefer to keep the group small; about 13 to 15 pupils, with two or three teachers, is ideal. This allows me to connect with every child on the trip on a personal level and keep an eye out for any home-sickness or other ailments, as well as being a small enough group to relax in and enjoy their company without feeling like one of those wretched tour guides that carry umbrellas or sunflowers aloft while dragging scores of hapless tourists from one hotspot to another.

Keeping the group small makes it easier to move around the city and visit galleries and other venues. Restaurants are more likely to accommodate a smaller group if you decide to visit one for lunch and, most importantly, there is less likelihood of an individual going missing or being left behind somewhere if the group is smaller. (Perish the thought...)

I would recommend spending three to four nights away. Much of the first and last days might be spent travelling, so any less time means you won't actually spend much time at your destination. Don't try and do too much. Young people get tired and bored easily and dragging reluctant children hither and thither would



The pre-assessment debate

More senior schools are asking for pre-assessment for children as a means of identifying what they see as the 'right' candidates for them. But does the system work?

"Imagine if UCAS didn't exist," says John Baugh, Headmaster of the Dragon School in Oxford. "Universities would each have their own admission procedure. Senior schools would have to send prospective students around the country at different times of the year – perhaps two years before they took their A levels – to take numerous, different, tests. It would be a logistical nightmare – effectively unthinkable. But that's what pre-assessments are like. Pre-assessments are disruptive, stressful – and, for many children, not even necessarily predictive."

Increasingly, prep schools are calling for changes in the system to prevent a situation where pupils have to undertake this kind of constant round of testing. There are a number of reasons why the trend for pre-assessment is believed to have a negative impact on children.

Parents will tend to consider a number of senior schools for their children, and make their final choice of school as late as possible. They want to do all they can to ensure that their child performs to the best of their ability, often bringing in tutors to coach them to perform. As a result of this approach, it is quite possible that a child could be sitting pre-assessment and also possibly scholarship exams for a number of senior schools from Years 5 to 7, all of which are conducting their own assessment tests and interviews. This means children have to cope with pressure over a number of their pre-senior school years, dominating this period in their lives, when they might be enjoying their education and being allowed to be children, without being ruled by the need for performing in exams.

Travelling about the country visiting schools for assessments means they are also missing valuable curriculum time. There are echoes of the problem in the recent revolt against SATS with parents complaining about the schools

who did not allow children to sit SATS when they had put so much work into ensuring their child achieved that precious level 5. The question is how young is it appropriate to bring in the pressure of exams and home tutoring or coaching? Pre-assessments also handicap English children who are late developers and those who have English as a second language, as these tests do not allow them enough preparation time to get their English or academic understanding up to a level of understanding to cope with the assessment process. Some bright children, who would offer a great deal to the senior school community, are being turned away as a result.

What can be done? Some senior schools have their own approach to the issues.

Sarah Munden at St Edward's School in Oxford (13-18 boarding and day senior school), says: "Parents are often no wiser at the end of the tests: if their children are given 'B List' places this is in effect a waiting list place. They then panic and go on another school's list, only to come off if a place becomes available at their first choice school. Children are also at a disadvantage by not knowing which school they are going to; they work harder when they have a goal to aim for.

"At St Edward's we have extremely good relationships with our prep schools – they know exactly what we are looking for and what we expect at CE. Therefore we believe that if a prep school is saying that St Edward's is the right school for a boy or girl, then we would have every expectation that they would reach the required standard at CE. If there are concerns, or if parents are set on us against the advice of the prep school, then we will pre-test those children at the beginning of Year 8. It is also true that children develop at different rates and boys in particular come on enormously in their last two years at a prep school. Pre-assessment may mitigate against the late developer."

Another option is offered by Shiplake College, as a spokesperson explains: "The decision was made two years ago to offer unconditional places at 13+ based on the

outcome of an assessment day. Prospective pupils spend a whole day at the College, sitting short tests in maths and English, participating in a discussion group and taking part in a range of outdoor activities."

They are also interviewed by the Headmaster or deputy head and by a housemaster. This process enables staff to gain a broader picture of a boy's strengths and weaknesses and enables a balanced approach to be taken when making offers of places. The all-round assessment has proved useful since its introduction and has benefits when pupils arrive as they are more at ease at the College and staff have a range of information available on the new pupil.

"We feel that pre-assessment is inappropriate as boys mature significantly between the ages of 11 and 13 and early assessment could lead to an inaccurate picture of a boy's potential. However, our system of offering guaranteed places removes some of the anxiety that can accompany Common Entrance."

John Baugh at the Dragon School believes there needs to be a co-ordinated response across the sector.

"What's long overdue is a common report form and also a common test that can be taken online at the child's own prep school. Clearly senior schools will want to interview at some point, but that's possible. What's the mantra? 'It's all about the child'. Well, here's a case in point. Let's reform the system – for the children's sake."

The nature of education means that assessment in one form or another is always going to be important, but the form, frequency and timing is crucial – particularly in the prep school period in pupil's lives when there is so much potential for inspiration and enjoyment. Assessment at this stage should also be flexible, open-minded, not a hurdle to jump, but always keeping in mind the potential for change and development in young lives.

Catherine Stoker is Managing Director of Gabbittas Education.

The power of design technology

Lis Rowley, head of design technology at Beechwood Park, explains her school's achievements in the Toyota Technology Challenge

The pilot for the Toyota and Rapid Technology Challenge took place in 2005 and was a great success. I first heard about it through a mail shot that had been sent out to all schools and decided that entering this competition might be a great way of engaging pupils during our Wednesday afternoon activities slot.

Toyota's aim for this competition was to follow the same idea for the conception of new models for their company, in other words from "conception through to marketing," using recycling as the basis for building the cars.

The competition involved creating a car that was powered by solar energy that would then be raced to see which car could complete a course in the shortest amount of time. Pupils worked as part of a team and had to complete a 30-page project folder

charting their progress from research, development of ideas to testing and evaluating. The seven best projects in each region were invited to their regional final, where they had to deliver a PowerPoint presentation, explaining how they had chosen their team name and identity and the design, development and manufacture of their car to a panel of judges.

At first the whole thing was fairly low key and only involved those pupils who had decided to take this option as their activity. However, during that first year, our success first of all in winning the regional finals, and then in coming third overall in the national finals, caught the attention of both other pupils and staff; everyone was talking about it and many pupils wanted to be in the next year's team.

Buoyed by our success and seeing that the first prize of an activities holiday abroad was within reach, I set about involving more pupils through an internal school competition for the whole of Year 8. We are now in our fifth year, and have consistently achieved a place in the top three in the national solar-powered car

competition. Last year, however, I entered one team in the solar category and a second team in the PIC.

The PIC is a different type of competition, involving pupils who have the ability to design a complex electronic circuit that can be programmed to avoid obstacles to get to the winning post. Whilst my own experience in this area was limited, we had a Year 7 pupil with these skills and his peers suggested that we should enter this competition too.

It seemed worth giving more pupils the opportunity to compete and we put together a team from the runners-up in our competition and included our electronic wizard. It was obviously the right decision as they went on to win the national final and we all enjoyed a holiday in Austria last year.

The most recent national competition took place on Saturday 15th May at Toyota's manufacturing plant in Derbyshire and we achieved our best result yet; in the solar-powered car category we gained second place, only just missing first position, and in the PIC we came first for the second year running. This time the prize is an activity holiday in Greece.

I cannot emphasise enough the benefits the Toyota Technology Challenge has had for my pupils. Evidently they have learnt much about technology from experimenting with pulleys or gear-ratios to achieve the fastest speeds, to looking at the effects of friction on the wheels of their car – and the list could go on.

However, they have learnt so much more, well beyond the realms of technology. They have had to work as a real team, discussing and negotiating the best design ideas, supporting each other and taking





responsibility for their own role within the team. They have developed their public speaking skills as they have had to rehearse and deliver their oral presentation to external judges, their parents, staff and pupils at our school –a daunting enough task for us teachers, let alone a pupil in Year 8!

They have had to apply their ICT skills in the preparation of both their project and PowerPoint presentation. They have learnt about materials that you can recycle or are recyclable, as well as renewable energies. They have discovered new marketing skills as they have sought sponsors for their project and considered how they will present their themed stand at the regional and national finals and they have had fun designing their team name and the theme which will run throughout their presentation.

Possibly the most important thing they have learnt for the future is working as part of a team and to an

immovable deadline. Their experience will stand them in good stead for all kinds of presentation situations at their next school and their experience at team working will make them valuable team members in the future. They have realised that they each bring a skill to the party and that the combined sum of their skills is more valuable than if they work alone.

In addition, I have personally found it really rewarding to see how pupils have grown in confidence throughout the competition, as they realised that they can be successful in areas that they never thought possible. It is great to see how much they enjoy using their own initiative to build a car from recyclable materials and then being able to race it.

As I know only too well, design technology in a prep school is traditionally a subject that receives little attention, since it does not form part of

the entrance examinations. It is often perceived as a non-academic subject that offers a little light relief from the pressures of exams.

Unfortunately, this view is often shared by parents who remain very focused on the 'more academic subjects'. The Toyota



Technology Challenge has brought about a shift in opinion and a gratifying elevation of the status of my subject within the school.

A few years ago I realised that if there were two adults available during lessons, the pupils would be able to achieve more in lessons and after gaining approval of our Headmaster, I put together a small team of parent helpers who supported the same lesson each week. These parents have continued to help over a number of years and the team of helpers has grown as people have realised what a brilliant subject this is and all that it has to offer.

They have been able to observe the progress of pupils and have then been ambassadors in raising the profile of the subject. Their help has been invaluable with the Year 8 pupils as we worked on the school solar power competition and with the teams that got through to the regional and national finals. The successes of the various teams have kept DT in the school news, as staff and parents have charted our progress each year. Consequently at Beechwood Park, the design technology department is very well supported by our senior leadership.

Next year we will be continuing our pursuit of the elusive first place in the solar-powered category of the Toyota Technology Challenge. Why don't you join us and raise the profile of your design and technology department?



The fourth 'R'

Anne Diack makes the case for using the built environment as a teaching resource

Engaging Places is a free resource for teachers, created by CABI with English Heritage to promote the use of our built, or made, environment – architecture in its very widest sense. The aim is to present buildings, streets, parks, squares, grand historic locations, local neighbourhoods and even school buildings themselves as a source that can be comprehensively exploited for the richest teaching and learning experiences. We believe that architecture – or the 'fourth R' – richly deserves its place in the curriculum.

Breaking out

The idea behind *Engaging Places* is about breaking out. Sometimes this is literal with the website – engagingplaces.org.uk – describing the fascinating and rewarding places all over England that can be visited for thoroughly worthwhile learning opportunities.

But it also means breaking out mentally from the usual ways of teaching and learning. The website provides hundreds of different teaching resources. There are face-to-face resources such as guided tours or storytelling sessions; paper-based and downloadable resources; or digital and online resources such as games and images for interactive whiteboards. Schools, learning providers and other experts are adding to this bank on a daily basis.

A network of support

Engaging Places also provides practical support through a network involving the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA), teachers and learning providers. This produces cross-curricular projects, making the connections between different subjects. The network helps teachers to decide what they want their students to achieve and how they will measure the impact. The projects followed a process that used a creative but rigorous approach to curriculum change.

Enthusiastic response

The scheme has met with an enthusiastic response. We think that is because it celebrates a characteristic shared by teachers and pupils – creativity.

Engaging Places is for all teachers of all subjects and all ages. Looking for a new angle on science, technology, engineering and mathematics? Use the world's only



tilting bridge as a starting point. Wanting a lesson starter for maths? Look at geometry with Harry Potter and Gloucester Cathedral. Biological science? Mini-ecosystems of plant-covered buildings. *Engaging Places* provides a fresh way to deliver the primary and secondary curriculum. And, of course, it offers a myriad of ways into art and design.

What young people think

CABI surveyed almost 2000 young people between the ages of 11 and 14 to see whether they thought this kind of learning has an impact. Four out of five told us that knowing more about the buildings and places around them makes them and their peers behave better. Nine out of ten said that they remembered more from a school trip than from a classroom lesson. This is a powerful statistic and demonstrates the power of this kind of teaching.

Barmby's pupils lead the way

Barmby-on-the-Marsh is a tiny, rural village in the East Riding of Yorkshire with picturesque cottages, an ancient church and a river running through. At the heart of the community stands an old Victorian schoolhouse with a small playground and a field shaded by an enormous horse chestnut tree.

The teachers wanted to do a project that increased students' involvement with the local community, nurtured a sense of social responsibility, encouraged creative teamwork and helped to develop the stamina to see a long-term project through to completion.

The school is a real centre for the village and as a result, when the school decided to improve its grounds the project turned into a community affair.

Inside out

The school's vision was to create a seamless transition from indoor to outdoor learning and to provide a new space for the village to use. "We feel we have a duty to continue the tradition of the school being at the centre of the community," explains teacher Bev Sharphouse. "From the outset the project has been a team effort, led by a steering group of local people and supported by a mentor from the East Riding of Yorkshire's School Improvement Service."

A space running along the side of the school field was under-used and, as one student said: "We decided a garden would look spectacular." With the help of the village's legion of gardeners, the students planned, designed, dug and planted.

Having cleared the land of trees and shrubs, willing volunteers added winding paths, seats and arbours. The students visited a local nursery and talked to staff to help them choose plants that would thrive in the conditions. Come rain or shine, parents could be seen hard at work to bring the garden to life.

Students from across the school worked with the local community to design and develop a new school garden and an outdoor sculpture and also to design a summerhouse for use by the school and community.

A model approach

The finishing touch was to create a sculpture for a space at the centre of the garden. Once again, the students led the design process. They began by investigating the work of artists who make sculptures, such as Anthony Gormley

and Andy Goldsworthy. Inspired by this research, they drew initial design ideas and translated these into small models, experimenting with how to create sweeping lines from corrugated card.

Having voted for their favourite design, the students helped to make a full-scale polystyrene model that was used by a local artist as the basis for making the final structure out of wood. Excitement mounted across the school as builders came in to dig foundations and the sculpture was concreted in place. The students helped the artist sand, polish and varnish the final piece, taking great pride in their work.

The impact

The students have forged new links with the local community and are much more aware of the outside environment. They have also developed skills in teamwork and design.

Today the structure – five sections arched high like the bones of a whale – is regularly used as a space for play and drama. The students feel real ownership of their sculpture and enjoy using something they have created.

Think big

Fired up by this success, the school decided to take the students' outdoor design work a step further. The brief





was wide ranging – to design a building that could serve as an outside classroom, a playroom, a tearoom on school garden party day and even a pavilion for the village cricket team.

Under the watchful eye of the headteacher, the students embarked on in-depth research through books, magazines, catalogues and the internet.

Having decided that what the garden needed was a summerhouse, they carried out detailed sketchbook work. They learnt to draw different views of buildings in perspective and produced a range of development drawings and collages of their designs. Building on their earlier modelling experience, they went on to produce 3D architectural models using card, papier maché and paint.

Maintaining momentum

Seeing this real-life project through from initial ideas to completion has been an empowering experience for the students. As one commented: "I am getting better at designing real things. I used to think it was something only grown-ups could do but now I know children can do it too." All have taken great pride in creating places that will make a difference to the school and community for years to come.

The school is now planning to create a new outdoor learning area alongside the school building. As Bev Sharphouse says: "We don't want to lose the momentum. We've discovered the value of maximising every possible space for learning."

Looking at the world differently

Engaging Places can underpin a whole range of teaching activities and Ofsted has reported that pupils' achievement can benefit significantly from getting involved with activities outside the classroom. The scheme can also complement any school building programme, with a wealth of ways to tap into the potentially rich learning experience created by the process of refurbishment or rebuilding.

The fourth 'R'

Architecture is a powerful addition to the curriculum for pupils of all ages. It offers memorable routes into teaching in all curriculum subjects, whether these are being taught on their own or in an integrated way.

The fourth 'R' also helps to ensure that young people engage effectively with the world around them. Children identify deeply with where they go to school and live but they are not always able adequately to communicate their sense of place to others. Learning through the built environment can encourage children to be articulate – to be visually literate – about the world we've built around them. The venues listed on *Engaging Places* can be the subject of a school visit, but they can also be used in the classroom to help develop critical skills.

The more young people know about and understand the built environment, the more easily they can help to shape it for the better, both now and in the future. So why not visit the website to see what other schools have done and to get ideas for how you can exploit buildings and places in your lessons?

Anne Diack is the head of education at the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and director of the *Engaging Places* project.
www.engagingplaces.org.uk



'Forest School' - It's the process not the product!

Natalie Stone explains why this type of outdoor learning has become a major feature of the foundation stage timetable

Forest School was brought across to Britain from Scandinavia in the mid 1990s. As the name suggests the children in these countries spend time outdoors in forested areas where they learn quite different skills from our own children. In the foundation stage at Norwich High School, the children are taken 'off timetable' for one afternoon a week to develop these different skills in their own Forest School. As head of nursery I attended Forest School Level 1 training and have also been accredited with the outdoor learning qualification. I have encouraged staff and parents to see the benefits to the children of working in the outdoor environment.

However, never in my wildest dreams did I realise the extent of re-training and the new knowledge I would gain from being trained as a Forest School leader (level 3). My timetable started with neuroscience, brain development from birth, and the latest scientific data from medical and psychology journals. I thought I must be on the wrong course!

As teachers we have all heard of Vygotsky, Bruner, Piaget *etc* and know that their theories are sound under certain conditions, but for me, here was the science behind those theories explaining why for some children some theories work better than others. With the relatively recent marvel of MRI scans, brain growth and development studies have been collated to show exactly how the brain grows and consequently the direct effects that society, peer pressure, stable family support, culture, tradition, economics,

health and general wellbeing will have on the young child's brain development.

We are lucky to have areas of woodland, mature trees and wildlife within the school grounds which provide the 'green room' effect for our young children. It was these lovely facilities which sparked the need to be out in these spaces as often as possible. It instantly removes them from the artificial stresses and pressures that are the consequences of modern living.

After lunch playtime, the girls are eager to change into their Forest School clothes: tracksuits, wellies, bib 'n' braces and any other clothing that fits another Forest School motto – 'There's no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing!' After a walk round to the other side of the school site past the Senior Department - which always invites conversation from staff and older girls - we arrive at our secluded Forest School.

Tree trunks and logs recycled from other areas in the school grounds provide areas for sitting, talking, balancing, learning and play. A tool working and making area is set slightly away. Our sessions usually start with an investigation or challenge on the way to the school: a feature of nature; changing seasons; the need to take equipment with us or following a map to take us there via a different route. Once at the site we recap knowledge of our boundaries, expectations of behaviour and practise games that have safety aspects.



Forest School is a long-term learning programme, and it often takes children several sessions to understand how learning can be developed in this environment. We know that children feel secure with regular routine and structure and therefore to begin with the freedom of movement and lack of timetable can be initially unsettling to some of the group. Observations and support from adults soon allay those fears.

The learning process is broken down into three main stages. First come familiarity with the site, safety and routines. Much of this period is adult-led and consists of directed activities. Secondly a selective introduction of skills, knowledge, ideas, resources and activities are offered to the children. Repetition and scaffolding of these skills develop the children's abilities and confidence, enabling the adult to take a step back. Thirdly, once equipped with skills either of a practical nature such as using a size and age-appropriate tool for a task, or with knowledge, children are ready to embark on their own projects.

The learning ensures that a child will ask for help if required. However their



confidence and knowledge mean that children will investigate, experiment, collaborate, fail and try again several times before asking for help, such is their faith in this new environment of learning. The practitioner knows that learning in the Forest School has been successful when the children take their learning skills back into the classroom and then into their own homes.

There is considerable scope for development in the programme. Depending on the interests of the children, their age and time of year, we may introduce a new game, provide different resources or directly teach a new skill or fact. Setting up a 'hook' can result in many hours of subsequent enjoyment, *ie* catching a spider (volunteer adult) in a giant spider's web, (previously woven between the trees in secret). Knowing when to do this at an

appropriate time is a skill learnt by the practitioner during training.

As children progress through the programme and develop ownership of their own learning so they start to become skilled communicators. The children are always encouraged to free play within a Forest School session, however such is the concentration and perseverance of activities and use of the natural resources that learning and freely trading skills is always obvious. This is a very different type of play to that seen in classrooms or playgrounds, there is naturally more respect towards each other, the atmosphere is calm, the noise level is low and smiles abound. Sessions end with Circle Time for reflection and sharing, and a name game to signify the end.

The safety and wellbeing of the children is always of the utmost importance. We have appropriate clothing, we don't go out into the school when winds are high, or there is a thunder storm. However it *is* fun to experience torrential downpours of rain, to run and jump in puddles and to realize that it is not a disaster if we fall in, to hang on to the playground fence when it is windy, to roll in the snow and completely cover ourselves in fallen leaves. These are often the first stages of discovering safe risk, unfortunately not always allowed at home, but safely supported and enjoyed



here. Acceptable and manageable risk is introduced when appropriate to different children at different times. According to the Health and Safety Executive, 'Children who are introduced to acceptable levels of risk at a young age are less likely to make bad judgements in the future'. Forest School has a high adult-to-child ratio, to ensure risk is minimized.

As Forest School leaders we are trained to have knowledge and understanding about a wide range of non-school-



"This is a very different type of play to that seen in classrooms"

curriculum activities, such as sensory activities, bush-craft skills, woodland crafts, team building, conservation, physical play, field studies. These are only the tip of the Forest School iceberg.

A degree of scepticism still prevails in some quarters. "Forest School? That's where they let five- year-olds loose in the woods to play with knives and build fires." I would counter this with, "Yes, that's correct – but it has taken them two years to learn how." They have had specialised tuition in knife use and

safety, and will know how to set a safe fire and responsibly remove all trace of its existence. That is more than can be said for most teenagers and adults.

It is the long process of learning: developing respect, self-esteem, responsibility; assessing and taking safe risks; being set up to succeed and introduced to new skills when needed to 'scaffold' the ascent to the next level. These are the life-long skills missing from the curriculum. The product, *ie* the knife or the fire, could equally be a KS2

project about Henry VIII, reading a bus timetable, or calculating an integration equation. The success of the product will have depended on and will have been influenced by all those factors that have affected brain development, not just the current teacher. The benefit of Forest School leaders is that they are skilled in identifying these factors and in ways to present the learning process to children with optimum efficiency to assist the greatest success with any product.

Bringing outdoor learning to life

Headmaster Mike Crossley explains how pupils at Taverham Hall test outside-learning theories and reap the rewards



Since my arrival as Headmaster in September 2008, there has been an increased focus on outdoor learning at Taverham Hall. A number of its teachers have undertaken full specialist training in Forest School teaching with a number having



achieved level three – the OCN Forest School Leader Award status. This means that the school is delivering to the highest standard of Forest School practitioners.

The benefits of outdoor learning have been both outlined and supported by the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (CLOtC) as well as by Ofsted in its October 2008 'Learning outside the Classroom – How far should you go?' report. This report evaluates and provides evidence to support the importance of learning outside the classroom. It demonstrates that high quality learning outside the classroom is a significant factor in raising standards and improving personal development: "When planned and implemented well, learning outside the classroom contributed significantly to raising

standards and improving pupils' personal, social and emotional development."

Taverham Hall's Forest School ethos fits in perfectly well with this and has provided its teachers with a valuable teaching tool. National Curriculum subjects are reinforced and supported by practical, hands-on learning. Science, geography, art and drama are just some of the subjects continued outside the classroom. Carefully planned and supervised activities allow children to take risks and make choices appropriate to their age and ability. Learning follows 'enquiry through exploration' principles and provides each pupil with increased stimulation as well as encouraging a greater learning potential.



All children, from Early Years Foundation stage to Key Stages Two and Three, let their imaginations run wild, all year round, within the school's 100 acres of beautiful ancient woodland. It provides the perfect environment in which to bring learning to life as well as encouraging



Recognising that other establishments simply do not have access to these types of outdoor learning opportunities for their children has led Taverham Hall to develop strong links with many educational establishments. There is a subsequent sharing of knowledge and expertise from the school's highly qualified staff with many other teachers and children who now regularly visit the school and its grounds. Their feedback often comments on how the outdoor Forest School learning environment has an amazing and positive impact on their children's sense of well-being and use of their senses as well as providing freedom and space to explore.



healthy lifestyles. Structured tasks and achievable goals increase self-confidence and encourage teamwork whilst raising educational attainment. In addition, tending their own gardens and caring for school pets also helps pupils to understand responsibility.

Forest School activities include: building dens and creating shelters; weaving hurdles; pond dipping, and investigating flora and fauna; managing the woodland; understanding the seasons – collecting seeds, berries and leaves; science in the outdoors; geography – understanding the world environment; art and drama – making natural structures and using natural resources as inspiration; English – using the natural environment within creative writing; music – developing singing skills and techniques through outdoor music exercises; mathematics – counting and measuring; using the trees, plants and wildlife to give inspiration for creativity; growing, cooking and eating your own produce.



Outdoor education: a way forward to learn outside and beyond the classroom

Patrick Papougnot explains why learning outside the classroom in a prep school is a serious business!

In busy prep schools where timetabled subjects and formal public events are so important for achieving success, it would be legitimate to sideline outdoor education (one of the activities in the Learning outside the classroom spectrum) as a peripheral activity. Alas, it is not enough any more to insert a well illustrated article in the school magazine about the end of year school trip in a wild remote location. Alongside activities such as day and residential visits, field studies, investigations conducted outside the school, sporting events, music and drama productions, Outdoor Education (OED) has become a co-curricular subject that deserves professional management, well-suited delivery, and, it is true, a sense of fun and personal achievement for the committed front line staff who give so much of their time to secure safe, good, valuable and efficient OED programmes in the evenings, weekends and holidays.

The government has been actively promoting learning outside the classroom since 2006 through its manifesto¹, and OFSTED has reported its evaluation of the importance of such learning in primary and secondary schools and colleges² in 2008.

Key findings

Here is a summary of the key findings in no order of importance: when planned and implemented well, learning outside the classroom contributes significantly to raising standards and improving pupils' personal, social and emotional

development. Learning outside the classroom is also most successful when it is an integral element of long-term curriculum planning and closely linked to classroom activities. Too many residential and other visits are imprecisely defined and not integrated sufficiently with activities in the classroom. This is particularly the case in primary schools. Schools rely heavily on contributions from parents to meet the costs of residential and other visits and give very little thought to alternative ways of financing them. The vast majority of the schools inspected were not able to assess the effectiveness, inclusiveness or value for money of such activities.

Prep schools do exceptionally well on these fronts in comparison with state schools and this is most probably due to the dual nature of independent

schools: they have charitable status with a professional purpose, and at the same time, are true multi-million pound businesses with an acute regard to costs and revenues of each and every activity undertaken under their aegis.

The three barriers

Although successful in terms of 'holistic education' promoting the physical, mental, intellectual, social and spiritual development of pupils in their care, prep schools have to work increasingly hard to overcome three main barriers to deliver outdoor education efficiently: Health & Safety, pupils' behaviour and teachers' workload. These are the tip of a huge iceberg floating ahead of the ship on its way to Speech Day. Unlike Edward Smith, the Captain of the Titanic, the Head of a prep school – mainly for legal reasons and because of an ever-increasing number of



regulations – has to justify 'live' and online the speed and direction of his ship. S/he must ensure that the school curriculum planning includes well-structured opportunities for all pupils to engage in OED as a key, integrated element of their experience at school. The Head and its senior management team must also evaluate the quality of OED to ensure that it has maximum impact on pupils' achievement, personal development and wellbeing. Finally, the SMT has to ensure equal and full access for all pupils to OED by monitoring the participation in outdoor activities by different groups of pupils and removing barriers, including financial.

Northbourne Park School: a way forward

In our school the Outdoor Education programme, called the Leadership Programme until now and soon to be re-baptised The Lord Northbourne Award Scheme, is more than 15 years old. It is timetabled on Saturday morning every other weekend and is divided into three groups: The Juniors (Year 3/4), who are made aware of the basics in outdoor activities, the Intermediates (Year 5/6), who are committed to team work and learning social skills, and the seniors (Year 7/8 and French classes) who are empowered to take the initiative and become independent outdoor learners. All these groups have to take part in various camps, nature walks, and challenges including an end-of-year school trip which should epitomise the learning process acquired during the academic year, including an increasing autonomy the further pupils reach in top year groups.

Bronze, silver and gold achievements are awarded by the Head at the end of each term to the best pupils in each of the three levels. This scheme is a local implementation of the ACE programme (Awareness, Commitment and Empowerment) promoted by *satips* to all its member schools.

As the head of the outdoor department since its foundation, I have enjoyed hugely the challenges emerging from

running such a diverse, multi-tasking department. Our philosophy is based upon giving the children a chance to live their childhood to the full, with respect to themselves, the others and their environment. Our strategy is to develop children's autonomy in terms of environment management (including camping in the woods), survival techniques (in our leadership village) and connection with nature (thanks to our fabulous Kent countryside). Our objectives are multi-fold and we have identified ten competencies that the pupils who have followed our OED programme demonstrate and transfer not only to other subjects but also to the senior schools that they join after our leavers' expedition:

- ✓ Self-esteem, confidence and motivation;
- ✓ Co-operation, trust and empathy;
- ✓ Communication skills, including negotiation and decision making;
- ✓ An ability for critical and lateral thinking and problem solving;
- ✓ Self-reliance and the ability to take responsibility;
- ✓ Thinking to the future;
- ✓ Feelings of belonging to the natural world;
- ✓ Creativity, imagination and personal response to the environment;
- ✓ Knowledge of networking processes and web systems both in the natural world and in society;
- ✓ An ability to reflect and evaluate.

The benefits of outdoor education

The benefits of OED are immense in a well-managed prep school and can include also a proper and in-depth understanding of sustainability and green issues. In my view, outdoor education is particularly relevant to independent learning about nature, the micro-societies we belong to, and oneself³. I am extremely blessed in my department to have very supportive, creative and committed colleagues. During the week after Common Entrance in June, the whole school takes part in our outdoor activity week

and every class focuses solely on a programme of challenges, games, and events outside the classroom, here in the UK, and also in France or Spain. We are proud to have trained the youngest group of children (aged 12-13) who have crossed the Pyrenees both ways (France to Spain and return) walking for four days at high altitude under the leadership of two great mountain guides. And not even a blister! This weekend, our Intermediates (Year 5/6) take part in the overnight camp in the woods and I have told them about taking pictures to illustrate this article. Have a look!

Despite the ever increasing administrative burden imposed by EU regulations and inspection requirements, I feel confident in the future of outdoor education in independent schools. We need a more structured and coordinated approach at national level to respond positively and efficiently to the challenge of organising school trips in the great outdoors⁴. This should be set up with the ultimate aim of securing the happiness and welfare of children who need not only to be connected to the natural environment and their peers⁵ but also to learn how to become the good and strong leaders regaining control of the versatile modern society growing in uncertainty and immediacy that we live in at the moment in the western world.

Patrick Papougnot is deputy head at Northbourne Park School, Kent, and a *satips* council member

1 Learning outside the classroom manifesto (DFES-04232-2006), DFES, 2006.

2 Learning outside the classroom How far should you go? OFSTED, ref 070219, Oct 2008.

3 Children in the Outdoors A literature review, Dr Sara-Anne Munoz, Sustainable Development Research Centre, SDRC 2009

4 Engaging and Learning with the Outdoors – The Final Report of the Outdoor Classroom in a Rural Context Action Research Project, NFER, April 2005

5 Getting The Best Out Of Me and Others, Copyright The Life Skills Company 2010, www.thelifeskillscompany.co.uk.

'Awareness, Commitment, Empowerment'

Robin Davies, Headmaster at Barfield School and *satips* council member, shares his school experiences of the ACE programme

Over the last two years, the children and staff at Barfield School have been enjoying a new outdoor learning programme called the 'ACE programme'. Established by *satips*, a handful of schools have taken and adapted the themes of 'Awareness' for Years 3 and 4, 'Commitment' for Years 5 and 6, and 'Empowerment' for Years 7 and 8, all with an outdoor backdrop.

At Barfield, outdoor adventure is particularly strong, with our own '3Peaks' outdoor pursuits company on-site, providing adventure activities such as high ropes courses, quad bikes, archery and a range of initiative and team-building challenges. It made sense to embrace fully the outdoor

learning opportunities that the *satips* A.C.E. initiative offered to complement our adventure programmes.

March 2009

The children in Years 3 to 8 went 'off-timetable' for two days for our inaugural ACE Days, just as signs of spring were starting to show.

Awareness: Years 3 and 4 did many activities that would literally get them hands-on with their local surroundings; they are only too used to and happy to be running around our fields and woods, but we really wanted them to look very closely at what was around them. In the two

days, they did mini-beast hunts, bark rubbing and bud drawings, birds treasure hunts and surveys, as well as a 'journey stick walk' and an exploration of Barfield colours, for example using natural dyes to colour cloth.

Commitment: The activities for Years 5 and 6 were based around waste issues and resources that we use. They had a grand tour of everything that comes into the school (food, water, stationery, fuel, electricity *etc*), as well as what goes out - the questionable highlight, apparently, being a look down the drain covers. The children did a 'rubbish sort', wrote their own 'waste charter', planted potatoes and made a huge dragon sculpture in the school garden.

Empowerment: Years 7 and 8

took to the woods with the warden of our neighbouring nature reserve to get to grips with the conservation management. Scary as it may have seemed, they took to the cutting down of invasive laurel bushes with much vigour, and yet took on board the learning objective, of understanding the complexities and paradoxes of conservation management (cutting down trees to 'save the environment'?). Their hard work was rewarded with hot dogs and marshmallows around an open fire, before returning to the school to use the cuttings to make a fence around the garden area and a chimes sculpture.

The whole prep school also took part in an orienteering challenge, with clues in French, Spanish and Latin, depending on their age.

The most thrilling thing I heard was when I'd asked one of the Year 4 boys what he'd been up to and he said, "We've been messing around outside for the last couple of days." When I asked if he had been doing any work at all, he said, "Not really, it was all just great fun!" This is not entirely true, as all the pupils were specifically scheduled class and prep time to write up reports, stories, graphs and maps - and they threw themselves at it with such enthusiasm. I can honestly say these are amongst the best two days of cross-curricular outdoor learning I have had the pleasure of being involved in.

With these two very successful general ACE days under our belt, we developed the three Awareness, Commitment and Empowerment





"Messing around outside..."

themes in line with central sustainability issues; energy, shelter, food and water and global perspective, so that each group explores each issue every two years.

September 2009

We sank our teeth into energy issues wholeheartedly with Years 3 and 4 becoming 'aware' of essential requirements of warmth and insulation through making shelters out in the woods. Once they had constructed their palatial lean-tos, they were told they were actually going to stay out for three nights –

they quickly re-evaluated their shelters in terms of comfort, with weather-proof and insulation priorities suddenly being elevated, as well as considering their fire requirements. The threat of an extended stay in the woods was, I confess, a lie, and they came back to the school to create a 30-foot sculpture of the process of electrical generation – including toy tipper truck loaded with coal to fuel the power station.

Years 5 and 6 surveyed light switches and plug sockets around the school and drew up their own charter of commitment to reducing energy

waste. They also dug up potatoes and other crops to take to the kitchen for their own energy intake later on. Many of the children also foraged for acorns and other tree seeds and potted them, creating our own tree nursery, with the intention to plant the eventual saplings out in the school grounds and local woods in due course, for future wood resources.

Years 7 and 8 took their ambitions as far as they could, by looking at the various energy resources available, and attempting to build their own power station. They considered their options and voted for their very own hydro-electric power station, taking advantage of a small hill in the grounds. The excavations and lining of the dam were on a grand scale, and as they dug and set in place the tube down through which the water would flow, concepts of gravitational potential energy turning into kinetic and electrical energy were covered. Sadly, through technical faults (the lining leaked, and the dynamo broke), the ambitions, to become self-reliant energy-wise, were not met, but it was great fun trying.

July 2010

As I write, plans are underway for the A.C.E. Day at the end of this term, looking at 'shelter' issues. The day will start with a grand treasure hunt / orienteering activity, that will introduce the younger children to types of shelter around the world, the middle year children to the range of materials buildings can be made from, and the older children to building issues such as planning – we are looking to build a



new sports hall, and want our children to have some say in it. Other activities will include making various shelters; extending what the Years 3 and 4 did last A.C.E Day, learning knots and lashings, our own 'Cardboard City', with due reflection on issues of homelessness, and an activity called 'Shanty Town' where Years 7 and 8 are challenged to design and construct the biggest possible structures (using mathematical formulae to measure floor areas and volumes) – using just newspaper and Sellotape.

The most exciting aspect of the programme is that there is simply so much potential, but this comes with its problems too – at each planning meeting, one enthusiastic teacher or another would say '... and then we could...' and it would be followed by a string of brilliant, exciting ideas, many of which are simply too ambitious to be achieved in a week, let alone a day. It is important that these days are not just a jolly good run around in the woods – well yes they are, but they are also designed with clear learning objectives in mind, and the



programme itself sits in amongst a wider set of events and activities in the school calendar, such as historical theme days each year and an extensive programme of school trips.

Recently, we were visited by the ISI inspectors, who fully acknowledged the strengths of the A.C.E. programme for the educational and pastoral

development of our children: 'A wide ranging curriculum, both inside and outside the classroom, enables pupils to develop good attitudes to learning, which they embrace with enthusiasm.' What more could you want?

To get involved in the *satips* ACE programme contact Patrick Papougnot by email papougnot@aol.com



The satips National Prep School Art Exhibition



From left: Dr and Mrs Julian Lewis MP, Mr and Mrs Henry Phillips

Hordle Walhampton took the reins this year to host this prestigious art event. Kevin Nicholls, head of art, took the whole exhibition in his stride turning the art exhibition area outside his department and the school hall into a wonderful showground of talent. Dylan Lloyd, head of art at Canford, opened the exhibition and spoke about his interest in collaborative work and they way in which it gave success to all. There were many collaborative pieces in this year's exhibition.

The exhibition was visited by Dr Julian Lewis, the local newly re-elected MP on his first outing since being re-elected, as a guest of the school. He was very impressed by the exhibition

and commented: "As someone who was a conspicuous failure in art at school myself, I am enormously impressed with the amazing range of talent and proficiency shown by the young people whose work is on display. They are all to be congratulated on a splendid effort."

We are grateful to all the staff of the school and families of staff who worked very hard to get the exhibition up and (importantly) down again at the end of the week-long exhibition.

The photographs of the work speak for themselves, but nothing beats actually visiting the exhibition next year. If you are a head of art seeking out inspiration for project ideas or a Head

or member of SMT wanting to gain an understanding of the level of attainment of pupils in your school, this is a date in your diary you cannot afford to miss. It is free to take part and also to attend the private view.

www.satips.org

Next year's dates

Register online by January 2011

Delivery of work by 7th April 2011

Private view for Heads and heads of art: Saturday May 14th 2011 11am for coffee – grand opening at 12noon with lunch

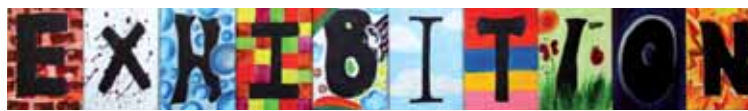
Private view for parents/staff/pupils of exhibiting children: Sunday May 15th 3-5pm with tea

Thoughts from the inside by Kevin Nicholls

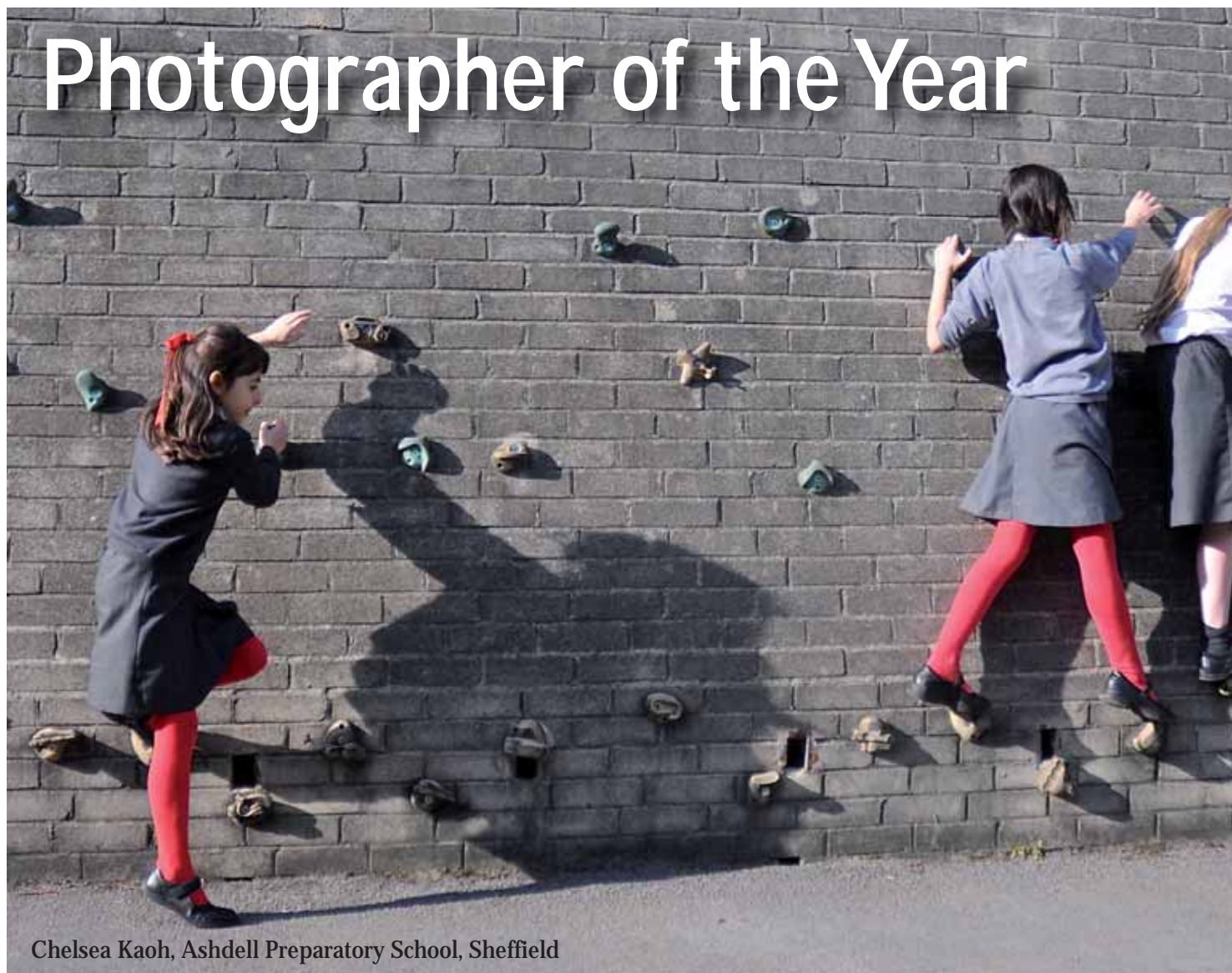
Over the last few years I have attended this exhibition and have marvelled at the organisation of the various Art departments and schools; now it was our turn. Preparations started in November, inviting member schools to send up to eight pieces of artwork of any size, style and medium. Whilst schools replied, plans were made to display the work, entertain various openings, feed and water different groups and show off the children's work as attractively as possible. The gallery area and PAC had a makeover creating a fantastic display environment for nearly 400 pieces of work. As the artwork began to arrive in the New Year, it was catalogued and

stored away to be opened at a later date. Two days before our grand opening we opened up the variously shaped parcels and packages to discover a huge range of fantastic artwork and began to panic about whether we had enough space to display it all. A very hectic 48 hours later it was all up; the dining room looked wonderful for lunch, the show's lighting was running and guests began to arrive. Forty six schools were represented from all over the country, from New Milton to Sheffield as well as a selection of work from a school in Ghana. The week that followed was full of various shows and school parties visiting the exhibition. It was a

great success and the art department deservedly received a good deal of praise but it was a real whole school effort. The maintenance crew who decorated the gallery and display areas, the Gap students who catalogued the artwork as it arrived, the office for receiving and returning the many parcels, colleagues from both Pre-Prep & Prep who stayed late on the night before the opening, manhandling display boards, sculptures and staging; those who laid up the dining room and made it look so fantastic; the kitchens for the wonderful lunch and numerous trolleys of tea, coffee and biscuits. It was very much a team effort and we look forward to hosting it again next year.



Photographer of the Year



Chelsea Kaoh, Ashdell Preparatory School, Sheffield

Winner 2010

We had another fantastic response to this year's competition, attracting over 100 entries from dozens of schools around the UK. With so many entries of such a high quality, selecting a winner was no simple matter. After a long deliberation, we settled on the entry of Chelsea Kaoh, who photographed some of her friends having fun on a climbing wall at Ashdell Prep, Sheffield. The second prize goes to Tom Nunan of King's House in Richmond, Surrey, while Izzy Fletcher from Kensington Prep School took third place. All three winners will receive digital cameras, by courtesy of John Catt Educational.



2nd

Tom Nunan, King's House School



3rd

Izzy Fletcher, Kensington Prep School



Photographer of the Year 2011

Now is your chance to prepare your entries for the 2011 competition. Entries must be received by May 31st, 2011 and the winning photographs will be published in the September 2011 issue of Prep School magazine. Digital cameras will be presented to the first three prize-winners.

The task: Take a photograph in colour, or black and white, illustrating life in a prep school. It could be on the sports field, in the classroom, at societies or

clubs, showing pupils at work or play. It must be sharp, it must be well-composed and, above all, it must show the fun of life in a modern prep school.

The rules: Only pupils at prep schools may enter; no more than two photographs per entrant; files should be a minimum size of 15cms x 20cms and 300dpi/ppi. Photographs are only accepted in an electronic format either by posting a CDROM to Michèle Kitto, c/o John Catt Educational, 12 Deben

Mill, Business Centre, Melton, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP12 1BL or by email to: editor@prepschoolmag.co.uk. Label the entries clearly with your name and school address. And please enclose an entry form from the magazine (printed below) to certify the work is yours. Please photocopy the entry form and attach to each entry. If you would like your photographs to be returned, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope of a suitable size.

ENTRY FORM

Prep School Photographer of the Year Competition 2011

Name of Entrant(s) _____

Name of School _____

Name of Confirming Teacher _____

As far as I am aware this photograph is the sole work of the above pupil.

Please photocopy this form and attach it to the back of each entry.

Send entries to Prep School Photographer of the Year 2011, John Catt Educational Ltd, 12 Deben Mill Business Centre, Old Maltings Approach, Melton, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 1BL.

Accessing specialist subject support from the experts

David Jones, chief executive of The Council for Subject Associations (CfSA), shares the value of getting involved with your subject association and the support it can provide for your staff in your school

Wouldn't it be amazing if you uncovered a previously hidden world of resources to support teaching and learning across the curriculum and, even better, if those resources were written specifically to help you, as a primary classroom teacher, to focus on subjects while covering wider educational priorities?

What if all the resources were written by subject specialists with the aim of informing subject leaders about whole-school approaches and to provide teachers with ideas to introduce subjects into the classroom? Well read on, because you will be amazed at what is available that, until now, has been offered only to selected schools.

The Department for Children Schools and Families (DfES) commissioned the resources two years ago from the CfSA and, since then, subject associations have been working with the CfSA to develop expert advice and support for classroom teachers to help them in their subject teaching. The resource is extensive and covers all statutory (and some non-statutory) subjects in the National Curriculum.

Primary Subjects is a thematic package of resources for teachers, comprising 16 pull-out pamphlets - one for each of the fourteen statutory subjects of the primary curriculum and for two non-statutory subjects.

It is produced by the CfSA on a termly basis and copies of the first seven

editions have been made available free of charge to every primary school in England. The authors are members of specialist subject associations, teachers, advisers and researchers, all known for their experience and understanding of teaching and learning in primary classrooms and their expertise in a particular area of the curriculum.

Each of the 16 subject pamphlets in Primary Subjects contains: information for the subject coordinator or leader; ideas and case studies to inspire class teachers; updates on what each Subject Association has to offer to primary members.

Themes to date have been:

- Issue 1 - Making Every Child Matter
- Issue 2 - Supporting Gifted and Talented Children
- Issue 3 - Engaging with Globalisation
- Issue 4 - Learning Outside the Classroom
- Issue 5 - Get Ready for the London 2012 Games
- Issue 6 - Using Stories
- Issue 7 - Assessing for Learning

'Making Every Child Matter' embodies what primary teachers have always known - that children have the best educational experience when their teachers work in partnership with other people and organisations.

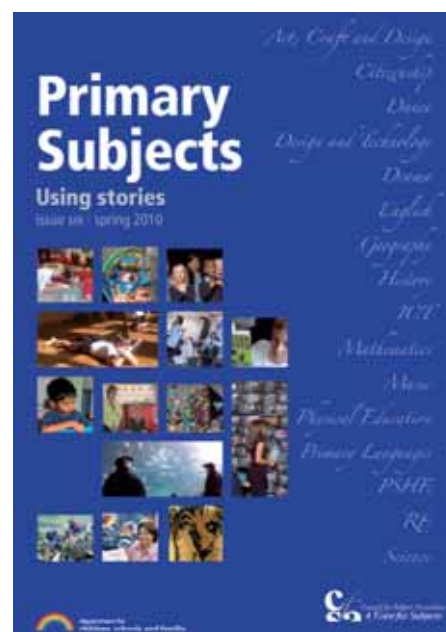
In this first issue, each subject provides different perspectives and

contributions about:

- Being healthy, physically and mentally: for example skipping in PE; studying ergonomics in D&T; expressing emotions and feelings in dance, RE and music.
- Staying safe: using art to represent the transition from primary to secondary school; understanding the mathematical basis of risk; using drama to explore dangerous situations safely; thinking about bullying in PSHE, and much more.
- Enjoying and achieving, through activities such as communicating in another language, using ICT to communicate with children in other countries, behaving like a 'real' scientist.
- Making a positive contribution: a children's school newspaper as outlined in the citizenship material; children commenting on their own and each other's performances in drama and PE through video recordings; in history, reflecting on how the past binds us all together; or discussing global issues in geography.

The 'Engaging with Globalisation' issue (Primary Subjects 3) demonstrates very well the recognition that globalisation is not the exclusive preserve of geographers, but relates to every subject.

With the world in your classroom you can really bring your teaching to life, whether it's following the journey of a



banana from the tree to your fruit-bowl in PSHE, designing a shelter in D&T that will have a minimal impact on the environment, flying the world in primary languages or thinking historically about why the Chinese don't play cricket.

Many of the pamphlets – religious education, drama and citizenship for example – take different approaches to considering what life is like for children in other countries.

In creative subjects such as art, music, PE, dance and English there are rich activities, which focus on the similarities and differences in cultures and how they are expressed.

ICT, by making communication easier and more effective, deepens children's learning through linking with real children in real schools in countries far away.

Mathematics contributes to understanding through a powerful illustration of the statistics of a 'global village'. Science and geography complement each other in the study of national climates and sustainability. What a wealth of ideas to thread through your lessons!

In 'Get Ready for the London 2012 Games' (Primary Subjects 5) each leaflet illustrates how classroom teachers might use the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games as a stimulus for each subject. The history leaflet has six exciting ideas for history topics and citizenship has a particularly moving story.

Other writers focus on the Olympic and Paralympic Values: friendship, determination, equality, inspiration, courage, excellence and respect. These

apply across all areas of the curriculum and most of the leaflets give them a mention but there is a particularly strong focus in PSHE and also in music. Dance and RE look additionally at the Olympic motto – 'Swifter, Higher, Stronger'.

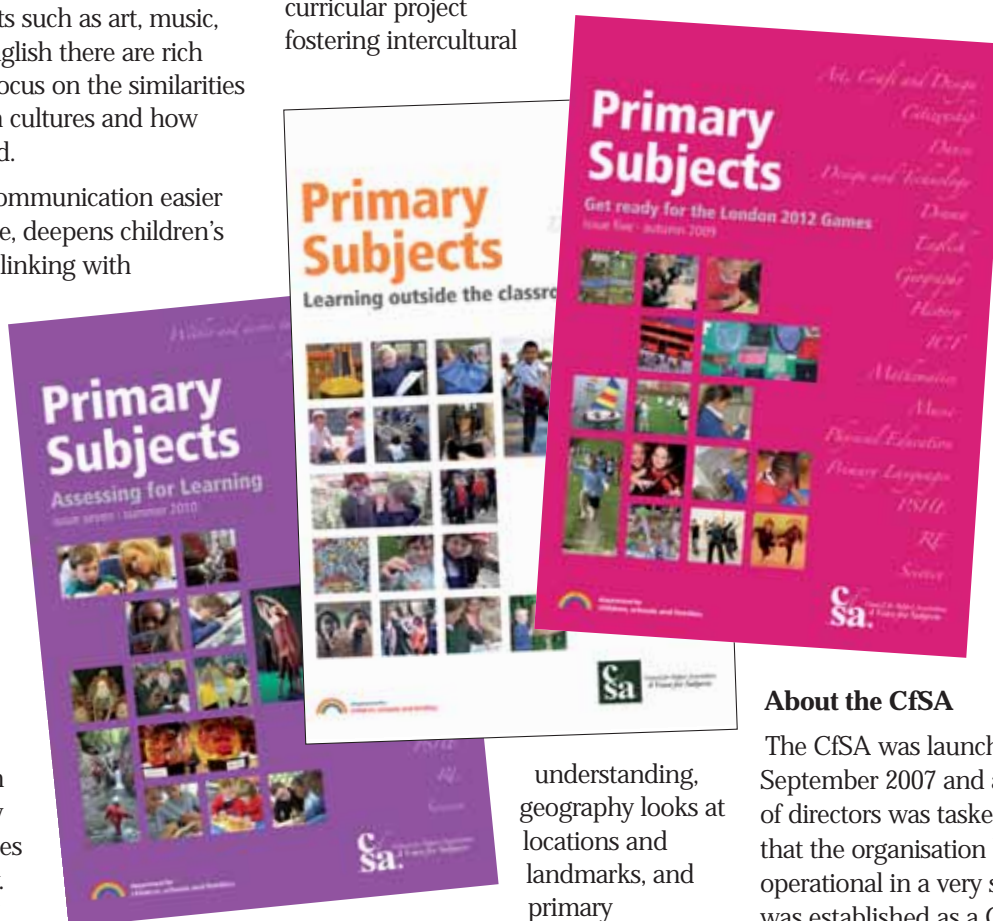
The international nature of the Games presents an opportunity to look at people and places from all over the world. The English leaflet provides a case study of a cross-curricular project fostering intercultural

can be used by children learning about 2012. Allied to this is the Maths focus on measurement of distances, times and speeds. Meanwhile, some subjects focus on the sporting activities themselves.

Free sample copies of some of the articles in Primary Subjects can be downloaded from the CfSA website at: <http://www.subjectassociations.org.uk/index.php?page=165>

Primary Subjects is available as themed issues as described above but it is

also possible to download the collected articles from each subject. Some issues are available in printed form and can be ordered from CfSA using the online order form. But please do have a browse through the downloadable samples to confirm the quality of the publication.



understanding, geography looks at locations and landmarks, and primary

languages shows how to greet our overseas visitors to help them feel welcome.

A number of the contributions explore the educational potential of the opening ceremony; see for example, art, craft and design. Drama has a performance idea for Key Stage 2 based around this. The RE document draws parallels between the Olympic and Paralympic Games and religion, citing features such as the oath, symbols, procession, motto and creed.

ICT has a technological slant all of its own, looking at the role of modern technology at the Games and how it

About the CfSA

The CfSA was launched on 20th September 2007 and an interim board of directors was tasked with ensuring that the organisation became operational in a very short period and was established as a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee. Of significant importance was a requirement that the CfSA establish a primary focused publication with contributions from all subject associations, now called Primary Subjects, the first issue of which was circulated to all maintained primary schools in England in April 2008.

Subject associations were invited to join the CfSA in January 2008 and currently it has over 35 members (listed below) representing the interests of almost all subjects in the National Curriculum.

Members of CfSA

There is a subject association for every subject. If you would like further information about the resources and assistance that subject associations can offer please visit the CfSA website www.subjectassociations.org.uk or contact the following subject associations directly:

Association for Achievement and Improvement through Assessment (AAIA)
www.aaia.org.uk

Association for Citizenship Teaching (ACT)
www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk

Association for Physical Education (afPE)
www.afpe.org.uk

Association for Language Learning (ALL)
www.all-languages.org.uk

Association for Science Education (ASE)
www.ase.org.uk

Association for the Study of Primary Education (ASPE)
www.aspe-uk.eu

Association of Professionals in Education and Children's Trusts (Aspect)
www.aspect.org.uk

The Design and Technology Association (DATA)
www.data.org.uk

Development Education Association (DEA)
www.dea.org.uk

The English Association (EA)
www.le.ac.uk/engassoc

Economics, Business and Enterprise Association (EBEA)
www.ebea.org.uk

The Geographical Association (GA)
www.geography.org.uk

Institute of Physics (IOP)
www.iop.org

The Association for Information Technology in Teacher Education (ITTE)
www.itte.org.uk

Media Education Association (MEA)
www.mediaedassociation.org.uk

Naace (ICT Association)
www.naace.co.uk

nasen (Special Needs Education)
www.nasen.org.uk

National Association of Advisers in English (NAAE)
www.naae.org

National Association of Advisers and Inspectors in Design and Technology (NAAIDT)
www.naaidt.org.uk

National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum (NALDIC)
www.naldic.org.uk

National Association of Music Educators (NAME)
www.name.org.uk

The National Association for Primary Education (NAPE)
www.nape.org.uk

National Association for the Teaching of English (NATE)
www.nate.org.uk

National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE)
www.natre.org.uk

National Association of Writers in Education (NAWE)
www.nawe.co.uk

National Dance Teachers Association (NDTA)
www.ndta.org.uk

National Drama (ND)
www.nationaldrama.co.uk

The National Health Education Group (NHEG)
www.nheg.org.uk

The National PSE Association for Advisers, Inspectors and Consultants (NSCoPSE)
www.NSCOPSE.org.uk

National Society for Education in Art and Design (NSEAD)
www.nsead.org

The Professional Association of Teachers of Students with Specific Learning Difficulties (Patoss)
www.patoss-dyslexia.org

The PSHE Association
www.pshe-association.org.uk

The Religious Education Council of England & Wales (REC)
www.religiouseducationcouncil.org

Royal Geographical Society with IBG (RGS)
www.rgs.org

Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC)
www.rsc.org

United Kingdom Literacy Association (UKLA)
www.ukla.org

History of The Townsend-Warner History Prize

Patrick Gent, formerly assistant head of Chafyn Grove School, shares the history of the most wonderfully 'prep school' of history prizes, steeped in history and tradition

The origins of the Townsend- Warner History Prize go back to 1885 when Mr EE Bowen, a housemaster at Harrow, offered an annual prize to the Headmaster of Elstree to be called the Harrow History Prize. Ten years later the Dragon School was invited to participate and other schools soon followed.

In 1905 Mr Townsend- Warner, of Harrow, took on the organisation until his death in 1920, during which time he awarded to a certain Arthur Bryant a card of commendation, not a prize! The prize then took on the name of its late organiser and has retained its Harrow connection ever since.

The number of schools involved has inevitably risen dramatically from 1905 when 39 children from 15 schools took part, to 1940 when 80 children

from 30 schools and in 1950 when 510 children from 70 schools took part. At its peak in 1987 there were 830 entries from 130 schools! Now there are usually about 700-plus entries from about 70 schools. It would be nice if these numbers increased to 1000 and 100 respectively! Prize money too has risen proportionately from £1 12s for winning in the 1930s to a first prize now of £50, with the top fifty being awarded prizes and the next fifty cards of commendation.

Candidates have to sit two papers: the first (one hour) in January each year set by Mr Hugh Thompson, a former head of history and housemaster at Harrow, consisting of 100 one-word answer type questions from world history, some straightforward and others obscure! The top 200 then sit paper two (two hours) set in February

by Mr Tony Beales, former head of history at Harrow and Head of King's Bruton and Epsom College; paper two is a more advanced scholarship type paper with a wide choice and variety of questions, and so requires not only good knowledge but an analytical mind and some humour to succeed.

Entry forms are sent out in October each year via the IAPS office to member schools and also through the *satips* History Broadsheet. Entries must be received by the first week of January.

The administration is in the hands of Patrick Gent – very ably helped by his wife Sally – from whom copies of past papers may be obtained. Lower Woodbridge House, Peaceful Land, King's Stag, Sturminster Newton, Dorset DT10 2 BD Tel: 01963 23363

www.townsend-warner-history.co.uk

National Schools' Handwriting Competition 2010

Patricia Lovett, judge of the 2010 National Handwriting Competition, shares her thoughts on why handwriting is so important

Writing is magical when you think about it; you can communicate anything you like just by drawing a sequence of little loops and squiggles, and anyone who honestly believes that the loops and squiggles don't have a ton more charm than Times New Roman has a section of their brain missing.

Handwriting a letter is usually an act of love, which no one could ever say about typing.

India Knight.

Sunday Times, 23:V:10

A survey by World Vision of 1,188 British schoolchildren aged from 7-14 in May this year found that one-fifth had never received a hand-written letter, and one-tenth had never written one themselves. This is such a sad statistic when so many of us can remember, and still experience, the thrill of picking up from the doormat a hand-written envelope, and all that it might contain within, amongst the boring computer-labelled or mail addressed brown business envelopes and circulars. Perhaps those of us who remember and have that excitement when receiving hand-written letters, can take it upon ourselves to write to children so that they can share in 'a ton more charm' as India Knight writes above.

As a professional calligrapher, I do make a point of hand-writing envelopes, letters and cards as often as I can because it is a way of self-promotion. I know, because I have been told, that my taking time to write a calligraphic envelope has meant that

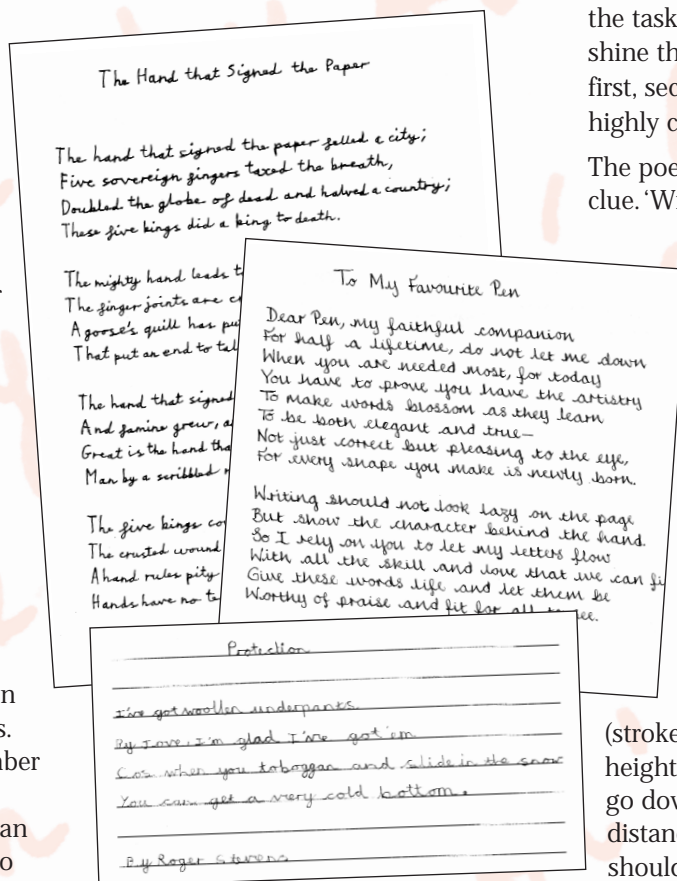
my letters, invitations or requests very often land on the desk of the person to whom I am writing, and are rarely opened by a secretary or PA and quietly filed away without ever reaching their intended recipient. The same must be

it was very difficult indeed to choose who would actually be placed in first position. Again this year we had a couple of entries from 3-year-olds, which is quite amazing considering the concentration and control which would have been needed to complete the task. So how did those winners shine through and make the coveted first, second or third place, or be highly commended?

The poem for 8-11-year-olds gave a clue. 'Writing should not look lazy on the page', and there should be 'character behind the hand'. Also, the words should have 'life'. So there needs to be a rhythm to the writing, which should flow and be easy on the eye, so that reading is not a problem. Individual letters should be well formed, and there should be a consistency of family characteristics with similar shapes for the bowls of the letters *a*, *b*, *d*, *p* and *q*, etc, and with the ascenders

(strokes that go up) of a similar height, and descenders (strokes that go down), descending to an even distance below the line. There should be a regularity to the slope, although it does not matter if the slope is forwards or backwards, or if the writing is upright.

This is not always easy even for those of us who have been writing for many years, and some, like me, who have been professionally trained to write various styles of script. Our prize-winners, then, are to be even more commended for managing to produce



true of a beautiful hand-written (as opposed to calligraphic) envelope.

For the finalists in the National Schools' Handwriting Competition writing that beautiful letter or envelope will present no challenge. There were so many entries this year that could easily have been winners, and particularly for the 8-10-year-olds,

the standard they have under the conditions of writing an entry for a handwriting competition. To them, and others, it often helps if the physical situation is suitably set up. There should be a good light source, which is usually best when it comes from the side which is opposite to the hand being used (good light from the left for right-handers, and from the right for left-handers). A table and chair should be at a height where feet are firmly on the ground, to create steadiness, and the shoulders are not stretched or hunched when writing so that the writing arm can move freely, and under control not tension. No matter what the writing implement, whether it be fountain pen, fibre or felt-tip, ball point pen or pencil, it should fit comfortably in the hand – not too big and chunky, nor too small and spindly – and the ink should flow easily.

And although grip is not something on which there is always a lot of focus, the conventional grip of writing implement resting in the v-shape between the thumb and first finger, held between the first finger and thumb, and steadied by the top knuckle of the middle finger, does seem to cause least pain when writing for any length of time. Paper quality and position are important, too. Paper sheets and exercise books should be turned so that for right-handers the right-hand corner is at the top, and for left-handers the left-hand corner is at the top. This means that writing can then be seen and checked, and writers do not then have to twist wrists so that they can see what they've just written, or avoid smudging ink. If the quality of paper is good, too, that can be reflected in the writing – after all, many of us know the intense pleasure of writing on a scrumptious paper with a good pen. Much of this can be taught, shown or provided by parents and teachers, and there are often no real reasons why most children should not be able to develop a fluent and attractive, legible style of writing, which serves them well for all those hand-written letters they are going to write in the future.

Staff Prize

First Prize: Sarah Barrow
 Runner-up: Anne Hornsby
 Third place: Nicholas Allen
 Highly commended: Lori Chew

St. Hugh's, Carswell
 Edgbaston High School for Girls
 Newton Prep, London
 Shema Christian Academy, California, USA

Class A Winner

Ella Winter (Age 5)

Kensington Prep, London

Age 4

First Prize: Rachel Velangi
 Runner-up: Precious-Pearl Odunmbaku
 Third Place: Tarleen Takhar
 Highly commended: Krish Kumar

Hallfield, Edgbaston
 Grace Dieu Manor, Leicester
 Hallfield, Edgbaston
 Hallfield, Edgbaston

Age 5

First Prize: Bella Stevens
 Runner-up: Edward Harvey
 Third place: Boryn Nancy Read

St. Hugh's, Carswell
 Cross-in-Hand CEP School, East Sussex
 Cross-in-Hand CEP School, East Sussex

Age 6

First Prize: Olivia Wightman
 Runner-up: Joseph Gillitt
 Third place: Joe Howarth
 Heckmondwike, West Yorkshire
 Highly commended: Luca Hayes

Beechwood Park, Markyate
 The Croft, Stratford-upon-Avon
 Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School,

Devonshire House, London

Age 7

First Prize: Nikhita Trautman
 Runner-up: Darcey Crawley
 Third place: Emily Leeson
 Highly commended: Omar Khan

Devonshire House, London
 Royal Masonic School for Girls, Rickmansworth
 Cumnor House, Danehill
 Keble School, London

Class B Winner

Emily Williams (Age 11)

St. John's, Sidmouth

Age 8

First Prize: Lara Stalder
 Runner-up: Charlotte Wilson
 Third place: Calypso Cox
 Highly commended: Tom Symes

High March, Beaconsfield
 Putney High Junior School
 Kensington Prep School for Girls
 Elizabeth College Junior School, Guernsey

Age 9

First Prize: Alex Lyons
 Runner-up: George Russell
 Third place: Brendan Warren
 Highly commended: Clara Correia

St. Bernard's Prep, Slough
 St. Hugh's, Carswell
 Beechwood Park, Markyate
 Marist Prep, Ascot

Age 10

First Prize: Tamneet Julleekkea
 Runner-up: Angela Doran
 Third place: Kashee Mistry
 Highly commended: Jordan Coleman
 Hannah Horton

St. Bernard's Prep, Slough
 Rowan Prep, Claygate
 Solihull Junior School
 Edgbaston High School for Girls
 Hatherop Castle, Cirencester

Age 11

First Prize: Renata Passaris
 Runner-up: Felicia Xu
 Third place: Il Kyu Cho

Putney High Junior School
 Solihull Junior School
 Willington School, London

Class C Winner

Matthew Coster (Age 13)

Beechwood Park, Markyate

Age 12

First Prize: Isabella Weston
 Runner-up: Hannah Cork Keeling
 Third place: Ben Thompson

Ashfold School, Aylesbury
 Grace Dieu Manor, Leicester
 Kingshott, Hitchin

Age 13

First Prize: Jack Beckford
 Runner-up: James Johnson
 Third place: Nathan Samuel

Sandroyd, Salisbury
 Ashfold School, Aylesbury
 Kingshott, Hitchin

Age 14

First Prize: Flora Mockridge
 Winning school:
 Runner-up school:

Cumnor House, Danehill
 Beechwood Park
 St. Hugh's, Carswell

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Satipski 2010

After 34 years of Satipski on outdoor artificial slopes it was decided to run the 35th event on indoor snow. The new Snow Centre at Hemel Hempstead, which has the slogan 'The best snow this side of the Alps', was an ideal venue. It is a very attractive facility and drew a large number of skiers despite the competition taking



place on a Monday. Several new schools came along and hopefully enjoyed the day.

As always Cranmore and Aldwickbury were to the fore. Abbots Hill Junior School and Beechwood Park put local knowledge to good use and there was some very good racing from Surbiton Prep, Gayhurst and The Abbey Junior School.

It was good to see some of the first-time entrants taking high positions. Fourth place for Knighton House was a particularly good result and probably made the long journey worthwhile.

In any sporting competition not everyone can win. Skiing is a competitive sport but the competition does not stop with the podium places. In the cross country events at the Winter Olympics earlier this year it was noticeable that the British skiers, although well down the field, were still cheered all the way home by the small band of British spectators who were delighted that they had done their best and achieved pleasing results. In Satipski winning is only



part of the event: enjoying yourself, doing your best, and learning more about racing so that you can do better next time are equally important.

The impression was that there were some very happy children who had had a great day – especially as they were out of School!

Next year's date is
Monday 9th May 2011.

Contact details: briangilyead@aol.com

Under 11 Boys

Cranmore	86.60
Surbiton Prep	93.97
Aldwickbury	96.85
Lockers Park	96.88
Gayhurst	97.14
UCS JS	98.66
Haslemere Prep	100.82
The Hawthorns	102.14
Lochinver House	102.99
Castle Court	103.59
Grantham Prep	104.09
Northwood Prep	104.27
UCS JS B	106.88
Barrow Hills	106.96
Fairfield	107.65
Notting Hill Prep	DNF

Under 14 Boys

Aldwickbury	81.25
Gayhurst	81.88
Cranmore	87.49
Cheltenham CJS	89.12
Lochinver House	92.12

Lockers Park	94.47
Millfield Prep	96.61
Northwood Prep	97.37
Beechwood Park	98.09
Millfield Prep B	101.35
Barrow Hills	103.48
The Hawthorns	105.99
Castle Court	108.06

Under 11 Girls

Beechwood Park	98.17
Abbot's Hill JS	107.53
The Abbey JS	113.26
Knighton House	120.56
Abbot's Hill JS B	122.09
Fairfield	123.35
Bancroft's Prep	125.30
Surbiton HS JS B	129.18
Surbiton HS JS	131.54
The Abbey JS B	132.60
Grantham Prep	148.28
St. Mary's	DNS

Under 14 Girls

Cheltenham CJS	99.53
----------------	-------

Knighton House	5106.92
Godstowe	112.65
Notting Hill Prep	115.17

Podium results

Under 11 Girls

Anna Henderson	Beechwood Park
Lauren Smith	Abbot's Hill JS
Beatrice Barder	Beechwood Park

Under 14 Boys

Harry Sutherland	Gayhurst
Luke Dawson	Aldwickbury
Adam Rochussen	Cranmore

Under 14 Girls

Flora Peel	Cheltenham CJS
Florence Perkins	Knighton House
Camilla Werdillin	Notting Hill Prep

Under 11 Boys

Jo Davey	Cranmore
Harry Deighton	Surbiton Prep
Harry Fish	Cranmore

IAPS Golf Championship 2010

Monday June 14th was the date and once again the venue for the IAPS Golf Championship was Royal Lytham & St Annes. The weather was ideal for the golfers – sunny at the start and end of the day with a little wind, turning cold and overcast in the middle, but thankfully no rain. The links course was at its best and the scoring was once again excellent.

The competition was played as usual over two rounds on the nine-hole course to a Stableford format, with three points for a par, so that two shots over par could still earn a point. The first match starting at 7:30 a.m. and the last match finishing at around 4:30 p.m. made it a long day for everyone, but it was as always thoroughly enjoyable.

Joshua Fletcher from Millfield, last year's runner-up, was the proud winner of the Royal Lytham Trophy, with a score of 54 points, which was a record, and two points better than last year's winning total. He was five points better than Joshua Taylor from Bedford, who won the under 12 age category with 49 points, and his fellow team member from Millfield, George Hankins was third with 48 points, which won him the under 14 age group. Joshua Davenport from King Henry VIII was seventh overall with 44 points, which was

another remarkable achievement for this under-11 year-old, which also won him the top prize in his age group. Helen Stickler from St John's-on-the-Hill won the Girls' Trophy for the second year running, with a score of 42 points, which was some way ahead of her nearest rival, Erica Sanders, from Foremarke Hall with 29 points.

The event was attended by 83 children from 26 schools and supported by parents and teachers, some of whom acted as scorers for the 29 matches that were played throughout the day. For the fourth consecutive year, the Top Team Trophy went to Millfield with 143 points (one more than last year) and the Under 12 Junior Team Trophy winners with 124 points were King Henry VIII (last year's runners-up), which was 31 points better than last year's winning score. The Girl's Team Trophy went to Cranleigh with 77 points - 17 points better than last year's winning total. The under-13 age group was won by Rory Giddins from Shrewsbury House with 47 points and the under-10 age group was won by Barclay Brown from Birkdale with 40 points.

This championship is now in its 19th year and was the brainchild of Paddy Molloy, who had been organising it since its inception and who sadly called



it a day after the 2007 tournament. However, he bequeathed a trophy to be given each year to the youngest competitor and this year's winner of the Molloy Trophy was Rosie Usher from Fettes, who, at only six days short of her ninth birthday, was second in the under 10 age category.

Prior to the prizegiving ceremony, a tour of the clubhouse was conducted by Dr Steven Reid, himself a past captain of Royal Lytham & St Annes Golf Club, which included viewing the cabinet housing clubs from each of the winners of The Open Championship at this venue from 1926 to 2001 and a brief history of the club. At the prizegiving, the current captain of the club, Frank Wyles, paid tribute to the enormous amount of talent on show from all the players and accompanied by the lady captain, Carol Brown, he presented the prize winners with their awards.

Brandeston pupils receive a letter from The Queen

Pupils in the Reception Class at Brandeston Hall started their new project 'Around the World' by discussing the birthday of Her Majesty the Queen and St George's Day in England. After surfing the net to find out more about their monarch, they also listened to radio recordings of the young Queen Elizabeth II. Fortified with this information, the Class wrote down what they would buy Her Majesty if they were invited to her birthday party. There were plenty of ideas including jewellery, dresses and cakes. Each child drew a picture and wrote about their present before sending it off to Buckingham Palace. The pupils were delighted to receive a letter from The Queen, written on her behalf by Mrs Philippa de Pass, Lady-in-Waiting.





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IAPS National Chess championships 2010

Over the Easter holidays 125 players from all over the country took part in the 38th annual Prep School Chess Championships. The standard of play was outstanding in the Championship, individual and team sections. There were 50 players in the Championship section and 75 players in the preliminary groups which were mini-tournaments to sort the players into playing strength for the next two days.



Prizes

IAPS National Champion 2010: Daniel Sutton 6.5/7

IAPS U11 joint champions:

Aloysius Lip (Hallfield) and Daniel Muir (Reigate St Mary's) 5.5/7

IAPS National Girls Champion:

Freya Finnegan (Cophorne) 3/6 Section A

Section A winner: Luke Thorne (St. Anselms) 6/6

Section B winner: Daniel Gooda (Cophorne) 5/6

Section C winner: Kishen Singh (Twickenham Prep) 6/6

Section D joint winners:

Michael Macleod (Hawthorns) and Gabriel Byrne (Aldro) 5/6

Hodgson Cup for the top U13 team

1st: Hallfield and Nottingham High School 18.5 National Champions

3rd: Twickenham Prep 17.5

David Bull Cup for the top U11 team

1st: Hallfield and Nottingham High School 18.5 National Champions

3rd: Reigate St Marys 15.5

Great Britain's first school Monopoly board

Dulwich College Prep School boys conceive a new and exciting way to raise money for charity

Dulwich College Preparatory School (DCPS) has been supporting the charity Sparrow Schools Foundation for 11 years and has raised more than £500,000. The foundation is a charity registered in England which helps the Sparrow Schools in Johannesburg to provide education for disadvantaged children in South Africa.

This year the boys at DCPS wanted to devise a unique way of raising money for the charity which would also use their talents and initiative. A year 7 boy, George Mitchell, came up with something rather special...

Designing a real and authentic Monopoly set dedicated to his school, but instead of street names it would be entirely about DCPS! This would be sold through the school with all profits going to the Sparrow Schools. A team of Year 8 (12-13 year old) boys was set up under the direction of Elaine Vestey, head of DT, to kick-start the project.

Winning Moves, the company licensed by Hasbro, owners of the Monopoly brand, to make special editions of Monopoly in Europe was contacted to see if they would be interested in professionally manufacturing the DCPS game. **The boys discovered that if successful it would be the first Monopoly set in Britain dedicated to a school. A totally original concept!**

Not only would the boys be raising lots of money for charity, but they would also leave behind their mark in the school's 125th anniversary year. After a nerve-wracking 'Dragon's Den' style pitch to the Headmaster, Michael Roulston, permission was given to proceed.

The boys then came up with another unique idea - the parents and friends of the school could pledge to buy a



set and donate to the Sparrow school before even a prototype had been designed. Such were the strong support and warm feelings towards the initiative that the costs to build the set were very quickly covered and over £2,000 was raised for charity after only one month!

Winning Moves loved the fact that the boys' idea was not-for-profit and a purely charitable enterprise and have decided to use the boys' 'pledge' concept to encourage other schools to do the same.

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Talented staff! An Apple app for teacher!

Last week saw the exciting world-wide launch of a new iPhone app 'Quaso' devised by Ardingly College maths teacher, John Enock. Mr Enock, who says: "A lot of maths is all about fun and messing about with numbers and shapes," has been a lover of puzzles for many years and has had two books published.

Out of the latest, '24' *The Challenging New Number Puzzle*', came an idea to create a popular puzzle based on algebra. In Quaso, Mr Enock has taken a crossword grid with equations on the side, in which symbols substituted for letters

enable you to work out the numbers the symbols represent. Then you have to work out where the numbers go. The word Quaso is derived from equation but, like the puzzle, is pure invention by Mr Enock!

The *Mail on Sunday* has started running Quaso and the new craze has its followers already in the newspaper, on the iPhone... and in the Ardingly playground! George Gutteridge from Year 6 was heard to remark: "I tried the app at home and it's fun – a crossword with numbers!"

John Enock lives in Sussex with his wife, a successful writer. A former senior school teacher in Battle, John has been Head of Maths at Ardingly College Prep School for the past eight years. Headmaster Chris Calvey says: "John is an inspiring maths



John Enock demonstrates his iPhone app to some young mathematicians at Ardingly Prep. L-R: Crispin McCutcheon, George Gutteridge, Will King, Imogen Waters, George Gavoyannis

teacher and I am not surprised that his ability to make maths teaching interesting and fun has surfaced in this talent for setting puzzles."

So – challenge yourself! Can you get from the Quicky Level to the Tricky in The Mail or up to Level 5 on your iPhone? And be warned, Mr Enock has plans to go up to Level 8.

Junior Heads gather at the ISA Cross Association Conference

Headteachers from schools in membership of the Girls School Association (GSA), Headmasters and Headmistresses Conference (HMC), Independent Association of Prep Schools (IAPS), Independent Schools Association (ISA) and Society of Heads of Independent Schools (SHMIS) met in Stratford-upon-Avon in March for the biennial Cross Association Junior Heads Conference.

The conference, entitled 'Meeting the Challenge', gave delegates the chance to hear from key speakers and take part in a wide range of workshops. Paralympian Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson opened the event by talking about the challenges she has experienced during her own life and career, which spans 11 Paralympic gold medals and 30 world records. She attributed her success to the supportive team behind her who encouraged her determination to succeed.

Christine Ryan, chief inspector at the Independent Schools Inspectorate, gave an outline of the role of the inspectorate and the format of the new inspection arrangements.

Other speakers included Professor Mick Waters, the president of the Curriculum Foundation who spoke about 'The Challenge of Creating the Learning Adventure'; Sarah Orio, a marketing consultant, who outlined 'SMART Marketing for Junior Schools'; Rob Elkington, RSC head of school partnerships, who 'Spoke up for Shakespeare'; and Mathilda Joubert, an education consultant addressed 'Creativity in a World of Change'.

Workshops held throughout the conference were: 'Thinking skills for primary pupils'; 'Identifying Challenges in the New Inspection Framework'; 'Good practice in EYFS'; 'Developing Quality Whole School

Provision for Able Pupils'; and 'A Survival Guide to Employment Law'.

Conference chairman Susan Woodward said: "A conference dedicated to the headteachers of junior schools is held every two years and hosted in turn by one of the associations. This is a great way for headteachers to get together with their peers and focus on some of the key issues affecting their schools and have time for reflection and debate. The conference was a good opportunity for members from all the associations to work together on professional development leadership opportunities.

The next Cross Association Junior Heads Conference will be held on 12-13 March 2012 at Stratford-upon-Avon and will be organised by Simon Letman, GSA/HMC Director of Professional Development at IPD.

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Any more Tom Daleys out there?



Andy Banks puts prep pupils through their paces.

Officials from the National Diving Association visited Plymouth College Preparatory School earlier this week to see if the school has any budding Tom Daleys. The three staff put children from Years 2 and 3 through some coordination tests to see if they had the potential to be top divers. They were looking at flexibility, agility and many other skills required to be a good diver. All the children had great fun taking part in this search for another sporting star and received a certificate and a free diving session at Central Park pool. The school already boasts Plymouth Diving members, Ollie Piper and Alice Avens, both in Year 5 and aged 10, who have taken part in overseas diving competitions. Tom Daley himself is a pupil at the Senior School.

satips Professional Development courses: Art and Design & Design Technology 2010-11

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Art	17th Nov	Screen Printmaking – making screens and simple printing	Aldro School
Art	7th Dec	Working with art scholars and gifted and talented pupils – building portfolios, widening horizons – lots of ideas and support	Prior Park prep School
Art/DT	16th Jan	Paper Sculpture and mixed Media	Bilton Grange, Rugby
Art	23rd Jan	Co-ordinating art in the early years - exploration of project ideas for the early years, plus inspiring schemes of work and leading your team	Abingdon Prep School, Oxon
Art	9th Feb	Art History – an art teachers' guide to art history and how it can be incorporated into project work/schemes of work and inspire lots of practical projects	Summer Fields School, Oxford: tbc
Art	23rd Feb	Working in Wire – techniques for wire work in the classroom – practical extensions	Abingdon Prep School, Oxon
Art	15th March	Using Sketchbooks – developing this powerful tool through a range of different techniques, materials	Prior Park Prep School
Art	6th April	Printmaking – adventures through mono, collograph, lino, drypoint and experimental work. Suitable for all age-groups including scholars	Abingdon Prep School, Oxon
Art	4th May	Using museums and galleries – lots of practical ways to embed this into your planning. To be held in a museum or gallery TBC	To be confirmed – Midlands or London gallery
Art/ DT	21st May	Textiles – constructed textiles and mixed media work using silks, inks, paint, batik and felt	Bilton Grange, Rugby
DT	Spring	Leading a DT department – inspiring schemes of work, preparing for inspection, risk assessments etc	tbc
DT	Summer	Health and Safety in the DT department	tbc
DT	Summer	Electronics and control	tbc

All courses contain lots of ideas for projects in the classroom and are suitable for specialist and non specialist teachers and teaching assistants. Cost £110 per course and includes lunch and materials. To book please contact: Pat Harrison tel: 01371 856823 email: admin@satips.com



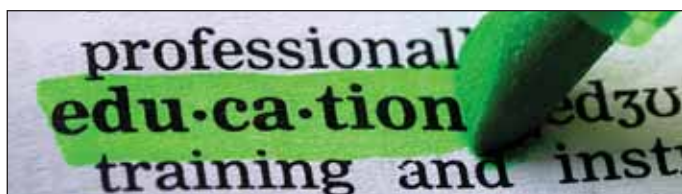
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