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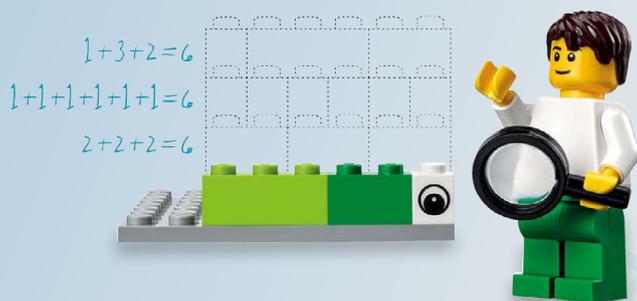
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Editor

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Steering Group

satips

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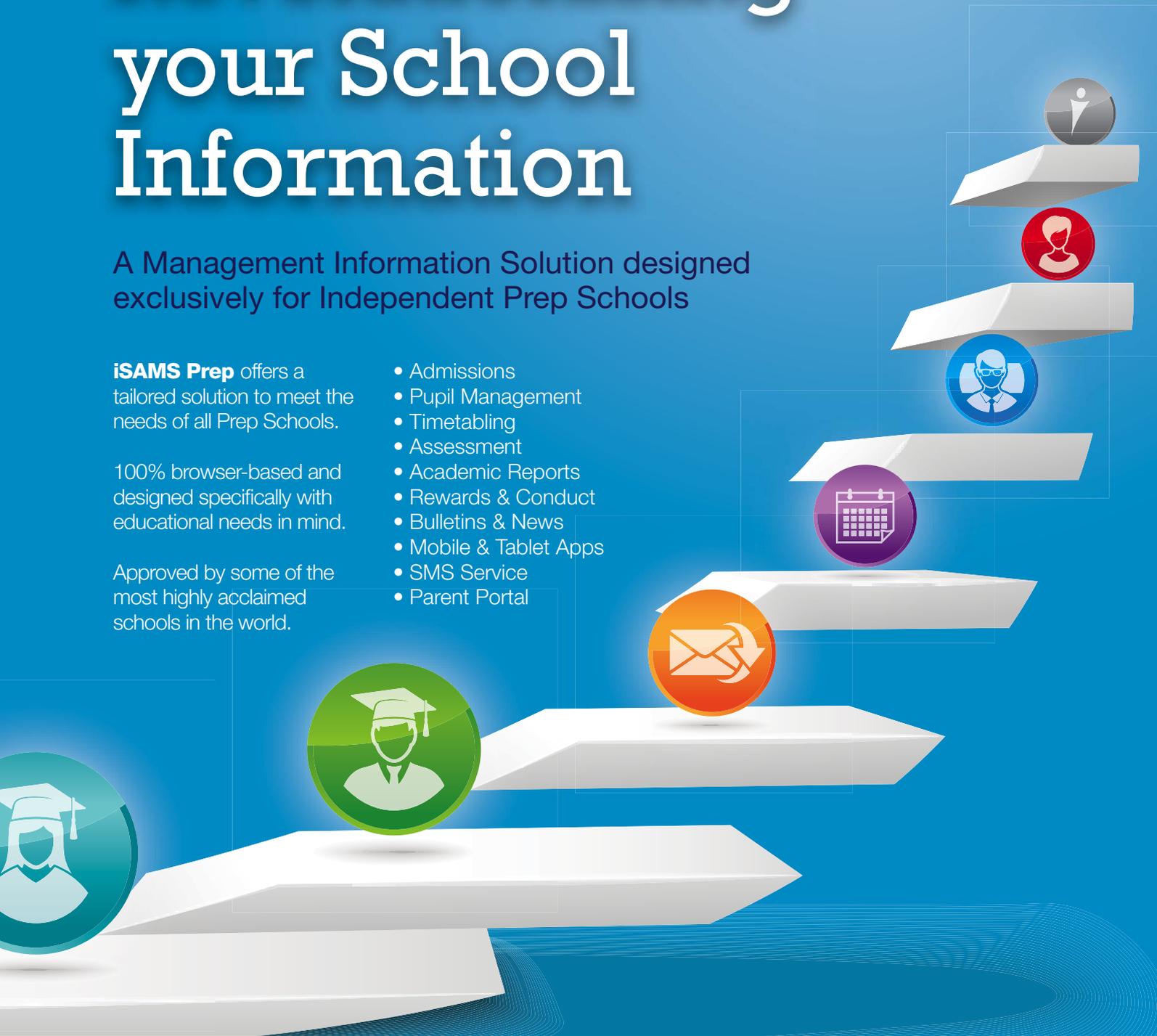
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From the editor



In a new year our thoughts naturally turn to new things, fresh starts ... and perhaps even a visitation of Wise Men, Wise Women, and their Wise Words. Yes, *Prep School* comes in threes (one each term) and brings you gifts (ideas). In this issue we bring much wisdom from head teachers around the country who honestly

reflect on their issues and concerns.

In the spirit of looking forward I am encouraging you, this term, to start building firm foundations for the future in your schools. You might start this with an emphasis on manners and values. Or you might start developing a clear vision of how the decisions you make today will affect the students in your schools in years to come.

The film *Back to the Future II* suggested that in 2015 we would be moving around on hover boards, driving flying cars, using video calls and living in highly interactive homes. In one scene the characters answer phone calls with glasses, in an eerie premonition of Google Glass! What was science fiction to the filmmakers of 30 years ago is reality today. From time-to-time we should ask ourselves what the future might look like in our schools? Are they well placed for a long and successful future? What might happen if, in 20 years, the UK goes through another recession? Would they survive? And thrive?

This term's magazine covers the usual wide range of issues

including an in-depth look at how one school came through the recession. We have a stimulating mix of articles about teaching and learning that we hope you will show your staff including one that reminds us that, in the world of information technology, 'it is not what you've got but how you use it'. How we harness new technology in our classrooms and school is going to become more and more important as the 21st century progresses.

I am always thrilled when heads and teachers get in touch to tell me about exciting developments in their schools. I am equally pleased to receive news about how they are dealing with some of the more mundane and less 'sexy' topics. Please do remember to encourage your staff to share their ideas for possible articles with me. If they are at all unsure, remind them that at *Prep School* we can help them at all stages from first idea to published article. Many of those who started off writing in *Prep School* have used it as an enjoyable stepping-stone for a range of new opportunities, including promotion. It is also a wonderful way to promote your school and the good practice it exemplifies.

As we move through the early months of 2015, I urge you to challenge your staff to keep trying new things. Teachers who stay firmly in their comfort zones – viewing events from their jealously defended staff-room armchairs – are not serving their students and they are definitely not helping to move their schools in the right direction. As Albert Einstein said: 'the measure of intelligence is the ability to change'. Happy New Term and Year!

If you have an idea for an article or the next issue, please email me at editor@prepschoolmag.co.uk

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Bringing up the Holocaust

Director of Studies Dr Matthew
Jenkinson at New College School,
Oxford reminds us not to shy away
from a sad and harrowing topic

How can we make them understand the seriousness of the Holocaust, without making Holocaust Memorial Day just another date to be ticked off, before the next 'World [insert topic here] Day' appears on the chronological carousel?

All schools follow a ritual year. They all have at their core a calendar punctuated by events that happen each and every year, whether they be Nativity plays, Harvest festivals, World Book Days, or Maths Olympiads. Most schools continue to add to this calendar, as something new is marked, diverse festivals are celebrated, and energetic members of staff promote their subjects. One particular date – 27th January – is one that, quite rightly, has been added to many schools' ritual year. But it is a date that is fraught with difficulties for those schools whose denizens are as young as four, as it commemorates Holocaust Memorial Day.

There is, of course, absolutely no problem with marking the day. It is the way in which this is done that causes anxieties. In essence, how can we bring our pupils' attention to a commemoration of such an atrocity, without causing them serious psychological disturbance? How can we make them understand the seriousness of the Holocaust, without making Holocaust Memorial Day just another date to be ticked off, before the next 'World [insert topic here] Day' appears on the chronological carousel? Is there a way of discussing the Holocaust in front of the whole school, while catering to the intellectual and emotional needs of learners of a wide variety of ages?

Such issues have come significantly to the fore in Israel, where a law has been passed to ensure that all

kindergarten children – five-year-olds – will be taught about the Holocaust. They hear sirens that blare out to mark Holocaust Memorial Day across Israel, anyway, so this statutory move arguably makes sense. Children will have been curious about the sirens' purpose, they probably will have discussed the issue with their parents, so perhaps it does no harm to move such a discussion into the classroom. Nonetheless, the new law was met with some resistance and much black humour (if you can call it 'humour'): the Polish artist Zbigniew Libera constructed a concentration camp out of Lego to illustrate the jarring of childhood innocence with a subject of such profound seriousness.

There are more productive ways in which the Holocaust can be memorialized among young children. The first point to make is rather obvious: mention of the Holocaust in general does not mean that children need to be traumatized by graphic stories of gas chambers. The key concepts of discrimination, prejudice and even genocide can, when done correctly, be discussed as abstract concepts that have had a terrible reality. I have wrestled with an appropriate and adequate way to define something so awful to young children. 'A time when Jewish people were not allowed to live their lives as Jewish people across the parts of Europe controlled by Adolf Hitler and his supporters in the 1930s and 1940s seems contrived, simplistic and

woefully inadequate to do justice to the memory of those who died. When done sensitively and with a keen eye for how the messages are being received, though, the general story of the Holocaust can be communicated. We are doing our charges a disservice, and not adequately honouring the memory of those millions who died, if we try to gloss over or duck away from so important a subject.

Another productive method is to focus on the bright lights of humanity that can be found in so dark a time. We can talk about the extraordinary people who did extraordinary things to protect and help people, principally (though not exclusively) Jewish people. There many people and organizations who helped victims of the Holocaust when they were under threat. We know of over 22,000 people in particular, and they have been honoured as 'Righteous among the Nations' – an honour given to those who put themselves in real danger to help save the lives of others.

The most famous of these, of course, is Oskar Schindler. We might also tell our pupils of Raoul Wallenberg and his colleagues, who saved 100,000 Jews in Hungary, or of Dimitar Peshev, who saved the lives of nearly 50,000 Jewish people in Bulgaria. Or of the town of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon which saved several thousand Jewish people. Or we could talk about the Oeuvre de Secours aux Enfants (OSE), a society set up to help around 1,300 Jewish children in France,



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Two women stand out as being remarkable for focusing their efforts on protecting Jewish children. Andree Geulen-Herscovici saved more than three hundred Jewish children by hiding them from the Nazis in Belgium. She helped give them new identities, but crucially she made sure she kept a record of their original names, so they could retain and rediscover their true identities. At the age of eighty-six, Andree was reunited with many of the children she had saved. Her response was extremely humbling and moving; she described her actions as ‘merely’ doing her ‘duty’. She loved them all, she said, like she loved her own children.

Irena Sendler saved the lives of 2,500 Jewish children in just three months. As a child, she had been taught to love and respect people, whatever their background. She stood up for her Jewish friends when she was a student in Poland, at a time when many people discriminated against Jews. Under the codename ‘Jolanta’, Irena smuggled children out of Warsaw because, she said, ‘we needed to give our hearts to them’. With the help of a team of 25 people, Irena gave the children a new home and a

new identity. Irena listed the name of every rescued child on cigarette papers or tissue paper. She then buried those lists in a glass jar under an apple tree in her neighbour’s garden, hoping that the children could be reunited with their families after World War II. Irena was caught at one point, but she refused to hand over the names of those people who were helping her.

After the war, Irena worked tirelessly to find the families of those children she had saved, to help reunite them. Her life has been turned into a play, *Life in a Jar*, which has been performed hundreds of times in America, Canada and Poland. She was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize and was given the highest honour you can earn in Poland: the Order of the White Eagle. Like the response of Andree Geulen-Herscovici, Irena Sendler’s reaction was truly humbling. ‘I only did what was normal,’ she said. I wonder how many of us would have ‘merely’ done our ‘duty’, or done what was ‘normal’. Surely the actions of such heroines exceed the realms of what today the vast majority would consider to be our ‘duty’ or ‘normal’.

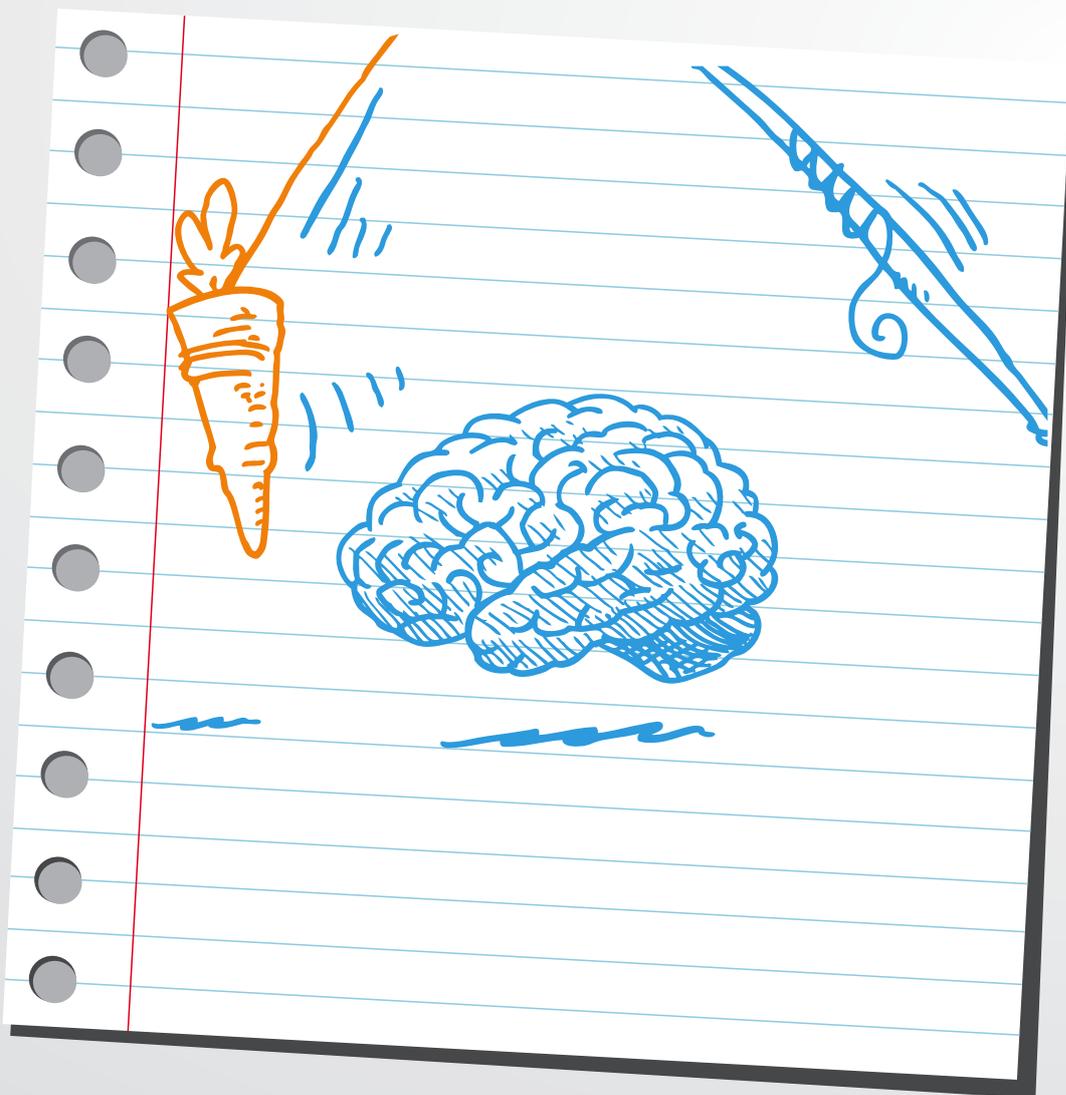
Irena also added that ‘The world can be better, if there’s love, tolerance and humility’. Surely these are three key qualities that should be celebrated, and Holocaust Memorial Day is an appropriate occasion on

which they should be promoted. Of course, the examples of Oskar Schindler, Raoul Wallenberg, Dimitar Peshev, Andree Geulen-Herscovici, and Irena Sendler stand out because they were extraordinary, and the implication is that their behaviour was necessary because so many other people were doing such awful things to their fellow human beings. This unimaginably grim time can be implied by focusing on individuals like Sendler or Geulen-Herscovici, while not dwelling gratuitously on the darkest horrors. In this way, young children can be introduced to a very important subject, without being traumatized.

The appropriate time will come when they can read about the horrors of Auschwitz or Buchenwald; some of our pupils will one day visit those very places; many will watch Schindler’s List. But the Holocaust – and the messages that arise from it – should not come out of the blue once our pupils reach their teenage years. The kindergarten children of Israel should not be the only ones asking why memorial sirens are blazing. We all of us have a duty to face up to the dark periods of inhumanity. Out of those dark periods will also come beacons of love, tolerance and humility. And it is with those beacons that we can start our pupils’ exploration of unimaginably difficult periods of the past.

Monitoring Motivation: a prime source of energy

Andrew Hammond shares a way of inspiring staff and pupils in your school



Schools need a constant flow of energy as a pen needs ink. Energy is the lifeblood of any school. From inspectors to prospective parents, discerning visitors to a school may be impressed by state-of-the-art facilities, honours boards in the dining hall and sports silverware in the cabinets, but it is the degree to which the atmosphere of a school energises its staff and pupils that makes it truly outstanding.

Such energy can be harnessed to encourage real prolificacy in children and staff alike. An energising school experience leads to more creativity, greater productivity and ultimately greater engagement in learning. So the benefits of an energising climate are obvious, but what is the source of all this energy?

Leaving aside the fact that the real source of all energy that has ever existed and will ever exist in the future was the Big Bang (in case someone takes me too literally here) I do believe that we have more energy at certain times in our lives, and at certain times in our education.

These moments are, as Ken Robinson might say, when we are ‘in our element’. Schools are wonderful places in which children, and staff, can find their element.

And being in our element means we possess the two qualities that have the greatest impact on our success and happiness: motivation and self-belief.

Like so many things in life that really matter, motivation and self-belief are invisible. If you think about it, it is not our skills or our personality or even our goals and aspirations that get us out of bed and into school in the morning, whether we are seven or 47; it is our motivation – deep, intrinsic motivation that is felt not only in the head or the heart but in the gut.

We can try to instill motivation in others – through rewards and even sanctions. But we all know that such extrinsic motivations are fleeting and can fizzle out like a damp squib on firework night. It is only intrinsic motivation that lasts through the year.

So how do we find it within us, as teachers, and how do we find it and

encourage it to burn brightly within our pupils? We know, don’t we, that a self-motivated student can, quite literally, go on to change the world. We know too that a self-motivated teacher can inspire young minds – what an awesome achievement that is.

Independent schools ‘do motivation’ well, just as they ‘do’ character and confidence and independent thinking. These qualities that make up the ‘invisible curriculum’ are hardwired into a good prep school’s culture and ethos, and they leap from the page of every prospectus and website, just as they feature in the script of every prospective parent tour. ‘Ours is a well-rounded education here, where character, confidence and curiosity are just as important to us as intellectual advancement.’

If I were a prospective parent my response to this claim would be: ‘Great, but how do you know? Can you prove to me that the character traits and attitudes of your pupils are as important to you as their intellectual capacities? Show me proof that you value self-motivation in your children and that you are monitoring their well-being and working habits as closely as you monitor their academic progress.’

I’ve no doubt the stock reply to this would probably be along the lines of, ‘The added value that we give our children, in terms of character development, motivation and confidence will be self-evident when you meet our pupils. You’ll soon see these qualities for yourself when you meet them in person today. They’re delightful.’

OK, so is that all of your pupils all of the time? Can I meet any of them at any time and still find them brimming with motivation and confidence, or do you mean the few hand-picked children who are waiting outside in the corridor, ready to greet me as soon as we’ve finished our tea, Headmaster?’

Please forgive the cynicism. It may well be that such a claim from a school leader is entirely justified because his or her staff work very hard indeed to monitor the state of mind of their pupils everyday, and are able to notice when their motivation dips.

But just to be sure, after draining my china cup of Lady Grey, I should like to pose the question again to the Headmaster, ‘If it’s so important to you, how can you prove that you are carefully monitoring the motivation of your students?’

The answer this time, may probably be something like, ‘Well, just because we value something doesn’t mean to say we should measure it.’ (A common view, with which I have much sympathy, or used to). I might brace myself here for the favoured Albert Einstein quote which often follows: ‘Not everything that can be counted counts and not everything that counts can be counted, Mr Hammond.’

A reply to this must surely be: ‘OK, so is your belief that motivation, just like character, curiosity or confidence, cannot be measured based on your past attempts to try to measure it and finding that you can’t? If so, can you talk me through those earlier attempts, please?’

Enough! Let’s park the cynicism and criticism, you cry. We all know

Like so many things in life that really matter, motivation and self-belief are invisible

that much of the real value of a good education, in terms of child development and those all-important life skills and attitudes, happens invisibly, under the radar of academic grades and assessments. Heaven forbid any of my four children coming home saying, 'Daddy, my confidence has risen from a C to a B, but my curiosity has slipped from an A to a B minus this term.' This seems rather facile doesn't it.

But I do want my children's teachers to monitor their motivation and self-belief because I know how integral these qualities will be to their future success – more important than their academic grades, one might suggest.

I want my children's teachers to know what does and does not motivate them so they can help them to capitalise on their natural motivators and provide strategies to help them thrive in the areas that don't motivate them too. We can continue to ignore these natural motivators, of course, and just expect my children to be self-motivated, or submit to the extrinsic motivators, in all lessons, all of the time, but I know they won't – and I want to know why.

This is proper, personalised teaching and learning of the order I expect from a good prep school. It's about knowing my children like I do.

If I asked my son's teacher if she could tell me what motivates him, I'll wager she might struggle to answer, or reach for his last assessment card to see which subjects he achieved a decent effort grade in. 'Ah, he achieved grade one for effort in Science, so obviously a scientist in the making, Mr Hammond,' she might say with confidence.

Not necessarily. There are so many possible reasons why my son, Edward, achieves top effort grades in Science: he likes the teacher and is motivated to work hard for him; he dislikes the teacher and resolved to 'show him'; he sits next to his best friend in this lesson so feels positive; he has science lessons in the afternoon and has usually woken up by then; his science teacher has a strict routine and Edward likes to know what to expect on a given day; or his science teacher

is unpredictable and my son enjoys the thrill of not knowing what will happen next; this teacher allows pupils to work together in groups, which Edward enjoys; or the teacher never allows group work and my son prefers it that way as he likes working by himself without distractions from others...

And so on. You get the picture. Or I should say, none of us get the full picture of Edward through his grades, whether they are for effort or academic attainment.

There is something else going on. There is something that my son does or does not find motivating in science, and I want to know what that is. I want to know why his science teacher is pressing the right buttons, when other teachers are not, or so it seems. I want to know what it is about science, or the science teacher, or the room, or the teaching and learning styles adopted, or the time of day, or the science curriculum itself, that motivates Edward? Imagine if we could know that, not only for my son but for all pupils?

I could always ask Edward, of course, and he would soon tell me. But why have they not asked him at school?

They have not asked him at school because the system is not currently set up to consider such questions. The system is created to deliver knowledge and skills to Edward and then to test him on how much of this knowledge he has retained and can recall, and how many of the skills he has mastered and can demonstrate on demand. Any extra care given to Edward is filed under 'pastoral care' and this is communicated to me by his personal tutor at the end of term in ways that are perfectly charming but completely non-specific, informal and entirely after the event. There is no 'script' for this, currently. Which is all well and good whilst Edward is confident and buoyant and just the sort of boy the Head would choose to show parents around. But what if all this dips? Which it will, inevitably.

Will they start questioning Edward's motivational levels and self belief when his effort grade in science falls

to a four? Is that when intervention strategies will kick in?

The system is not set up to monitor Edward's favoured learning style, favoured teaching style, favoured working style or favoured curriculum area. But it should be.

This is precisely why I like the Motivational Maps designed by James Sale. (At this point, I realise, readers may feel duped into reading an article that is ostensibly a sales pitch, but I promise I wouldn't trouble colleagues with something if I didn't think it was worthwhile – and I believe this is very worthwhile, so please read on!).

The Motivational Map gives an accurate report on what motivates an individual. We all have the same nine motivators in us but we prioritise them differently, depending on our wants and needs and on the changing circumstances around us. The Motivational Map is not a personality profile, neither is it a measurement of strengths and weaknesses or skills and talents. Rather, it is concerned with our wants and needs and how these shape what we do and why we do it.

And this is worth knowing. Still needing to be convinced, I had a motivational map done for me. It involved completing a 15 minute online questionnaire. This led to my receiving a 12 page report, accompanied by a one-hour feedback session over the phone with a mentor (in my case, the wonderful Mark Turner, who knows more about motivation than anyone I know).

The person described in my subsequent report was not just familiar to me, it was me. It was the most accurate assessment of what motivates me that I had ever seen – in fact, it was the only assessment of what motivates me I had ever seen. And it made me ask, how on earth have I pootled along for 43 years without actually knowing what motivates me, deep down, until now? Come to think of it, how much actual awareness of 'me' and what 'makes me tick' do I have? Boy, I wish I'd known this ten years ago, or 20, or 30...

I promptly arranged for all four of my children to be given student



motivational maps. We received three reports for each child: student, teacher and parent versions. Again, the results were astonishingly accurate and made sense of so much of my children's behaviour to date, and more than this, the recommendations listed within the report, and described at length in the feedback sessions, offered the most valuable insight into how to teach and encourage our children. Now that we know what does and does not motivate them – and I mean really know – then we can enjoy a much better rapport with them, because we can speak to them in the language of their motivators. We can give them strategies to deal with areas that are demotivating for them (so they can still achieve in these areas, which they must) and provide other suggestions for how to capitalise fully on their preferred motivators – and thus 'find their element'.

Of course, I now want my children's teachers to read their motivational reports, and I find myself asking the question, How can you teach any child without knowing this kind of information about them? That's not psychobabble, that's common sense. 'Why are these reports not embedded within all pupil monitoring systems and staff appraisals?' I cry.

I know that of the nine motivators, the 'Friend' is my son Edward's top

one. This means he is most motivated by rapport with others, fitting in, enjoying positive relationships and receiving the reassurance of social acceptance. Of all the teachers in the school, Edward gets on best with his science teacher.

In the case of my eldest daughter, her top motivator is the 'Director' which means she is motivated by leading groups, captaining hockey teams or helping to organise projects and events. A little bit of authority or responsibility goes a long way for my daughter.

The reports also provided us with a list, and explanations, of how all nine motivators ranked in our children's profiles. And mine too. My highest is the 'Searcher', motivated by meaning and purpose in what I'm doing. My lowest motivator is the 'Builder', motivated by money. Perhaps that's why I've written 40 educational books but drive a ten year old Golf.

Imagine how effective it would be if Heads could know the motivational profiles of their Senior Management Team, or staff? Are they Searchers like me, or perhaps Defenders, motivated by security, stability and thus change-resistant? Or are they Experts, motivated by training opportunities and mastering new techniques? Or Creators? Imagine too how effective as teachers we could become if we knew the motivational profiles of our pupils?

I was so convinced of the benefits of the maps that I became a trained and licensed practitioner for Motivational Maps, and established the company, MyMotivators. I work with schools in profiling the motivators of school leaders, staff and pupils, so that teams can work together more cohesively, staff can feel more motivated and pupils are better known to their teachers. Recognising each other's motivators reduces absenteeism in staff, increases productivity, raises performance in the classroom and greatly improves communication between staff and parents about their children.

Above all, the motivational maps provide the 'script' I had been looking for, shedding some light on what hitherto had remained invisible, and enabling us to report on it in meaningful ways. If this enables children and staff to find their element, and thus keeps the energy flowing through a school, I believe it's worth doing.

To find out more about Motivational Maps and the benefits they bring to schools, visit MyMotivators.co.uk or email Andrew Hammond: andrew@mymotivators.co.uk Andrew regularly visits schools to deliver INSET on all aspects of teaching and learning

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Paul Ainsworth inspires us to follow *Genesis 9:7*. Go forth and multiply

Are you constantly finding that you are trying to achieve more with the same resources or even less? In an ideal world with the vast majority of a budget spent on staffing we would be trying to get even more out of our staff but ever conscious that we also wish to care for their welfare. A few years ago I read 'Multipliers' by Liz Wiseman that suggested by developing my leadership style I could expect my staff to believe that they were twice as effective and I could stretch their ability!

What is a multiplier?

Wiseman believed that Multipliers amplify the intelligence of their work force. They have the ability to 'create collective, viral intelligence in an organisation'. The opposing leadership style is being a, 'Diminisher' who depletes the organisation of intelligence, capability and staff; who begin to believe they have nothing to offer the organisation except time and drudgery.

Multipliers and Diminisher can be intelligent. Staff can perceive Diminisher as geniuses and this can make them feel stupid. We can all think of the very academic teacher who does not understand why pupils cannot understand a concept. In sport, there are outstanding players who fail in management role as their players

are too in awe to perform.

The best school leaders are intelligent but they do not make staff feel that they cannot give their ideas. Due to your experience and talents you may perform tasks better than your staff. Yet to perform our jobs effectively we must delegate so we utilise our employee's skills to the full, develop them further or introduce new capabilities. Rather than being the genius Headteacher, be the genius maker!

Wiseman looked at the ways Multipliers worked and separated their actions into five disciplines; The Talent Magnet, The Liberator, The Challenger, The Debate Maker and The Investor.

The Talent Magnet

One of the most exciting tasks in the school year is the recruitment of new staff. Talent Magnets recruit good staff and achieve much more.

A Talent Magnet will consider that appointing staff with raw talent and a good mix of skills is the first part of the cycle of attraction. They will consider what other skills the teacher has and how these can be fully utilised. Can the teacher teach another subject, lead fantastic assemblies, have counselling experience or write timetables?

Talent Magnets continually assess how members of staff can add value to the organisation. Once skills or capabilities are recognised, they must be given opportunities to use them. This experience may mean that they seek promotion, in your own school but also outside. This is not necessarily a bad thing as some schools become known as the locations to go to for career advancement and receive a steady flow of new talent.

In all organisations there are negative influences and 'blockers' which prevent your new recruits working effectively. Whilst looking for talent everywhere and stretching staff with new projects; identify the blockers and try and minimise their influence.

Be a Talent Magnet: Consider one person per day in your organisation and identify their talents. Why not start with your senior leadership team? Share your thoughts with key staff.

The Liberator

Once a school has a rich input of talent, a Multiplier will liberate their staff to use their talents. Many teachers are buzzing with skills and ideas. Some schools would give them a heavy timetable as they seemed competent, leave them to teach and not allow them opportunities to



use their talents. I remember being discouraged from looking at any wider ideas as my job was to plug the timetable.

A Liberator encourages staff to use their skills and create an environment where they can implement their ideas. The opposite of a Liberator is a 'tyrant' who creates a tense atmosphere and people are afraid to offer solutions. A Liberator will give direction, but staff have space to think, are expected to give their best. If they make mistakes, they should learn from them. If you wish staff to take risks you must be prepared to share your errors or acknowledge when things have not worked.

To save time the best liberators will label their opinions by making their red lines clear. If as a school leader, the current school uniform is cast in stone, you need to make this clear to staff so that they do not waste their time creating ideas around this topic. For other subjects you need to encourage staff to give ideas perhaps by reducing your input in meetings to give space to develop their ideas.

Be a Liberator: Play meeting poker! Make a conscious decision to only give three ideas in meeting (playing three cards) so that your staff have space to solve the problems themselves.

The Challenger

Challengers encourage staff to create their own solutions. Senior leaders often have a lot of knowledge and can solve problems quickly. During a day many teachers ask questions because they want reassurance. Why not ask the teacher concerned what would they do? Often they have the answer but do not have the confidence to put it into practice. If we continue to give answers the member of staff can become dependent.

One subject leader recently asked me how they should adapt their scheme of work for less able children. My response was I wanted her to research what she thought was the best approach and then explain it to me and as she was the expert I would support her choice. One danger of this strategy is falling into the trap of asking questions and expecting

colleagues to second guess our answers.

Be a Challenger: Rather than what have I done today, consider what have I asked today?

The Debate Maker

Some leaders are hesitant to ask questions as they recognise meetings will then fill with debate. An SLT used to the Headteacher or another dominant member giving their view may be used to simply nodding in agreement.

A multiplier will create debate and manage it constructively so the team reaches a resolution rather than sitting in opposing camps. All teachers act as debate makers in the classroom. Use this to define people roles and structure the debates by defining the issue, engaging the team and ensuring a sound decision is made.

SLT debate can quickly become anecdotal; everyone has a story of a particular child, class, teacher or issue. A debate maker must ensure rigour so the discussion moves from anecdote to actual evidence. It is good practice to frame the debate so that people are tasked with drawing upon data preferably on existing self-evaluation but some primary evidence gathering may also be required.

One technique useful in reaching a consensus is to ask senior leaders to take the opposite side of the debate and argue against their own position. It takes time for a team to develop the practice of debate so that a consensus can be reached rather than more entrenched positions.

Be a Debate Maker: Not only ask people for their opinions but ask them to give their evidence for these thoughts.

The Investor

Finally Investors will invest in the success of others so that teachers can teach better and middle leaders run their teams more effectively. A true test for effective senior leaders is can they run the school effectively in the absence of the Headteacher and for middle leaders can they lead their area without relying on others.

You are trying to avoid developing staff that need micromanaging. On the smaller issues staff will make their own decisions and tell you afterwards. On the bigger things they will consult us, not to be told what to do but for the reassurance of a second opinion. There is nothing worse for senior leaders to find out major curriculum change when a parent rings in or by discovering a serious pastoral issue when it is compounded by another event.

Investors create an ethos in school where staff identify a problem and give a realistic and cost-effective solution. We've all sat in staff meetings where staff are happy to tell us of the things that are not working. Staff need ownership of their area and the school as a whole. We must develop staff; by coaching their leadership skills and modelling the behaviours we expect so people are accountable for their actions and not scared to act.

Be an Investor: When a problem is brought to your attention always ask the member of staff what would they do?

Be a Multiplier

Many leaders wish to become a Multiplier but why do the employees of a Multiplier feel they are twice as effective? They comment that by working for a diminisher they only use 50-60% of their talents. They may be working very hard and putting in the time but they stick to the routine. Those led by a Multiplier will feel they are using more than a 100% of their talents because they are developing further skills.

In the mythical school led by the perfect Multiplier, staff will constantly be looking for new ways of tackling problems. They will be striving to find more effective ways to run the school. They will not be working twice as many hours!

Paul Ainsworth is a School Advisor and former Head. He can be found on twitter as @pkainsworth and is the author of 'Developing a self-evaluating school', 'Get that Teaching Job' and 'The Senior Leader's Yearbook'

Running a school in recessionary times

In January 2009, the UK officially went into recession. Richard Fenwick, Headmaster of Hazlegrove reflects on how the school responded

The months following the collapse of Lehman Brothers in September 2008 were uncertain times.

We knew from previous recessions that pupil numbers in independent schools were likely to remain stable for two years before the economic downturn would affect us. The storm was coming, but how should we respond?

I recalled advice I had received in the past from two friends, coincidentally both lawyers, one in the world of banking in England, and one in politics and finance in Kenya (not incidentally, an unusual combination in that part of the world).

The London-based advice was cautionary and about surviving the tough times ahead. 'Tell your staff to take nothing for granted. Tell them not to take their job for granted, not to take any customer for granted. Do everything you can to provide the very best service you can.'

The advice from Nairobi planned the future, looking beyond difficult times. 'Always invest in a recession. You need to do everything you can to make sure that when the economy recovers you are stronger than your competitors and ready to respond to increased demand.'

Two very different messages, but they fitted together well and they provided the template on which we would base the next five years. Organisations do not stand still. They either go

forwards or they go backwards. Schools are no exception and we only wanted to go in one direction.

Take nothing for granted

The staff were determined to do all they could to support the school and the Hazlegrove families. We looked at all aspects of the school and identified a number of areas where we could be stronger.

We increased the opportunities for pupils, with more provision for sports and a greater range of clubs and activities. We were particularly keen to recruit more boys and investing in a floodlit sports facility had a huge impact, extending the school day and allowing us to introduce a year-round tennis programme. Twilight winter sport became a reality and boarders loved being able to get outside for football and hockey during those long winter evenings.

We reviewed the curriculum in the pre-prep and introduced more specialist teaching utilising the many strengths we had in the prep school. Dance, drama, tennis coaching, a full sports programme, music and forest school quickly made afternoons hands-on an active part of the day. Children were going home totally worn out, but with lots to talk about.

At the same time we began to feel the need to look beyond Europe and introduced Mandarin into the curriculum in Years 5 and 6.

We reviewed our IT provision, and

put in place an ambitious programme to introduce mobile technology into the classroom, responding to recommendations from the last Inspection Report. This was a complex and costly exercise involving a trench over a mile long to bring in 100Mb of bandwidth and significant investment in tablet technology.

We were determined to review the quality of our teaching and learning and appointed a new Director of Studies with experience of over 20 ISI Inspections as a Team Inspector. A more rigorous approach to staff appraisal, lesson observations and pupil work scrutiny was introduced. The quality of teaching and learning undoubtedly improved.

Communication strategies were reviewed and an ambitious three year programme to move towards a paperless approach was implemented. Again, this has been a challenging process and we are now on our fourth Management Information System. However, letters and reports going home in envelopes are a thing of the past. It's now all about parent portals, login details and passwords.

Staff at all levels were determined to be at the forefront of educational thinking and innovation.

Invest in a recession

Working closely with the Board of Governors, an ambitious programme of investment was put in place and the last five years has been an exciting



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time. Sport, music and the academic life of the school were priorities.

Sport has always been part of the lifeblood of Hazlegrove. An old shale hockey pitch provided the location and foundation for a second all-weather pitch which now supports our successful hockey culture; new netball courts freed up space, allowing us to install eight all-weather cricket nets with full bowling run-ups and synthetic grass wickets. Floodlighting extends the school day and new tennis courts support our tennis programme. By converting an existing facility, costs were kept to a minimum and an in-house appeal provided the funds needed to complete the lighting.

The addition of a new percussion room to our existing music facility, the refurbishment of the theatre and new visitor cloakrooms support our ambitious performing arts programme.

Perhaps the most exciting project is

our new £1.7M Teaching and Learning Centre which was opened by her Royal Highness the Countess of Wessex at the start of the academic year. It is defined by its innovative design, six classrooms, a learning support centre and lots of centralised break-out space to support independent learning. It has been surprisingly transformational. The increased sense of endeavour is tangible and staff love teaching in there. Internal glass walls, huge windows and high ceilings combine to create such space and light that spirits are lifted and ambition is fuelled.

Five years later

Undoubtedly, Hazlegrove is emerging from the recession as a stronger and more complete school, better equipped to meet the needs of a wider variety of pupils. The quality of teaching has improved, it is more inspirational and greater attention is given to meeting individual needs. The momentum of pupil achievement is

growing; pupils are gaining increasing numbers of scholarships and awards to their senior schools and sporting achievement is gaining national as well as regional recognition. Pupils are exceeding not only their own expectations, but also those of their parents and their teachers. These are exciting times.

Looking to the future

We are often asked if Hazlegrove is changing. In most respects, the answer is no. Pupils still experience a genuine childhood, traditional values and a strong sense of family still permeate through all aspects of school life. Our boarding community has continued to grow and remains at the heart of the Hazlegrove community. We simply strive to improve all that we do.

The recession has given us much. It has made us reflect, it has given us greater focus and determination and it has refined our vision. It was good advice.

Manners matter

Robert Gullifer, Headmaster of New College School, Oxford says now is the time actively to promote good manners across the whole school community as part of the renewed national emphasis on values

It's a truism that teaching is a long game and we don't always see immediate results for our efforts. But often parents are thoughtful enough to take the trouble to write to express their thanks to a school or to individual teachers not because their children have received particular plaudits, but just because they appreciate the overall care and concern for all the children which goes on day-in-day-out. Such appreciation is part of a civil home-school dialogue and, just as importantly, recognises that education is not instant, but rather an on-going process shared between school and parents.

It concerns me, therefore, that a growing minority of parents write or email, not because they have a genuine complaint, but because their child has not received as many certificates as someone else, or not had as many solos in a concert, or is not picked for the first team or has got a smaller part than someone else in the school play. They do not seem to understand, especially at prep school level, that it is important to spread such honours around, that different people have different talents and, even more importantly, that it's simply good manners to rejoice in others' successes as much as one's own. It's something that children instinctively understand: I've seen them whisper a word of congratulation to each other or pat each other on the back after an award in assembly. I've seen them cheer an opposing team's victory on the sports field. These things have always been traditionally considered

part of 'fair play' and 'sporting behaviour'.

It's easy to deride 'good manners' as a soft, old-fashioned value; but I've always thought of manners as the oil which makes society work smoothly. These conventions have a social purpose. The very parents who write to complain about the alleged 'lack of recognition' of their children would be the first (and rightly so) to decry a school in which children are encouraged to be competitive at others' expense or resent the achievements of others. These children have to get along with each other: they put a high premium on friendship and loyalty. Behaving in a mannerly way fosters this. Unmannerly children will soon find they have no friends and no loyalty from others if the going gets difficult. I pity the child who is brought up at home to believe they are good at everything because their parents have cleared the way for them. Not only are they subliminally subjected to intolerable pressures to succeed, but they receive a clear message that their parents will sort things out if they don't. One day they won't want or have that parental support and then they must relate effectively to those around them: that's where good manners are vital. But, by then, they might have received the erroneous message that sharp elbows, money and big talk get you all you need. Well, all except genuine friendship and good relationships with others.

And what about the poor manners of the parents who don't let you know

they have entered their child for a particular senior school and the first you hear of it is when a reference request comes through? In some cases, they've not even had the manners to let their own children know either. Presumably they hope by this sort of clandestine manoeuvring, they will obtain what they (but often not their children) want. Do they not see how a little courtesy, openness and honesty would achieve the same or even a better outcome without sowing the seeds of suspicion and resentment? The truth will always out. Or, in a more extreme, but not I suspect isolated, example there was the nationally-reported primary school Head who, in response to complaints received from local residents, had to write to parents about their anti-social behaviour at the school gate. Again, what messages are their children receiving about how to treat others?

If, as schools and educators, we care about the values of a civilised and well-ordered society and furthermore now have a duty actively to promote 'fundamental British values', I would argue that promoting the values inherent in good manners is a vital part of this. (I'd of course also want to observe that manners are not exclusively the prerogative of Britain, but it is true that British society has been traditionally associated with the values of 'le fair play' - a term the French have borrowed from English - and good manners, so let's build on the stereotype). And we ought to worry if parents and others in our society model behaviour which runs



counter to good manners. William of Wykeham, the founder of New College School, Winchester College and New College, did. The motto of the Wykehamist foundations, 'Manners Makyth Man', is more polemic than we might think. In his day, Wykeham became one of the most successful and wealthy men in England; but contrary to the prevailing ethic of the time, he always attributed that to his education and the way he interacted with others, rather than to any family influence. The motto puts it clearly: it's the way you behave towards your fellow human beings which makes you a successful and decent person.

I suspect that some of the poor manners we see from parents emanate from a nervousness about how their children will fare in an increasingly competitive world; a feeling that

everyone else must be pushing their children forward, so they must too. So, as we are urged to become more proactive in promoting good values, schools should take a pride in modelling appreciation of others, loyalty and open communication in every aspect of school life. And we should challenge parental behaviour which does not live up to this too. The 'me' generation of parents may find this tricky at first, but they might actually feel supported by it. Most parents cannot intrinsically gainsay these values, but they must be challenged – as we should be in school too – to put them into action.

How should we do this? Every lesson, every assembly, every encounter in the corridor, every action from school employees should consistently demonstrate good manners. Pupils

should be treated with exactly the same respect as adults. Everyone in the community needs to sign up to it and pulled up if they fall short. And that includes parents. Why not invite parents into assemblies, drip-feed the ethos through newsletters, hold a parenting forum? Above all, make parents think about how their actions affect how their children perceive the adult world and grow into it. We are not afraid to insist on good manners from our pupils; we are not afraid to challenge rude or unprofessional behaviour from our colleagues, so why should we accept anything less from the parents with whom we are in partnership in educating the next generation? And if parents find it uncomfortable, the message might be getting through.

I suspect that some of the poor manners we see from parents emanate from a nervousness about how their children will fare in an increasingly competitive world

Speak the truth

Ditch the rhetoric and add some authenticity to your school's culture, says Geraint Jones

Over Christmas, I re-read *Wittgenstein's Poker*, David Edmonds and John Eidinow's informative and amusing account of Wittgenstein's famous clash with Karl Popper in Cambridge in October 1946.

The intensity of Wittgenstein's intellectual life throws comic light on our current preoccupations with critical and creative thinking as a core educational goal. But, forget our students for a moment. Why do so many teachers and Headteachers spend so much of their time mouthing the mantras of the current educational orthodoxies?

In my new role as Dean of Education at the University of Buckingham, I have the privilege to visit a good number of schools, state and independent. I often have the chance to talk to Headteachers about what they are trying to do in their schools. Here is what one state school Head said to me recently: 'We develop our pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural awareness. We want them to be independent thinkers, active learners, global citizens with high self esteem, who develop a love of learning'.

All admirable objectives, of course. But the question is what individually and collectively, they mean and how these outcomes are to be realised? It is easy to talk the talk, hard to dig into the complexities and, on occasion, inanities which underpin the rhetoric.

What, for instance, do we mean when we say we want our students to be 'independent thinkers'? Does this mean that we expect their judgements and world view to spring miraculously from their individual heads uncontaminated by anything they have read or been taught? Has any thinker, ever, in the history of mankind, produced new insights which have not grown from his engagement with what has been written and thought before? How realistic are we in expecting 10 or 11 year olds to have the knowledge and experience to come to an independent view? What is the right balance between teaching and independence? These are the kinds of questions that should preoccupy us when we are rehearsing the dogma of the day.

Is it that, like doctors who write illegible prescriptions, we are seeking to mystify the layman? I don't think so. It is that, for some perverse reason, we seem to enjoy mystify ourselves. We appear to believe that the educational enterprise needs re-inventing and that as leaders in our schools we have to speak up for the new world.

What matters in a school? Four things: the quality of teaching, the curriculum, the pastoral care and the extra-curricular provision.

When I became a Headteacher, it took me a while to realise this obvious truth and, until I did, I found that more and more verbiage would seep into my discussions with parents and staff, my reports to governors and the marketing campaigns we designed to promote the school's identity. The less I was involved in running the core business of the school, the more inauthentic I became in talking about the school and its students.

I cannot recall many conversations I had with a teacher or



governor which were not about one of these essential aspects of our school's life. The talk might have been about fees, attainment, facilities, pupil tracking, the website or lesson observations, yet they could all be traced back to our desire to

improve teaching, the curriculum, pastoral care or extra-curricular provision.

The Headteacher is the key decision maker in the school, the person parents almost always want to speak to if there is an issue, the school's main marketer, and the link between the governors and the school. I therefore made it my business to know the ins and outs of every facet of the school, so as not to trot out the rhetoric. I sound a little

weaknesses, and they develop the organisation with these in mind.

It is, of course, easier said than done. Bureaucracy, pressures and deadlines can consume a Headteacher's life, and it is a courageous and skilful one who strikes the right balance between strategic thinking, managing his/her people, managing the paperwork, managing the parents and managing the governors.

I have not met many Headteachers, either in the state or independent sector, who disagree with these fundamentals of the job or indeed the challenges associated with them. Why is it, then, that rhetoric rears its ugly head so often?

My answer, brutal but true, is that it is easier to talk the talk than walk the walk. I used to ask myself every Friday afternoon when I was a Head how much time I had spent in classrooms or working with heads of department. My key aim for the school was to raise standards of teaching. I spent more time, I think, than most Headteachers on this goal, but it was nowhere near enough. I allowed too much else to intrude. I did not invest enough intellectual energy in challenging our pedagogic assumptions and practice.

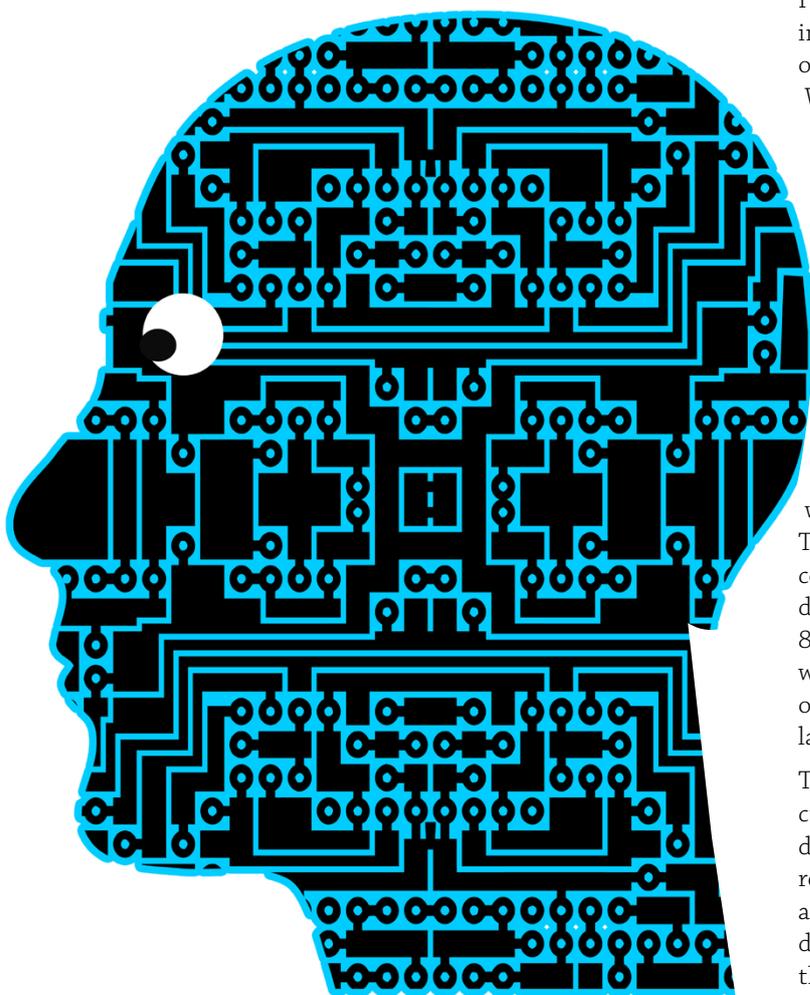
Some time ago I heard an anecdote about the culture which has been created at The Europa Hotel in Belfast. This hotel has hosted presidents, prime ministers and celebrities. It is also the world's most bombed hotel – during the nationalist conflict in Northern Ireland in the 80s and 90s it suffered 28 attacks. Despite its notoriety, when staff at the hotel were asked about how the hotel operated, the same reply would be forthcoming – “We are ladies and gentleman, serving ladies and gentleman.”

Those nine words grouped together say it all about the culture operating within the hotel, even under the most dangerous of circumstances. It is, as much as anything, a reflection of the quality of the leadership within the hotel, and how these men and women involve themselves on a daily basis with the service they offer and the people in their employment.

Hotel, school, business, government department: it is the culture which drives the day to day activities of the organisation that matters most. It is the actions of staff guided by a clear set of underpinning values which determine how an organisation achieves its aims. This is the fundamental responsibility of any leader: to define the

like a control-freak. Show me a good Headteacher who isn't.

Leaders who lead know what their colleagues are doing. They understand the issues 'on the ground' and help put them right; they get to know people's strengths and



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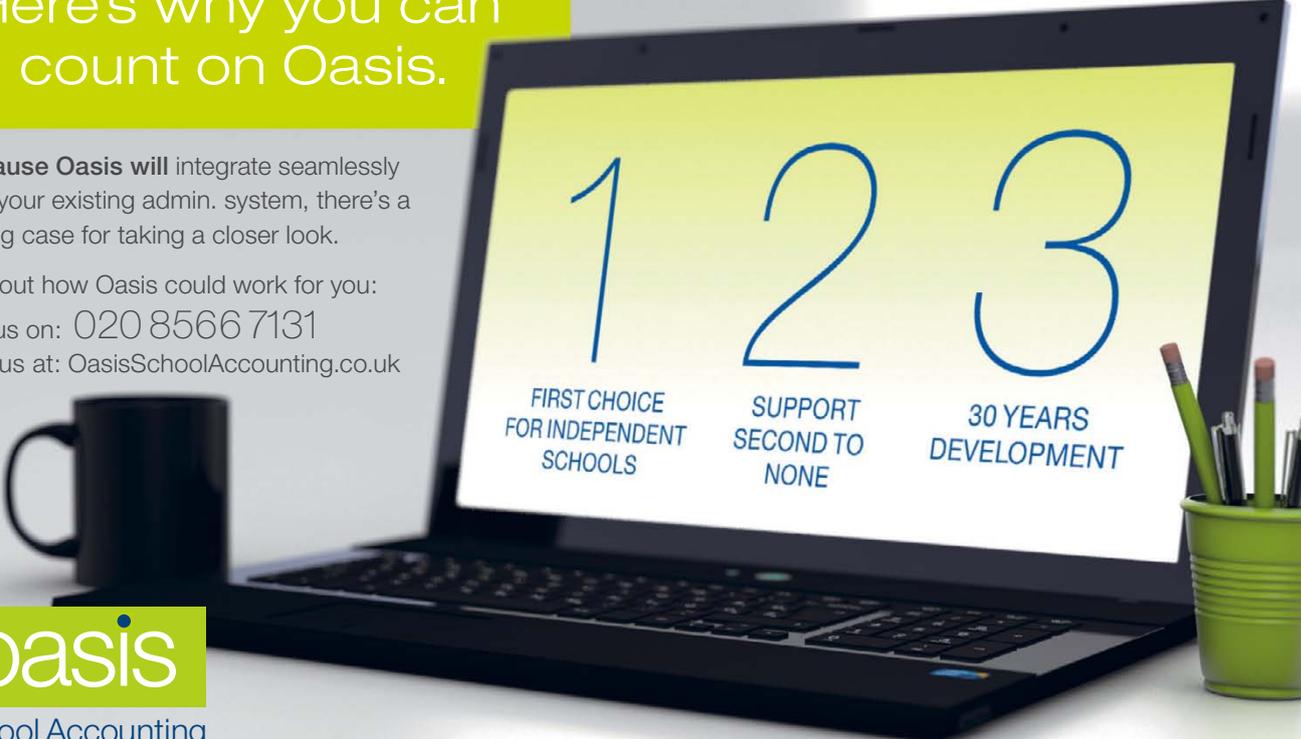
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It is the actions of staff guided by a clear set of underpinning values which determine how an organisation achieves its aims. This is the fundamental responsibility of any leader: to define the aims and the culture through their words and, crucially, their example

aims and the culture through their words and, crucially, example.

It may be a useful exercise for Heads to ask their staff about the culture in their schools, because as one very wise Head once told me, 'You know when you've cracked it, when your staff tell you back what you've been telling them for years.'

The following statements all came from staff in one school:

- Fun, in its proper place, is good, but it's not an objective. It is a by-product for pupils of good teaching, and for staff of camaraderie and a common desire to crack the craft of the classroom.
- We retain, employ and reward the best teachers, coach those who want to be better, allow the rest to leave.
- The SLT exists to remove barriers to allow teachers to teach more effectively.
- We aspire to achievable aspirations for every pupil in every discipline. Challenge is good. Belief is better.
- We know our pupils and care about them. We especially know their academic profile, progress and attainment, and have the data to prove it. Parents delight that we know their children's
- abilities as well as, if not better, than they do.
- We know our subjects and care about them.
- Parents should never be surprised by news at parents' evenings – it's too late by then.
- Energy-sappers have no place here. We have an 'if not me, then who?' culture.
- Parents - If you like what we do, tell others, if you don't, tell us.
- Staff – If you like what we do, tell others, if you don't, tell the Head.
- Our profession is noble and respectful, and we will uphold and protect these beliefs.
- Within reason and skill-set, no colleague will ask something of another which they are not prepared to do themselves.
- Bureaucracy is kept to a minimum. Our outcomes cover our backsides, not a piece of paper.
- It is never "my school, my staff, my pupils" – this says more about someone's need to be seen to be in charge. This is "our school, our staff, our pupils".
- Finally, and perhaps most important of all, we aspire to be a thinking school with a questioning culture. We are

prepared to turn every stone and we are not frightened by what we might find underneath it.

Wouldn't you, as a teacher, love to work at that school? As a parent, would you not want to send your children there? There is a simplicity and honesty about the above statements which stands in stark contrast to the educational discourse which dominates so much of our time. The challenge is to cut through the pseudo thought and devote ourselves to the things which really matter.

For more information about the University of Buckingham's courses for current and aspirant school leaders, see www.buckingham.ac.uk/education

Geraint Jones has been Dean of Education at the University of Buckingham since 2014.

Prior to joining the University, Geraint was Director of Education for Cognita Schools - Europe's largest independent schools group. Geraint was Headmaster of Quinton House School in Northamptonshire - a co-educational, non-selective, independent school for 2-18 year old pupils. Under his leadership the school became the top performing school in the county at GCSE level.

Prior to joining QHS, he was Vice Principal at a large state comprehensive school.

Teaching computing well

Margaret White, Director of Studies at St Faith's, Cambridge, considers the value of a good computing curriculum for prep schools

As educators we have a responsibility to teach our pupils how to live in a digital age responsibly, safely, creatively, effectively and efficiently: children need to be taught how to be masters not servants of IT. Of more intellectual and academic interest, we can teach our pupils how to be contributors to the digital age. They can learn to be creators rather than merely consumers, and be inspired

as visionaries, themselves equipped to devise new technologies that will make the real world a better place. The rules and tools, languages and protocols of computing, once grasped, provide novel learning opportunities, and act as an exceptional spur to creativity and curiosity, intellectual interest and ambition. The case for excellence in the teaching of computing is undisputable.

A digital generation

The Digital Revolution is arguably the most momentous global societal change since the industrial revolution. Its products – including the internet and digital devices that depend upon it – comprise the most powerful tool ever created by mankind; and in all likelihood, the field is still in its infancy. Its impact on education, as on



all spheres of life, is, and will continue to be, highly significant.

For the current generation of children, however, IT is as natural a part of the world as are books and bicycles – arguably more so. Born into a digital world, known as the information age, from the earliest moments of play children now engage with digital toys, graduating rapidly to all manner of mobile and wired digital devices. For our pupils, IT is neither special nor novel; it is simply an integral part of any world they have ever known.

IT is also likely to be a highly significant element of the world they will enter as adults, so that not only will good IT skills and understanding be important for employment, but for playing any part as a fully integrated and responsible citizen. Further, however, the current generation of children will rapidly become the architects of future technological advance.

Digital responsibility

It follows that we also have a burden of responsibility to equip this generation fully and effectively for the challenges and responsibilities that living in a digital world will bring. Schools therefore have a responsibility to devise the best possible computing curriculum, which will determine how best to enable pupils to become skilled users of IT, and how best to enable children to become skilled creators and developers of IT

Firstly therefore, our computing curriculum needs to be designed to meet our aspiration of enabling children to be responsible and skilled users of digital technologies. Arriving at school they are already familiar with IT, but need to hone that familiarity into a knowledge of exactly what IT can do, an understanding of precisely when it is of use, and the skills necessary to apply it to each particular need.

In the younger years, the computing curriculum therefore must encompass digital literacy skills, teaching children how to use computers, other digital devices and associated software responsibly, safely, creatively, effectively and efficiently. Pupils

An obvious challenge is that the hardware and software that children will be using in their later lives are yet to be invented

need to receive a foundation in the operation of the most widely-used software packages and computing devices and learn about how digital technologies can be beneficial for accessing, organising and communicating information in a multiplicity of guises. The goal of this teaching is to ensure that children grow up to be masters rather than servants of IT.

Transferable skills

An obvious challenge is that the hardware and software that children will be using in their later lives are yet to be invented, so instead of being concerned with detailed functioning of a specific package, they should be taught the operational fundamentals of computers and programs, which can be transferred to future developments.

As a result, if taught well, they will know how to use the many spin-offs of IT for their benefit and that of others, including within school across the curriculum as they progress through the years. IT skills are transferable and applicable across the curriculum, enhancing opportunities for accessing widely divergent banks of information as well as for the presentation and communication of ideas.

Stimulating creativity

Secondly, computing offers a unique opportunity to stimulate creativity, curiosity and interest as an academic discipline in its own right. This is particularly so when children are empowered to be creators rather than

simply consumers of the technologies. Thus besides preparing children for life in an increasingly digital world, our computing curriculum even in the younger years, must provide a grounding in computer science.

Computer science has a great breadth that spans the academic spectrum. Inherently cross-curricular it includes programming, often likened to learning a foreign language, pure mathematics topics such as binary, robotics which overlaps with science and engineering, a rich history during its short life as an academic discipline, and artistic topics such as web design and fractals.

A major component of computer science is programming, where pupils have to organise their thoughts in a formal, unambiguous and structured way. Children can be introduced to the concept of programming from as early as the age of five when they generate sequences of instructions for programmable floor toys. As the children get older, and certainly from the age of nine or ten, the computing curriculum evolves into a rigorous academic course in computer science, teaching children the rules and tools, languages and protocols of computing. Learning programming promotes thinking about thinking.

Once children know what the building blocks are for programming and understand the structures which they form, they can acquire the skills necessary to become architects of novel applications themselves. Hence, for example, knowledge of control sequences and the Python

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programming language gives the opportunity for pupils to create their own nascent versions of artificial intelligence; an understanding of binary, hardware and logic gates can lead to the creation of computers themselves.

The practical application of these skills – possible in many contexts – is hugely enjoyable, while also encouraging imagination to develop and inventiveness to flourish. Resultant achievements and attendant experiences of success are key ingredients in fostering a life-long love of learning, exploration and creativity. Pupils who truly understand the power and process of such technology will also understand something of its potential. Our aspiration must be to educate children to have the imagination and perseverance to be the future creators of new technologies which have the

potential to be developed and used for the wider benefit.

Mastering the virtual world

Computing as a subject falls neatly within the collective prep school aspiration of providing a broad, balanced, rigorous and engaging curriculum which encourages all pupils to excel. Computing develops pupils' problem-solving skills and logical thought, whilst creating a life-long passion for many of them. By its nature, however, computing is a rapidly evolving discipline. It follows that lead teachers need to be keen, astute followers of the field, constantly on the watch for developments if we are to fulfil our aspiration that our children experience the best practise in the teaching of both digital literacy and computer science.

Our pupils must learn to understand and master the virtual world so that they can live and work effectively within it and be encouraged and equipped to be its future architects. This way they may be inspired to become the next generation's developers of novel and exciting new technologies that can be used to help make the real world a better place for all who live in it.

St Faith's is in its second year of an entirely new computing curriculum, which covers both digital literacy and computer science. It has been awarded Lead School status in the Network of Teaching Excellence in computer science, and runs courses on teaching computing for local schools.

It's not what you've got but how you use it

Jody Burley, Head of Geography at Fairfield Preparatory School, believes that schools should allow children's innate ability for self-learning to dictate how technology is used

The use of technology in modern primary schools is now ubiquitous and yet this still remains one of the most confusing and daunting areas that schools are contending with. Should we have one device per child? Should we use tablets or notebooks? How do we future proof our choices as technology evolves exponentially? Do we need to teach this stuff explicitly or can we rely on exposure and secondary learning? And perhaps the most important question that schools face - How do we afford it? It seems that education has found itself caught up in a self-perpetuating race, which has sprung from a 'keep up with the Joneses' mentality with regards to technology in classrooms. Prep schools especially don't want to look out-dated and feel that cutting edge technology is an essential part of what it means to be the best. Perhaps we need to refocus; we should not be looking at what we have but rather on how it is used.

For anyone tired with trying to keep up with educational technology look no further than the, now famous, TED lectures by Professor Sugata Mitra to restore some of that zest. His credentials are testament to his genius at whatever he puts his mind to; a genuine polymath with credits in biochemistry, computing, education and cognitive science. In

his 'hole in the wall' experiments (from 1999 and repeated until 2005) he left a computer connected to the internet in the wall of an Indian slum and returned two months later to observe the level of self directed learning that had taken place. His results were astounding. In some of the poorest parts of the world children learnt to speak English with a perfectly neutral accent (in order to operate the computer set in voice recognition mode) and gained pass marks on exams that actually rivalled their peers that were lucky enough to attend the local schools. Sugata Mitra repeated this effect in different

slums around the world and gained international recognition. In fact, his studies were the inspiration for a novel by Vikas Swarup that inspired the film Slumdog Millionaire.

From this research Professor Mitra proposed that education is a self-organising system; meaning that as a species we are genetically predisposed to what he calls the emergence of learning. He developed this hypothesis further in 2009 on a group of nine years olds at St.Aiden's school in Gateshead. He asked them to get into groups of four in order to answer six GCSE questions using the internet and one computer per group. The rules

It seems that education has found itself caught up in a self-perpetuating race, which has sprung from a 'keep up with the Joneses' mentality with regards to technology in classrooms



were: It is OK to observe and copy other groups and it is OK to change groups if you want to. Now remember, these were Year 4s! The fastest groups had answered the six GCSE questions in just 20 minutes; the slower group took 45 minutes to answer them. Not bad, but of course the logical criticism was that these answers were simply 'lifted' off the internet and had not been understood to a particularly deep level by the children. In order to test this further Sugata Mitra gave the children these same six questions two months later, but this time it was a traditional written test, which the children answered independently. Amazingly, the results were exactly the same as when the children had access to the internet; the average pass mark was 76%. Professor Mitra maintains that this effect was observed because the children were in small groups and were continually discussing the information in order to make sense of it. If the children are not given this opportunity to interact then the learning is not retained. Interestingly, Sugata Mitra has repeated this experiment in several countries and has found that results have even been known to increase two months later on the paper test. He postulates that this is because children have continued their discussions in their own time and have done further research on Google.

So how can this improve what goes on in the classroom? Surely the message here matches what most of us regards as sound pedagogy; as teachers we are the facilitators of the learning experience not the directors and dictators. Though sadly in many of our classrooms the children are seldom given the opportunity to "find their element" as Ken Robinson puts it in one of the most watched TED lectures of all time entitled *How Schools Kill Creativity* (2006). Instead we follow a very rigid format of teaching and assessment, which is all too limited in opportunities for self-discovery and chances for the children to learn through their own strengths and styles. Surely the classroom should be an environment where the children learn to interact and communicate effectively to solve shared problems because these are the skills they will need in the real world. It is purely this interaction and emergence of self-learning that has attracted so much interest in Professor Mitra's research.

In practical terms this research illustrates that we should be looking to use technology to drive group work. There is no point giving children an iPad each if there is no common purpose. Classroom tasks needs to be given enough space and time to evolve organically and to allow for

group dynamics to drive them if we want to tap into a child's innate ability for self-learning. In many ways this requires a shift in the educational philosophy of our classrooms in order to make self-discovery one of the key precepts of the learning process. Preparatory schools have a higher number of specialist lessons in their timetable, which makes this creative flow and child-led learning harder to achieve. Instead, we become slaves to the timetable and end up trying to shoehorn lessons into single periods before herding the class out in their sports kit to an away fixture. Arguably a cross-curricular, topic based teaching approach does create more interconnection for the learners but to really bring the classroom alive we need to be working towards significant projects within these topics. Whether it's a *Dragon's Den* presentation to gain funding for a project, a charity or local community link or something else the children can work towards in groups. This is where Professor Mitra's self-organising system will come into play. Teachers will always be needed to facilitate and encourage reflection on the learning journey but we must have the courage and confidence to step back and get out of the way.

There has been much discussion in further education about the benefits



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By using technology that is free to schools it just takes a fresh perspective on how to maximise the opportunity for collaborative learning

of 'flipping the classroom' so that lectures are watched before class to enable the teachers to discuss and clarify rather than instruct. A good platform is vital for this Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) but as yet there has been very little academic research on the benefits in a primary school setting for flipping the classroom. Imagine the discussions that could take place and the time that you could free up in your crammed timetable if the 'information feeding' part happened at home. Your lessons would be practical, discursive, dynamic and would evolve to follow the children's own interests around a topic

One digital tool kit that I have had a lot of success with in the classroom is Google Drive. I'm not a Google rep, nor am I on their payroll but it's not hard to see the benefits of using the Google Drive system as a basis for a VLE. Above all else it is a tool for collaboration. The Google version of the Microsoft Office suite can seem a little clunky at first but children absolutely love the simplicity and the fact that they can see what other members of their group are doing, on separate computers, in real time. On a shared document the children each have their own coloured cursor with their name above it and after modelling 'polite' collaborative behaviour (eg not deleting or typing over your partner's work) the children's progress in a group is staggering. From what I've seen the sum is usually greater than the parts and what I've found really interesting

is that the less able children who tend to drift at first, rapidly caught up because these tools are accessible from home. And the children want to learn to use it because it's fun. What's not to like about chatting to your friends at home using the chat bar while making a poster using Google Drawings on the topic from class; the amount of information that is exchanged in this way fuels discussions that I've heard continuing for days after at school.

In my opinion Google apps for Education deserves a whole article to itself but for now all you need to know is that there is a wealth of information out there on the subject and if you've got time it's easily learnt. I used this platform to create my school's VLE for free (save the price of domain registration) and by giving each child their own Google account they also receive 30GB of storage space each, which is plenty. I disabled the account's email function to make policing the system more manageable and instead used Edmodo as the go to communication board and as an extension to the VLE (a great resource and a wealth of knowledge on the subject is Mark Allen from edintheclouds.com). By using technology that is free to schools it just takes a fresh perspective on how to maximise the opportunity for collaborative learning. We shouldn't be making it our goal to supply every child with a device in the classroom; be it an iPad or a chrome book, it's completely immaterial. What is important is that we change our mind set about how we use technology and

see it more as a tool to help teachers facilitate in order to allow children to direct themselves.

Even old desktops are more useful than the most up to date technology when used creatively. Sugata Mitra is currently conducting a longitudinal study based on the development of Self-Organising Learning (SOLE) Environments within classrooms. Each SOLE consists of a computer with seating for four children (to encourage open discussion) and a large screen which projects the face of a mediator from the 'The Granny Cloud'. The job of this mediator is simply to offer praise, encouragement and ask questions in order to illicit explanations and discussion from the group. His research has suggested that learning can be accelerated and retained by a further 25% with the addition of this warm and encouraging persona in his SOLEs. The key elements seem to be open questioning and lack of judgement, hence why Sugata Mitra has been very busy recruiting retired grannies for just this purpose. Again, this comes back to child driven learning; teachers standing aside and letting children learn for themselves, as they are genetically predisposed to do. Aurther C Clarke quite contentiously said that, "If a teacher can be replaced by a machine he should be." I don't think we are even close to this point. On the contrary, our empathic responses and emotional consideration should be exercised more as we as teachers learn to get out of the way and let the learning take place.

The last piece in the jigsaw

Aimee Tan believes once-prized qualities in children are becoming increasingly less relevant since the digital revolution

In the week before half term we took a small team of Year 7 children to Samsung.

In their technology showroom, talking to our children, Tim Skinner and Philip Oldham were able to paint a vivid picture of how technology will continue to enhance our lives over the next decade. They were able to describe in great detail what it may be like to live in an 'inter-connected' world. We have moved in to an age of technology enhanced living. As a generation of digital immigrants grappling to make technology serve us in work and in leisure, how might we prepare our children for their futures as digital natives, a generation whose use of ICT is intuitive, confident and fluent?

How must we adapt our teaching and learning for the modern world? Some things are certain:

Once prized and rewarded qualities in children, neatness, accuracy, the ability to retain and

regurgitate enormous bodies of fact, for example, are becoming increasingly less relevant to our modern society. Instead we look to the development of key, transferable skills that will prepare our children for tomorrow's work place. Our children must be able to analyse, to evaluate, to synthesise information. They must be motivated to work independently, they must have the sensitivity and empathy to collaborate. They must have the tenacity and the curiosity to experiment. They must have the creativity, the confidence and the freedom to take risks.

The Samsung Galaxy Note, selected for its digital pencil and split screen, will change the ways we teach and thus the ways our children learn. Pedagogy will become child specific and differentiation heightened as children choose how they wish to receive, record and present information using text, images, photos and film. These choices will engender greater metacognition

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– a sophisticated awareness of how they work and learn most effectively. With this increased control, children will feel a greater sense of ownership over their learning; with increased opportunities for self and peer assessment, they will become more reflective. With greater reflection, children will want to review, edit and improve their work. Freed from the constraints of ‘neatness’, and buoyed by a digital toolkit, they will become more creative.

The Note’s split screen function coupled with safe, monitored access to the internet encourages children to draw and synthesise information from a range of sources. They will learn to

question its reliability and to evaluate its worth. The device’s portability, the school’s virtual learning environment and the use of cloud technology will ensure a consistency in learning whether in the classroom, on the sports’ field or at home. Communication between school and home will be improved as the Note becomes the window through which parents can view their child’s academic life. Subject web pages will give information on curriculum, tips for homework and links to relevant websites. ‘Hand outs’ will be un – losable and as preps are distributed, submitted and marked electronically, dogs will have to eat something other than homework.

Whilst the path ahead may seem uncertain, the destination is clear. Learning through ICT must be an embedded practice. 21st Century children must view technology as intrinsic to their successes at senior schools, universities and in the work place, and if we are truly to prepare our children for greater things, 21st Century adults must accept and promote its value too. For us, here at Barrow Hills slotting together excellent pastoral care, our Catholic ethos and high academic standards, a fully integrated approach to ICT is the last piece in our jigsaw. Only now may the picture be complete.



The 'i-Know' parents

Mobile technology has created a stronger link between school, parent and pupil, argues Lisa Spriggs

[Definition] i-Know par-ent

noun: A father, mother or guardian with a detailed understanding of their child's academic progress through digital access to school records and information.

Remember the days of crumpled up letters in the bottom of school bags, missing school trip forms and that crucial white envelope containing this year's school report that may or may not have made it home? Fast forward to 2014 and things look somewhat different. Today, prep school parents have the ability to keep up-to-date with all aspects of their child's

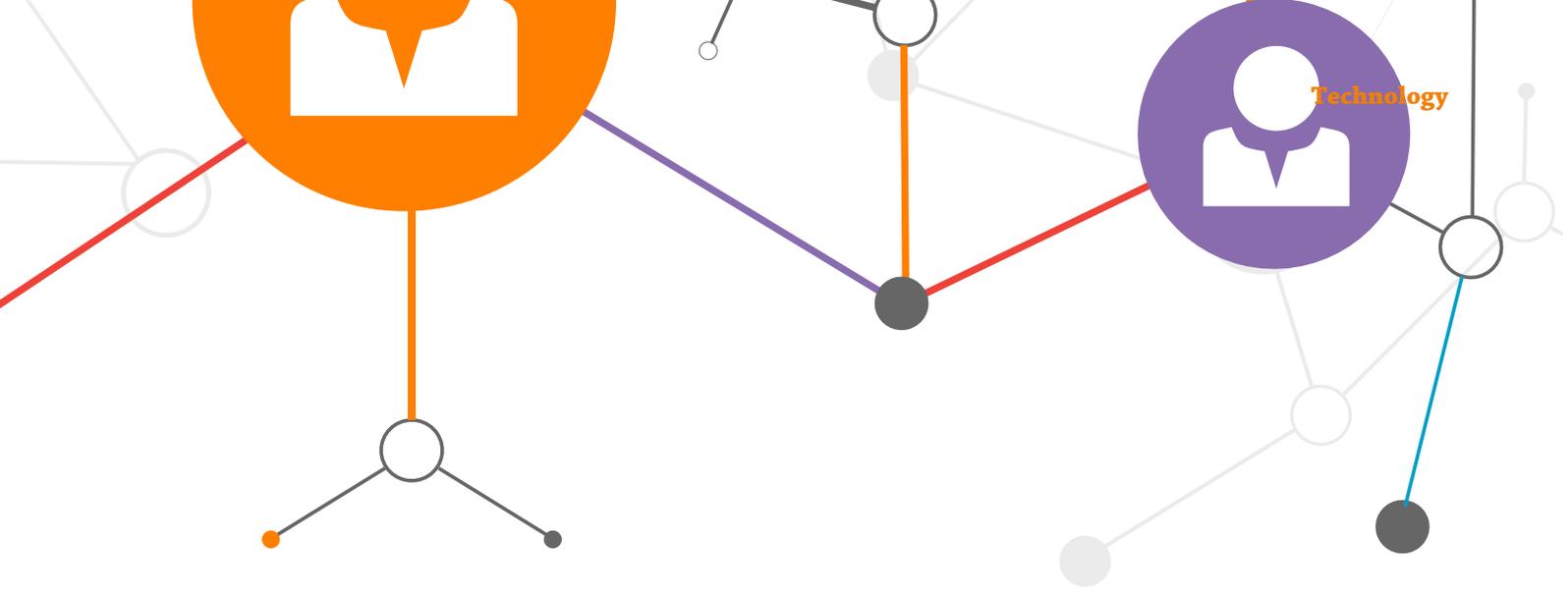
development at school with the click of a button – anytime, anyplace, anywhere. Welcome to the age of the 'i-Know' parents.

The proliferation of mobile technology has led to a shift by generations of all ages in their behaviour to communicate, share and learn. It has also created an opportunity for schools to enhance their communication channels with parents, opening up a valuable two-way dialogue that had traditionally been limited to parents' evening and other school events.

Bridging the gap between school and home

With many parents having access to a smart phone, tablet or laptop, prep schools are now able to take advantage of mobile technology as a medium for contacting and communicating with parents. Whether this is via SMS, email or updates on a parent portal or app, our digitally connected world offers the opportunity for bridging the gap between school and home, thereby enhancing the information flow from teachers to parents.

Not only that, it also creates a



stronger connection between teachers, parents and pupils ensuring greater engagement between all parties.

The power of information

Like many of us these days, parents want to be able to access information as quickly and easily as possible. They also want this information to be relevant and timely so that they can have a positive contribution to the needs of their child and react quickly to any changes notified by the school. An integrated parent portal and dedicated parent app provides a valuable solution, offering parents easy online access to keep up-to-date with their son or daughter's performance and any relevant school information, including last minute calendar notifications or event invites.

Information that can be accessed via a parent portal and/or app includes, but is not limited to:

- Development progress
- Reports
- Timetables
- Teaching groups

- Attendance
- Detentions
- Reward and conduct information
- Activities and groups for participation
- Exam arrangements and results
- School news and announcements

For many prep schools, the parent portal can also be a useful and quick method for collecting completed permission forms, removing the need for paper communication.

Increased parent engagement

For schools, the combination of a parent portal and parent app provides a powerful solution for strengthening relationships with parents by:

1. Opening new communication channels;
2. Increasing engagement levels; and
3. Improving parent satisfaction.

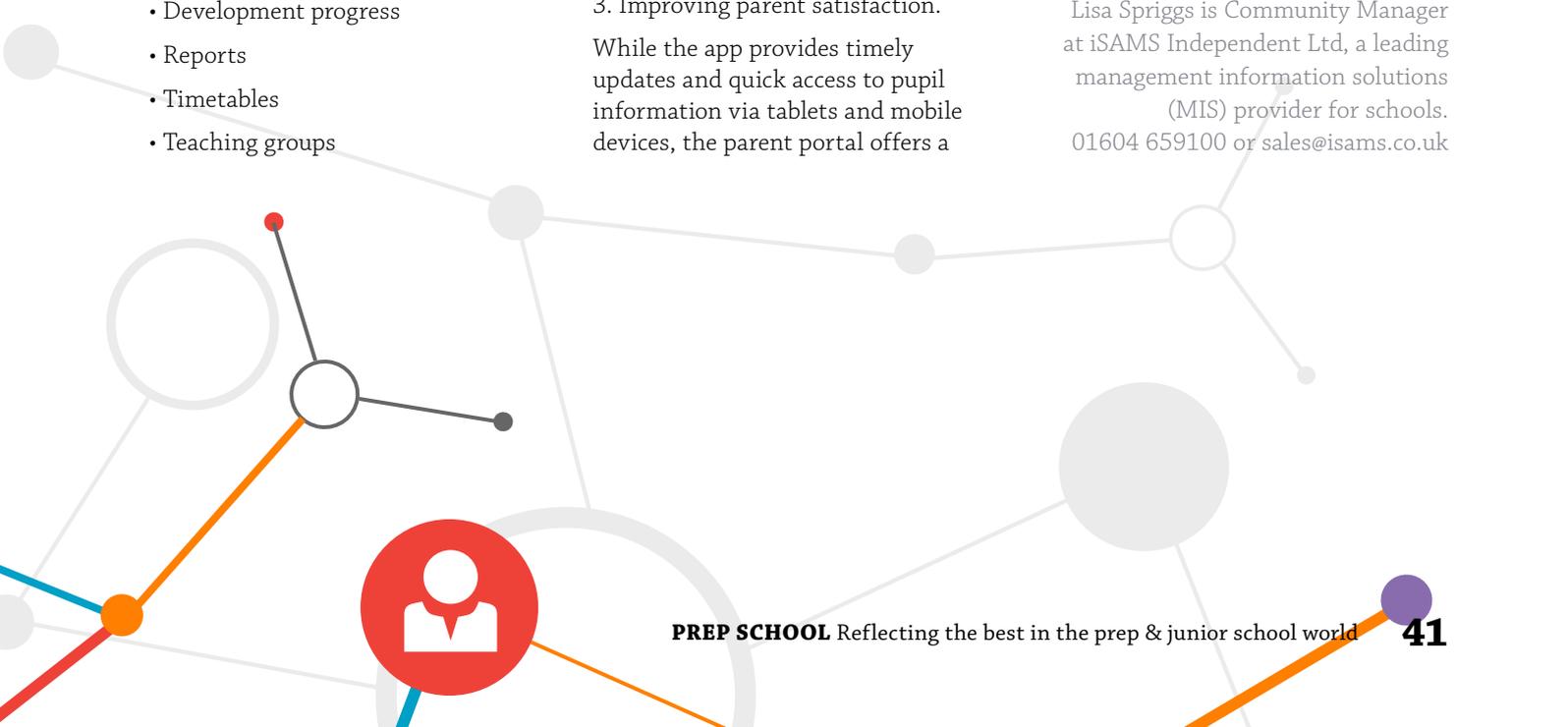
While the app provides timely updates and quick access to pupil information via tablets and mobile devices, the parent portal offers a

low maintenance online extension to the main school website where parents can access more detailed information, update contact details and view important school news. Information is extracted directly from the Management Information System (MIS), working seamlessly to offer pupil and relevant school information in a parent friendly format.

In it for the long-run

The increased learning benefits for pupils, enhanced parent/school relationships and valuable user data that can be attained through using a parent portal and/or app can provide long-term gains for schools. Integrated as part of a complete MIS solution, it also supports the wider information management network and allows schools to be more agile in their communications methods, increasingly satisfying the needs of parents.

Lisa Spriggs is Community Manager at iSAMS Independent Ltd, a leading management information solutions (MIS) provider for schools. 01604 659100 or sales@isams.co.uk



Trivium: the liberal arts as a basis for 21st century learning

Brian Hays, Felsted Prep School,
encourages us to think outside the box

Martin Robinson has, in his best selling and acclaimed book *Trivium 21c*, given us a blueprint for learning in the modern age by looking back over the last two thousand years.

The Trivium that he describes is made up of general grammar, aristotelian logic, and classical rhetoric, the first three rules-based subjects of the seven liberal arts and sciences.

The concept of the seven liberal arts is based on a curriculum outlined by Plato and can be traced back to at least the fifth century in this country, but it was only in the Middle Ages that it began to be popularised as new material from classical learning, and new attitudes towards it, flowed in. In 1209, some Oxford scholars who had become tired of the hostility of the townspeople moved to Cambridge. By 1226 they had formed themselves into an organisation represented by a Chancellor. They studied what we might now describe

as an 'arts foundation course' in the trivium, with further studies in the quadrivium leading to the degrees of bachelor and master.

Martin Robinson presents the trivium as a mantra for today's schooling: foundational knowledge, critical thinking and communication skills. How does this relate to a modern school? This is what School 21, designed 'from a blank sheet of paper' for the needs of the 21st century, has selected as its six Attributes:

Expertise (the basics of reading, writing, numeracy and subject knowledge): Grammar

Professionalism (organisation, punctuality, self discipline): elements of logos or logic

Oral communication ("the number one skill employers need"): Rhetoric

Grit, Spark and Craftsmanship (habits of mind)

Perhaps with reference to the trivium they might have included learning to think critically as a key attribute. As Anthony Seldon has said, "all young people should learn how to debate, construct an argument, know what a good argument is and how to avoid personal comments that can destroy reason."

In the last paragraph from 'The Lost Tools of Learning [the Trivium Method]' an essay written by Dorothy L. Sayers in 1947, the trivium is presented as a method for teaching children how to learn to learn:

"What use is it to pile task on task and prolong the days of labour, if at the close the chief object is left unattained? It is not the fault of the teachers—they work only too hard already. The combined folly of a civilisation that has forgotten its own roots is forcing them to shore up the tottering weight of an educational structure that is built upon sand. They are doing for their pupils the work which the pupils themselves ought to do. For the sole true end of education is simply this: to teach men how to

learn for themselves; and whatever instruction fails to do this is effort spent in vain."

We now know, through numerous research projects, that learning to learn, or metacognition, has one of the highest size effects of any educational intervention: "Meta-cognition and self-regulation approaches have consistently high levels of impact with pupils making an average of eight months' additional progress. The evidence indicates that teaching these strategies can be particularly effective for low achieving and older pupils" (Education Endowment Foundation).

This is how a modern liberal arts curriculum is described:

Although...it...has an updated choice of a larger range of subjects, it still retains the core aims of the liberal arts curricula maintained by the medieval universities: to develop well-rounded individuals with general knowledge of a wide range of subjects and with mastery of a range of transferable skills. They will become 'global citizens', with the capacity to pursue lifelong learning and become valuable members of their communities.

It all looks very 21st century, doesn't it? Here is what one of the modern age's greatest entrepreneurs and thinkers, Steve Jobs, had to say on the matter:

"It's in Apple's DNA that technology alone is not enough — it's technology married with liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields us the result that makes our heart sing..."

Unfortunately, by the 1600s the liberal arts were struggling to compete with the new sciences in the Age of Enlightenment. As Martin brilliantly describes, '...the call was "We need 17th century skills!"...' He explains that, although we now argue that the 21st century is different to other periods in history because of new technologies the trivium is just as valid as it ever was. He goes on to explain how a 21st century trivium can be used for curriculum design, assessment and as a pedagogical framework.

The inspiration to use the ideas of 'Trivium' has been taken up by Oundle School.

Trivium is a new third form course at Oundle, studied by all pupils in groups of ten. Intellectually ambitious, Trivium aims to place learning for its own sake at the heart of the curriculum. It is a course based on 'interestingness'. The philosophy of the course can be summed up the words of E M Forster: only connect. At Felsted Prep, a new critical thinking course for Years 5 and 6 follows a similar philosophy, but with emphasis on the logos of the trivium: logical thinking is taught through debate and discussion, frequently using Socratic seminars and speed debating but with children encouraged to look at both sides of an argument and base what they say on reasoning rather than opinions. A three-part trivium lesson plan encompasses DIRT (Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time) work as part of the grammar of the lesson. Grammar in this course also encompasses fundamental general knowledge and the emphasis on this has seen the school reaching the Quiz Club general knowledge national final for the last two years running. Rhetoric includes both oral and written communication, in equal measure, with balanced argument encouraged in writing.

As Tom Sherrington describes in his blog about Trivium 21c, "I'm conscious that the snippets in this post and my ramblings can't do justice to the book.. you just need to buy it and read it. And then act on it. It's already got me thinking at a deeper level – and that is exciting".

For anyone interested in the Trivium network, contact Martin Robinson at martinrobbo@robinson@gmail.com

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Williams 1961:130

educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk

The background of the slide is a composite image. The upper portion shows a view of Earth from space, with a bright sun or star in the center, a blue sky, and a white horizon line. The lower portion shows a topographic map of Europe, with green and brown terrain, blue water bodies, and white snow-capped mountains. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

The most important subject in the curriculum?

Andrew Lee, Sussex House School,
makes the case for Geography

Geography, has, however, by the admission of the Government and the Geographical Association, been a subject that has very often been poorly taught

Each discipline in common entrance has its slice of importance. English provides basic tools to understand and use language, mathematics the 'inalienable' principles of dynamics, science the nature of the minutiae of processes, languages the ability to understand and communicate with other cultures, religious studies to understand the human spiritual experience, and history the ability to understand that which has gone on in the past.

But, what exactly is the geographical endeavour? If it were to be summed up in a catchphrase as above, then it might read: geography is the study of the spatial and relational aspects of the earth. As with each of the other disciplines, we could also start adding detail so as to refer to physical and human aspects of the planet *etc*, but this is, in part the purpose of this article. However, what might just make geography the most important subject in the curriculum?

Geography, has, however, by the admission of the government and the Geographical Association, been a subject that has very often been poorly taught. Whilst this may not have affected pupils' pleasure derived from the subject - so many say that geography was their favourite subject at school - it may have provided a misaligned understanding of just what the discipline is up to.

Whilst geography is part of the popular Western imagination, this imagination, in its broadest guise, has empowered people (and led to their invasion) on and of this small island from the earliest days by sailings across the Channel and North Sea. Our great periods of exploration

and dominion were in part driven by the desire for wealth, but also for adventure and the search for the other. Island life has provided us with an opportunity to gaze from our shores into the great unknown, and what's 'over there' has long inspired us as a nation. We only need to see how many young people are keen to travel as soon as they leave school to get some understanding of how potent this is in our popular culture.

As a discipline, geography undoubtedly concerns itself with the planet, the spatial dynamics of the Earth, where things are, what they're called and how things work, but it also is implicitly about the role of human action individual and collective. It involves learning about cause and effect in the world, inequality, power, change, evolving patterns, trends, data analysis and broader understanding of the unfolding of the planet. If there is any subject in the academic bank offered to pupils at common entrance, geography empowers them as agents as they grow into adulthood and helps them become participants rather than passengers. The discipline helps them make sense of the world that they are growing up into, and it is the only subject that does this systematically.

One of the strengths of the discipline is that whilst it cannot provide all the answers, it can provide handles on the world so that pupils know where to start to answer the following kinds of questions:

Why and where there is poverty, what might be done about it and who might be responsible for it.

What might be the impact of volcanic activity on global travel?

Why are some industries contracting and others expanding.

Why the location of places might impact upon regional instability.

Why areas might be suffering environmental degradation and what this might mean?

What might be the impact of changing climate patterns?

What is the real impact of building a shopping mall in this part of the country?

What drives markets and the location of industry?

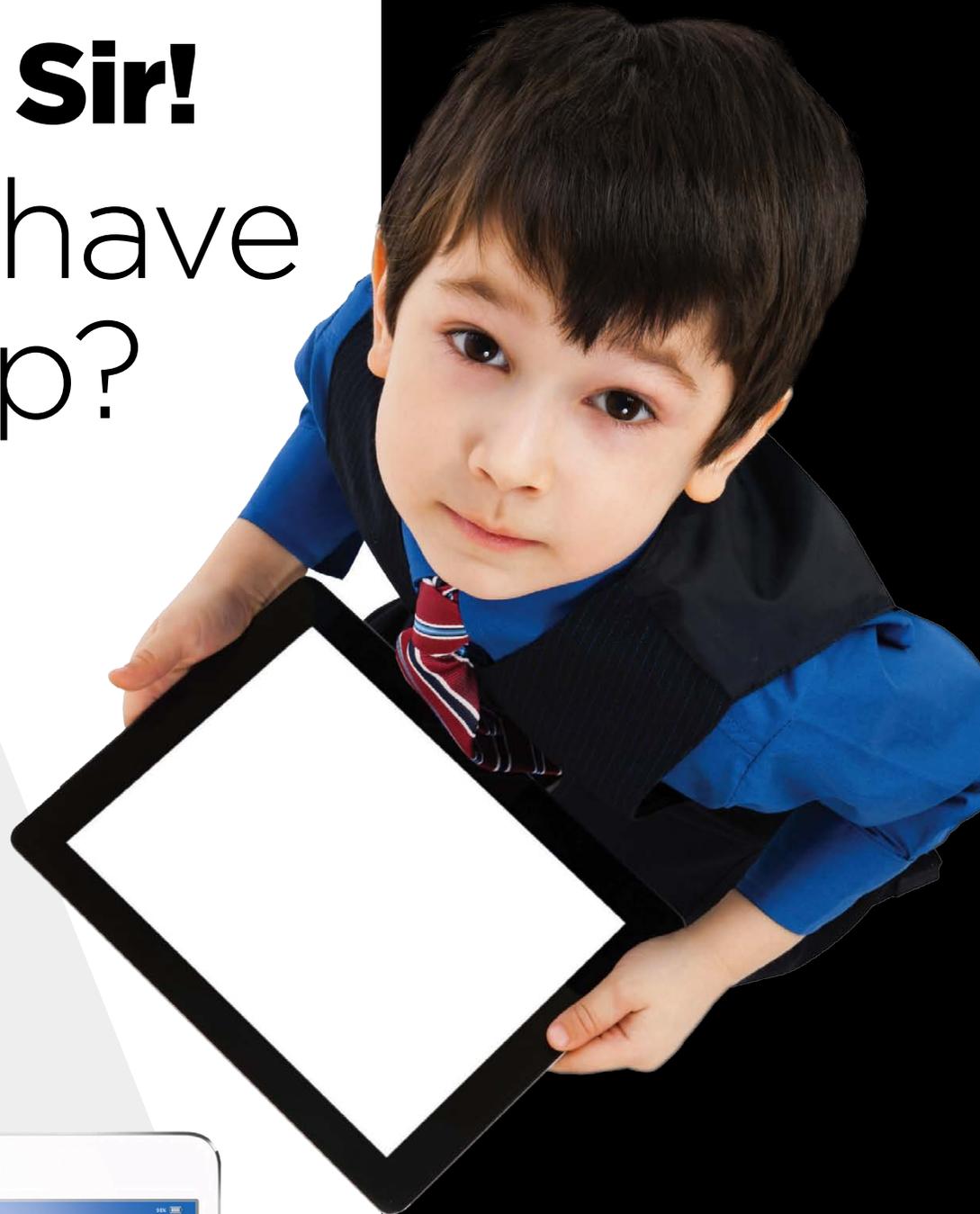
Where is it safe? Safe to live. Safe to invest. Safe to walk. What is safety? What causes danger?

Geography is not merely about equipping pupils with an understanding of earth science, but about equipping and empowering individuals ready to take a place in the world. Geographic method, moreover, trains pupils how to collect data, and what that data might mean. It asks of them how data might be misleading and how to interrogate the veracity of information. It teaches pupils not only about agency, but about reasoned agency and the making of sound, workable and appropriate decisions. It teaches them about place and the use of maps to identify patterns of change and to understand what might be driving that pattern. In short, it provides handles on the world that they are growing into.

Peter Haggett sometime professor of geography at Cambridge once wrote a book called: "Geography: A Modern Synthesis." This is the subject's distinctive *modus operandi*. It has the capacity to bring things together and

Please Sir!

Can I have an app?



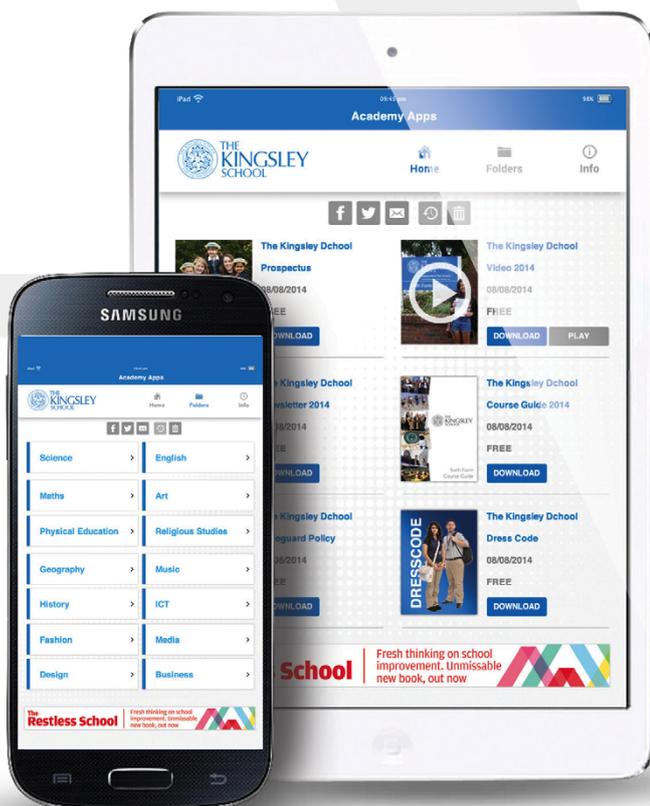
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create 'Eureka' or Gestalt moments. This is the magic of education where educators aim to empower pupils to have successes in their own enquiries and discoveries.

Geography, however, is not all about technique, it is about facts too, and it is this combination of fact and fact finding that makes it compelling and essential. It is about the means of collating facts and knowing what facts mean, which ones are important and why they may be significant. Geographical method employs data collection that is systematic, robust and well thought out. Getting pupils to critically evaluate data makes them effective astute operators in a duplicitous and confusing world. Geography is, therefore, inherently pragmatic, and this is why field trips are so essential to what geographers do. For pupils to learn facts in the classroom and then to see how they manifest themselves on the ground turns what they do in school into something that can empower them outside of the classroom. There is a direct line between theory and praxis in a way that isn't the case with any other subject.

This kind of approach trains the mind. It promotes hard but also lateral thinking - meaning it involves thought processes that look at issues and practical, implementable, real

world solutions. It teaches pupils that there are always multiple points of view and that finding a way forward where there is conflict needs to accommodate different perspectives. Enquiry and challenge based learning should play an important part in the geographical curriculum, where pupils are driven into corners where they have to be hard on the information that they have collated, or that they are given to work with. "What does it actually mean?" "What does this mean that we have to investigate next?" "If this is the case then what should be done here?" are memes of geographical enquiry. Sometimes this leads to important conclusions and sometimes it sends pupils back to the drawing board, but life's like that.

As pupils move from school into the workforce, they have to become, like most adults in the workforce, problem solvers. From the sales assistant who has to work out how to order in a garment of a new size for a customer through to the CEO of a transnational corporation, adults need to assess situations and make a plan for executing what is expected of them. This is not only true of the workforce, but also true of life. Where to live, where to holiday, what to pack, when to travel, where to not travel to, how to get there *etc* are all questions requiring geographical thinking. Rehearsing this kind of thinking

equips pupils with the expertise to determine what they need to make decisions and how to make them and where necessary, how to justify them.

But on a higher level we want our pupils to be good people, good citizens, members of society. We want them to be reflective, thoughtful, creative, insightful people. We want them to make good, solid and moral decisions based on facts and not whim or prejudice. We not only want them to be able to make good decisions we want them to want to make the best decisions they can, form their own opinions and be thought leaders and not thought followers.

So whilst geography may never be counted in the same way as English, mathematics and science in terms of school entries, or other 'scholastic key performance indicators'; the good teaching of geography not only serves pupils well, but puts them in the right mindset to be well-reasoned, hard-headed, fair, flexible, honest, imaginative agents who act because they have thought about and have been taught and encouraged to think about the world. One would have to be happy with that.

Dr Andrew Lee FRGS CGeog,
Chartered Geographer, Head of
Geography at Sussex House School

There is a direct line between theory and praxis in a way that isn't the case with any other subject

Keeping pace

Justin Sycamore asks how teachers can keep up with technological change

Technology continues to advance at a rapid pace. Look back ten years and smartphones didn't exist; now most of us have greater computational power in the palms of our hands than machines used 45 years ago to guide spacecrafts. But all the talk of how technology can enhance learning aside, how can busy language teachers keep apace with technology without adding to their already busy schedules?

Technology plays a crucial role; in education, industry and even our downtime. It isn't the be all and end all of education by any stretch, but its prevalence makes it difficult, and even dangerous, to overlook. "There is still a need for young people to learn and understand the traditional aspects of subjects," says Oliver Quinlan, programme manager of Digital Education Projects at Nesta. "But disciplines are changing as a result of developments in technology and school subjects need to develop to take account of that."

That's a valuable viewpoint, but what of the time factor? It's a truth universally known that teachers never stop. While there is a huge amount to be done in order to educate pupils, there are always ways to organise learning, plan ahead and manage a classroom. "Teachers are incredibly busy people who are pulled in different directions on a daily basis. However, if effectively implemented, technology is a very handy timesaver,"

says Lucy Price, IAPS subject leader and head of classics at Lyndhurst House Preparatory School.

Systems and software that automate feedback and guide pupils through a topic can be used alongside non-ICT based activities to great effect and for languages teachers, it can help to tap into all learning styles to allow pupils to develop reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. Perhaps of even more use, it can open up opportunities for children to interact with native speakers to perfect pronunciation, in addition to learning about another way of life.

Aside from collaborative links, technology can also help make vocabulary - the foundations of a language - easier to comprehend, retain, and recall. "As a Classics teacher, I teach students Latin and Ancient Greek and mastering grammar is essential in both languages," says Lucy Price. "However, this doesn't have to be limited to 'chalk and talk' style activities; it can be supplemented with technologies which keep students motivated, on task and helps to consolidate content in a practical and engaging way."

Making the most of the technology in pupils' hands

Multi-functionality, portability, and connectivity are opening doors for learning, so it's no wonder many schools are making full use of smartphones in the classroom. "Self-

directed learning will be a core tenet of future learning," says Terry Heick, educational theorist. "This means technology, and the most mobile, affordable, and accessible kind of technology is a used smartphone."

With responsive touch screens, high quality image, audio and video recording, editing, and sharing, voice recognition and web connectivity, smartphones allow for a multi-sensory language learning experience. This, combined with their dominance, makes smartphones a must-use tool in most classrooms before apps are even brought into the equation.

"Using app technology brings variety and excitement to our lessons and helps to improve pupil engagement. We have also seen an increase in attainment due to increased knowledge of vocabulary and grammar structures," says Edward Smyth, French teacher at The Dragon School, Oxford.

For most students, the 'hard graft' of language learning is building knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Mobile apps for language learning offer students the opportunity to practice vocabulary and grammar anytime, anywhere, increasing engagement so that students adopt and maintain an effective 'little and often' approach, learning at their own pace and integrating this revision into their daily lives.



There are many apps designed specifically for language learning, including dictionary and phrasebook apps. There are also grammar-drilling apps and others specifically designed for learning phonetics. For writing skills, students can use spelling and character writing apps. They are also apps which allow students to create their own revision flashcards.

Capitalising on existing hardware and maximising one-to-one devices

With tight budgets, its important schools make full use of their existing resources, and the dominance of interactive whiteboards means that most schools have some great technology that was designed with education in mind. “My interactive whiteboard is intrinsic to my teaching,” says Lucy Price. “I have all of my resources saved on this so that I can bring up the information needed for any given lesson. I use it for a number of activities and make use of the pre-installed tools available, including the anagram and sorting tools. I also use video clips too.”

For many schools though, it’s tablets that are proving to be popular new purchases. Recent BESA research on school ICT spending cited tablets as the most popular technology for new investments. Some educators believe that their prevalence could begin to push interactive whiteboards into the shade.

One of the main reasons for the popularity of tablets is giving pupils power, making classes very learner-centred. Web-enabled tablets are ideal for research activities like finding out interesting facts about another country to give language learning some context. However, tablets can be as much a creation tool as a consumption tool. They allow pupils to experiment with various multimedia formats including images, video and audio. “One of the most difficult elements of language learning is perfecting pronunciation. Using tablets, pupils can record themselves and play these recordings back to gain a better grasp of this,” says Edward Smyth.

Making the most of online services

Saving valuable teacher time and providing students with all they need to excel in exams, online language learning platforms can offer pre-loaded, pre-categorised exam board and text book vocabulary. Some also enable teachers to set assessments and track progress at a glance. “Online learning platforms help consolidate the building blocks of vocabulary to help pupils to apply this when learning grammar,” says Lucy Price. “Vocab Express is incredibly helpful as it offers all the necessary vocabulary for students taking papers in French, Spanish, Latin and Ancient Greek for the common entrance exam.”

For greater flexibility, a few offer teachers the option to create and upload their own custom vocabulary lists specific to their classes and teaching plans. There are also some that offer native speaker audio to help students develop a strong grasp of pronunciation and the intonation of words crucial for many languages. “The vocab express tool also allows me to keep a running tally of students’ results on my interactive whiteboard which is great for motivating students and encouraging a bit of healthy competition and it’s great for home-revision,” Lucy adds.

When used effectively, technology can greatly enrich the language education landscape, offering students unprecedented opportunities for accessible and exciting learning and valuable input into personal and social development, helping them to become successful global citizens with lifelong linguistic skills, a passion for languages and an appreciation for other ways of life.

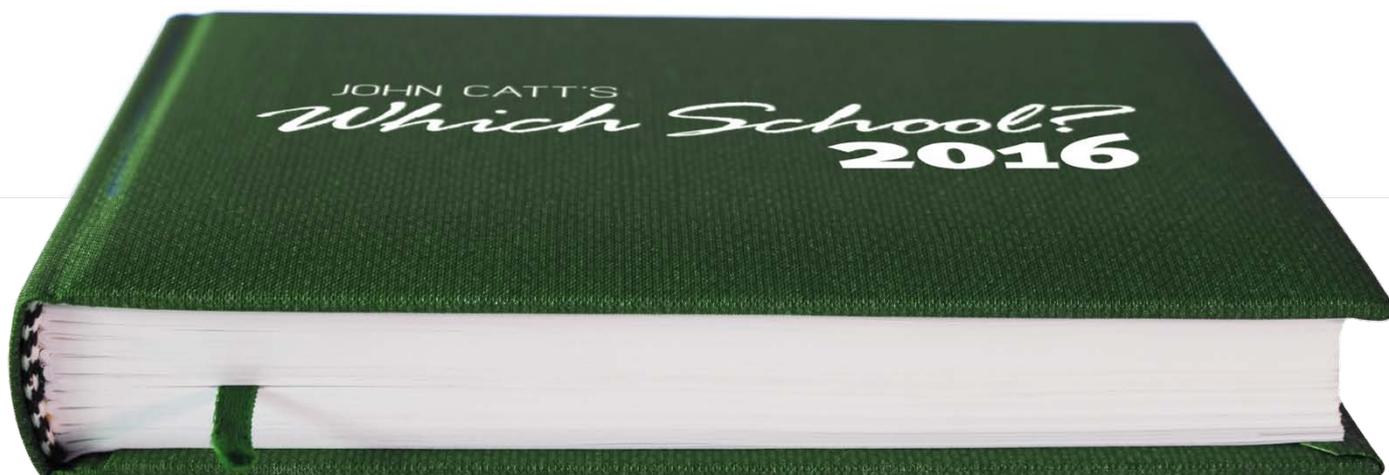
As the psycholinguist Frank Smith said, “One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way.”

JOHN CATT'S

Which School?

91ST EDITION

2016



Which School? helps your school stand out from the crowd

The new-look authoritative guide to over 2000 UK independent schools

Which School? has been helping independent schools showcase themselves for almost 90 years. This longevity and respect is unrivalled and is a strong reason for considering using the printed guidebook, eBook and website to celebrate your achievements and reaffirm your position as one of the leading schools in the UK.

We continue to ensure you have access to the best opportunities to shout about your achievements: in addition to the printed guidebook and website, your *Which School?* profile will also be replicated in our full-colour eBook – available for free download on iPad, iPod Touch and iPhone, in addition to Android devices.

The 91st edition of *Which School?* will be published in September 2015. A profile provides:

- A double-page spread in a prominent position to present your curriculum, facilities and success stories
- Up to 550 words for your school's profile, your school crest/logo and a full page photograph opposite
- Widespread, comprehensive coverage through our new eBook
- Promotion of your school to potential new staff and investors

This is a fantastic school guides We recommend it to many of our overseas parents. In this guide the schools dictate the content and structure of their entries and this gives the guide a personal feel. The accompanying pictures add welcomed flair to the book, as well as giving another insight into the schools. The guide itself is elegantly bound, and looks more like a coffee table book than a school guide, so it also makes a wonderful present.

Marina Byrne, Managing Director at Educate Private (www.educateprivate.com)



To reserve your space in **Which School? 2016** please contact our sales team on: 01394 389850 or email: sales@johncatt.com

Educational cruising

Independent Schools Adventure Cruises on the benefits of an educational cruise

ISAC is a charitable organisation run by a dedicated group of trustees, all of whom are vastly experienced leaders of school cruises. They act as the middleman for a week's educational cruising in October half-term, providing assistance and advice to parties and their leaders in independent schools.

The cruises are geared towards the interests of students aged 10 – 16. Let us explain why we recommend cruising for your students.

Value: Nothing beats the price of these cruises; students visit multiple destinations and experience fine dining and entertainment at sea. Payment may be structured by the participating school and paid over a two year period. The next cruise will take place in October 2016.

As an additional bonus, ISAC is subsidising each student £300 towards the cost of the cruise. The cost of the cruise is £1450 less £300 = £1150. And for every 10 students, we offer one free party leader place.

There is also an opportunity to submit a project relating to the places that will be visited and to obtain an Eric Sherwin Scholarship which could well secure a substantial amount towards the cost.

Bursaries are available via an application from the student's Headmaster to those who, without bursarial assistance, would not be able to travel.

Convenience: No matter how many places visited, you only unpack once and on-board, wallets and purses aren't required! Purchases on board are made with a swipe card.

Variety: Good choice of on-shore activities/places to visit.

Choice: You can dine in shorts or dress to the nines. There are timetabled on-board activities to keep you entertained whilst at sea.

Comfort: The cabins on board are well suited for students.

Adventure: The thrill of stepping ashore in a foreign land with your friends and experiencing the sights and smells of the local cuisine.

Sharing your experience: Cruising offers unique opportunities to meet other boys and girls from other schools – you will share new experiences that you will not find with other types of vacations.

Become an expert or meet one: The cruise staff offer lectures relating to the places that will be visited.

Experience more: Waking up in a brand new port of call is part of the exceptional thrill of cruising.

Togetherness: There's no better way to travel for large groups of friends than a cruise. When you travel as a group, the incredible experiences you share will strengthen the bonds of friendship forever.

Sightseeing: Each visit is carefully

designed to suit the student's age range. The local guides all speak excellent English and the tours are well balanced with history and information.

The Educational Programme:

An ISAC cruise is designed to give every student maximum educational benefit from his or her experience. The itineraries are carefully planned to give students enough time ashore to absorb something of the history, culture and way of life of the places and the people they visit.

On board, there is plenty of entertainment in the evenings organised by the cruise staff. These include films, quizzes, discos, *X-Factor* at Sea and fancy dress competitions. All school parties mix and there are great opportunities for making new friends.

The majority of cabins are two-bedded. All have private facilities consisting of shower, toilet and wash-hand basin. Accompanying party leaders and teachers are berthed in cabins close to their students.

Well balanced meals are served during the cruise. There is a choice of cooked or continental breakfast, a three course lunch and a three course dinner. A range of vegetarian dishes is also provided / provision made for special diets.

Interested schools should contact ISAC for further information

We can't duck the issue

In this extract from his new book *Classroom in the Clouds*, Alex McGrath, Head of King's Ely Senior School, argues that huge benefits can be reaped from new ways of learning

When was the last time you looked at a duck? I mean really looked?

I once heard a colleague talking about ducks, and popped out at lunchtime to the local university campus. There is a lovely large lake there, and it is populated by all manner of waterfowl, but it was the mallard which was my particular quarry on this fateful January morning in 2011.

Take a look at the duck on the page opposite. Notice anything?

Perhaps not. And I don't think that I would have done either had it not been for the fact that my colleague had pointed it out earlier. However, what he had said about ducks had been so revolutionary that I was unable from that point on ever to look at the creatures in the same way again. Take a really close look at the duck's face, and you will see that in fact ducks are trying (rather unsuccessfully) to disguise themselves by wearing little dog masks.

Do you see it? In fact, ducks worldwide are all attempting to dress up as small, happy yellow dogs....

From that day onwards I have never been able to look at a duck without a chuckle as I focus slightly differently and take in the little yellow dog mask. My whole way of looking at ducks has shifted, and the shift cannot be corrected. Such shifts come along once in a while. We have something familiar, and which we were brought up with. We never question it, and take it for granted. Then suddenly something transforms our view entirely. We focus on a new aspect, and see new relevance.

Thomas Kuhn, in his book *The Structure Of Scientific Revolutions* (1962), called this a paradigm shift. His work challenged the theory that scientific advancement was an evolving process by suggesting that in fact all scientific progress was 'a series of peaceful interludes ... punctuated by intellectually violent revolutions in which one conceptual world view is replaced by another'.

Headier stuff than ducks, perhaps, but you get the picture? Ideas create perceptions, and we are never able to view the world in the same way ever

again. Our intellectual understanding has been hijacked by the new concept.

Recently this has happened in education. *Classroom in the Clouds* examine the implications of a paradigm shift in our view of good learning, good teaching, and indeed the very notion of school. After reading it, I hope that none of you will look at education in the same way again. As with ducks, you will see through aspects of the new disguise and still know what real education is. However, you might have amended your view of what it might look like.

Now that we know about the dog masks we just have to accept that ducks look a little funnier than they used to, and get used to the new perspective. There is not a lot that we can do about it. In the same way, we could decide that if a change in our perception of education has come about it will remain.

We should get on with it. But there is an important difference, of course. Ducks always looked like this. We just did not notice the detail until it was pointed out to us. However,

education is changing radically and fundamentally. While the revolution in our perception of the duck's face is purely one of idea and perspective, the technological revolution in teaching and learning is something genuinely new. As a result, it is potentially disruptive. As an individual reader you may be excited by this disruption or terrified by it. What is clear is that you will need to confront it, because while your view of what good education is may well remain the same, your view of teaching and learning will become radically altered, if it has not been already. There may be some of you who never even noticed that it was here, and like your new perspective on a duck's face will only see the difference because of reading this book. I hope that you will be glad that you did.

In my previous book, *Lifting Our Heads* (2013), I put forward the argument that the independent education sector in the UK was facing a number of challenges. These centred mainly about the fact that our schools were becoming less affordable for those who may wish their children to attend them. I did not set out to be a harbinger of doom, however. I made the case that independent schools were centres of excellence, powerfully led, and exceptional value for money. The job at hand was to demonstrate the fact while addressing the affordability of such schools and the political challenge which that created for them.

Similarly *Classroom In The Cloud* is not a book by a Luddite complaining that something nasty from across the Atlantic threatens the education of our children, the jobs of our teachers, and our very existence as schools. There are some who would make such accusations. I am not one of them.



This book is a celebration of our schools, and what I am convinced they are capable of. It is also an encouragement to school leaders to embrace the opportunity which online and blended learning presents for us. But we must acknowledge that it will take a lot of hard work and careful planning, which UK schools should ideally attempt together, to ensure that the disruptive forces are harnessed by us as opportunities rather than overwhelming and destroying us. This will require independence of thinking, independence of leadership, and yet co-operation across independent and state sectors.

Government initiatives and centralised control, or 'one size fits all' models will

spell disaster, and hamstring us in our ability to adapt effectively.

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) is with us already, but it is concerning how many schools are taking the plunge without too much understanding of the wider issues involved. BYOD requires a strategy. There are enormous ramifications to creating the capability in schools to learn on the move. Across the Atlantic, online and blended learning in the USA in both Higher Education and K-12 schools is becoming a destabilising and political issue.

We know that British politicians take enormous interest in the educational initiatives of other countries. Free schools had their roots in charter schools in the States, as well as the



Swedish free school movement. Undoubtedly there will be someone in Whitehall at this moment scrutinising the pros and cons of virtual schools and blended learning in the US, and as the financial savings may be substantial it stands to reason that the Department of Education will soon be trumpeting the benefits of e-learning within the UK maintained sector. Pilots are running right now!

So, the purpose of *Classroom in the Clouds* is to focus the minds of teachers and leaders within UK schools on a task at hand: to face the potential disruptive forces of the online education revolution calmly, nimbly and with confidence.

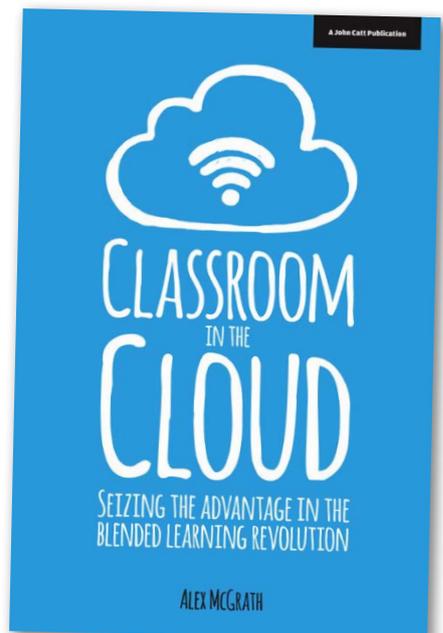
I believe that we can do so, but our response requires planning and coordination. It cannot be haphazard, and nor, probably, can we take on the threat as individual schools. This is something which requires cross-association collaboration if we are to address related underlying issues such as affordability, teacher performance, teacher pay, and the maintenance of the quality education we offer – not to mention the confidence of leading the field in e-learning as we do in other aspects of educational

provision. This book aims to help UK schools to remain ahead of the game – whether they are independent fee-paying establishments, or the centres of excellence within the maintained sector. I whole-heartedly believe that blended learning in particular presents an opportunity for strengthening and promoting the quality offering our schools represent in comparison to alternative providers.

I am tremendously excited about the potential for meaningful change within education which the technological revolution presents to us. I am firmly of the belief that children and teachers will be the beneficiaries, and learning will become more meaningful for all. The problem is not the revolution, but as with all revolutions, the counter-revolutionary intransigence which will seek to strangle the revolution at birth. If we do not engage with the issues purposefully and honestly, this reactionary mindset will grow among our governing bodies, senior leadership, teachers, and the parents of our pupils. Those who are in positions of primacy at the time of revolutions are always those most in danger, and with most to lose. Our

children, however, do not share our pre-conceived ideas and suspicions.

They are growing up in an online world. They are inquisitive, excited and excitable. They will carry this revolution, because to them it is not revolutionary. They are engaged with it, and it makes sense. We must face it. We cannot duck the issue!



Classroom in the Clouds, Alex McGrath, published by John Catt Educational, £12.99

The loudest voice in mathematics teaching

The Mathematical Association (MA) works to improve the teaching of mathematics in the UK.

One of the ways it does this is by supporting all teachers of mathematics. Teachers so often feel that they do not have a voice on the important things that matter to them. At The Mathematical Association, members add their own voice to a well-established association that is represented on all major maths education bodies, and plays an increasingly important role in the face of multiple changes to mathematics education. We also offer branch meetings around the UK to support the less formal sharing of resources and experiences. In addition, our primary subcommittee works closely with the ATM and meets once a term to discuss current issues in primary mathematics education.

By joining the MA, you become a member of a community that has a love of mathematics and mathematics teaching at its heart. You will also be able to add your voice to an association that already plays an important part in forming opinions about mathematics and mathematics education.

Primary mathematics and more

In primary schools, many teachers are not specialists and value the support that we offer with subject knowledge and pedagogy. The Mathematical Association produces a dedicated journal for primary teachers three

times a year. The journal offers readers a rich mixture of theory and practice as well as ideas for instant classroom use. We welcome articles from teachers carrying out action research in their own classrooms. There is also an extensive publications catalogue that features the writings of experienced practitioners and researchers.

Annual Conference

Everyone is welcome at our Annual Conference and one-day events, all endorsed by the NCETM CPD Standard. The joys of the MA conference are clear to those who attend. Nowhere else do you get such a range of workshops and such a rich and varied range of enthusiastic mathematics educators. University academics, primary PGCE students and established primary and secondary teachers attend, to mention but a few. Our 2015 conference entitled 'Fluency and Understanding - A Mathematically Balanced World' will be held at Keele University on 8th - 10th April 2015.

As well as lots of interesting and challenging sessions, there will also be a range of exhibitors, giving you the opportunity to browse what is new as well as top up on some old favourites. Keep an eye on the website for a more detailed programme. You can already book your place by downloading and completing the delegate booking form at www.m-a.org.uk/resources/Del_Booking_Frm_2015.doc

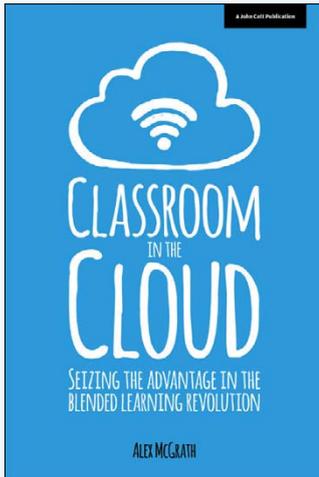
Primary Mathematics Challenge

Over the last ten years more than 800,000 children have taken part in the Primary Mathematics Challenge run by the Mathematical Association. Each November schools take part, inviting their Year 6 and sometimes their Year 5 pupils to sit the challenge. The paper consists of 20 multiple choice problems, followed by five more problems which are not multiple choice. All of the problems are designed to make the children think hard and the last five are particularly challenging. The pupils are allowed just 45 minutes to sit the challenge under test conditions within the school. Teachers are provided with answers and notes and with a clear marking sheet which helps to make it a smooth and easy process. Teachers are overwhelmingly positive about the ease of administration of the challenge. The second part of the challenge takes part in February when the children who have achieved the highest scores are invited to take part in the bonus round. At the end of each round the participating schools can award certificates and medals to pupils who took part.

If your school has not yet taken part in PMC sign up now to register your interest for next year. Contact the MA at: pmc@m-a.org.uk

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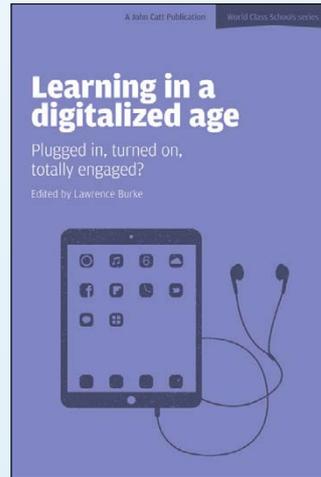
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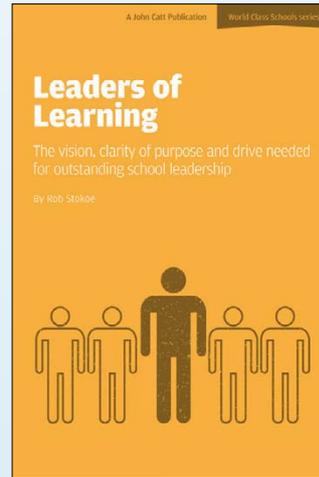
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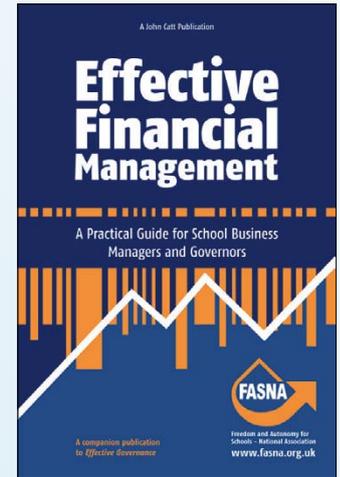
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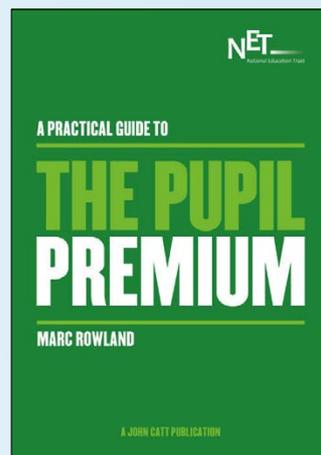
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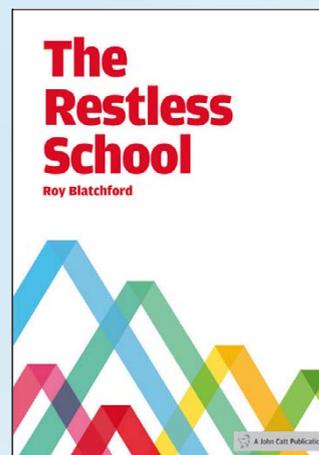
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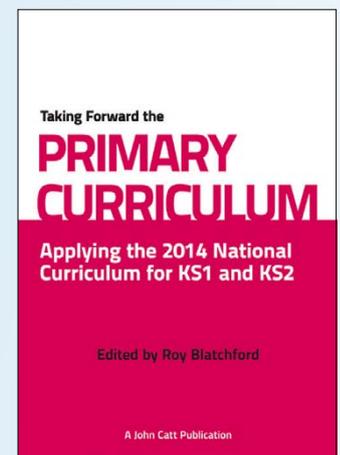
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Time for a joint conference?

Jonathan Wybrow, Head of Cheltenham College Prep School, hopes it isn't a bridge too far

I enjoy returning to school. The first few days of lists, management structures, policies and departmental meetings and potential sports teams remind me of what easy places schools are to administer – until the human element in the form of children and their parents arrive with what appears to be the sole purpose of disrupting all the best laid plans. But the greatest emotion is one of renewing acquaintances with colleagues, with children and with parents. Shared holiday experiences, hopes for the coming academic year and observations of the world at large quickly fill every waking moment and soon the rhythm and routine of the school day, week, term takes over and we're off.

I also really look forward to the IAPS Conference. Not only do you pick up some useful initiatives, either from the speakers or listening carefully to colleagues, but also, with a little effort, one can have a very enjoyable couple of days with some entertaining and amusing people. Worries for the coming year can seem a little less daunting when shared with others who can empathise. But something is missing. And in my opinion that something are the Heads of HMC, SHMIS and GSA. Perhaps even the Bursars of ISBA?

We are in it together. Independent education is under pressure, under scrutiny and, for most, over expensive. And yet, we continue to organize separate conferences, missing a real

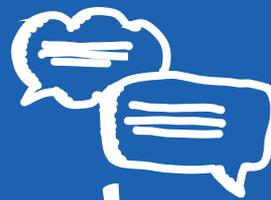
opportunity to present a united front to the Government, the Press and the market place. So far, the only reason that has been offered to me why we avoid organizing one conference is that there isn't a venue large enough to accommodate us all. A quick glance at the website for the Celtic Manor shows that it can manage a conference for 1500 – a decent start. And if one single venue cannot cope with all of us, surely we can discover four hotels and one conference centre in close vicinity? This actually might be the better solution as it would offer the potential for flexibility, which would serve not only the whole, but also the separate organisations. If I remember correctly, this actually happened a few years ago when HMC, having been gazumped by the Conservative Party Conference in Blackpool, found itself billeted in a hotel in central London adjacent to the one being occupied by IAPS. No one got hurt, rival gangs of Heads did not come to blows in the hotel bar or on the train bringing them to the venue and I actually spent a very useful two hours at tea with HMC heads, conducting more productive business there than in a term's worth of "hang on, I'll just see if I can find him/her" phone calls.

The potential for spending time valuably is huge. The potential to attract speakers with real 'clout' increases if they know that they are going to be speaking to the whole independent sector. Those who sponsor events will view the event as better value for money.

The possibilities for debate between individuals from different sectors on a range of subjects, old and new, are limitless. Time spent talking about transition issues, whether they are concerned with whole sector matters or individual cases can involve the relevant parties, there and then.

So who organizes this and when does it take place? I do not advocate that a joint conference replaces those arranged by individual organisations completely. Instead, I would suggest that a joint conference takes place every third or fourth year in the conference season – late September/early October. Unless there was a dramatic turn over of personnel, this should allow for genuine relationships to develop. Those responsible for producing the annual conference for their organization would join together for the purpose of designing and delivering the all-party event. With a three or four year lead in and with greater financial leverage, high-profile speakers can be booked in advance. One would hope that sponsors would be attracted to the greater marketing and networking opportunities and I know that parents would be more convinced that my time away was well spent if they knew that I was liaising with senior schools for the benefit of their children.

To my colleagues in the independent sector, I wish you every success for a successful academic year. I just wish that I could say it to you in person more often.



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New date!

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Class D (11 to 13 years)

Class E (Staff - open to
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The Prizes

For the schools:

One day handwriting course at Cambridge University Press or Cambridge University Press education resources worth £150 - for the Winning school of the four Classes (A, B, C, D) and the overall Winning and Runner-up schools.

For the pupils:

Prizes and certificates will be awarded to each of the Class winners. A handwriting gift pack and certificate will be awarded to the winners of each age category. Runners up, those in Third place and those Highly Commended will each receive certificates.

The winners will be announced during National Stationery Week (27th April - 3rd May 2015)
www.nationalstationeryweek.com

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Thursday 29th January - Thursday 5th February

The Challenge consists of a 45-60 minute written paper with one or two word answers to 100 general knowledge questions. There are two age groups: Senior and Junior. Schools may enter as many pupils as they wish in each age group (minimum team of 5). The five highest scoring papers in each age group from a school will be entered for the School Prize. There are also individual prizes for high scoring pupils.

The Senior questions are aimed at pupils in Years 7 and 8 while the Junior questions are meant for pupils in Years

5 and 6. We recommend that children are entered in the correct age group.

You will receive the papers about a week before the Challenge date. The Challenge should be taken under exam-type conditions, at any time to suit the school between Thursday 29th January and Thursday 5th February 2015.

The papers should be returned to the appropriate marker using the label/s provided. Please do not attempt to mark the papers yourself. It is a great help if the papers are dispatched as quickly as possible.

If you require further information please contact the Challenge organiser:

Alyson Cowlshaw
Cheam School,
Headley,
Newbury,
Berkshire, RG19 8LD

School: 01635 267821

Email: challenge@cheamschool.co.uk

An entry form is attached and should be returned to the organiser as soon as possible. The fee is £2 per pupil (minimum £10). Cheques should be made payable to 'Cheam School'.

Name of School:

Address:

.....

.....

Post Code:

Telephone:

Name of person in charge of Challenge:

Email:

I wish to enter Pupils (minimum 5) for the Senior Challenge (Years 7/8)

I wish to enter Pupils (minimum 5) for the Junior Challenge (Years 5/6)

I enclose a cheque for (£2 per pupil) made payable to 'Cheam School' (NB – minimum £10 per age group)

Please send the completed form, with your cheque, to:

Mrs A. Cowlshaw, SATIPS CHALLENGE

Cheam School, Headley, Newbury, Berkshire, RG19 8LD

Courses and events

SATIPS CPD

For more information on any of the *satips* courses below, please contact Sarah Kirby-Smith, course director, on coursedirector@satips.com
SATIPS members get a discount of £25 per course (£150) non- member schools £175

24 Feb	Improving assessment and questioning in Science	London
26 Feb	Dangling the carrot or cracking the whip: strategies to improve boys' attainment	London
9 Mar	Phonics and Spelling	London
10 Mar	Delivering the best Prep School Curriculum	Newbury
13 Mar	Moving to Pastoral Leadership	London
20 Apr	Maths Conference: Flipped Learning in the Classroom	London
21 Apr	Get Out!...and explore opportunities in outdoor learning	Newbury

Other courses and events

BSA

Further details on BSA courses can be found via www.boarding.org.uk

5-7 May 2015	Annual Heads' Conference	London
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GSA

For details of all courses and conferences in the GSA Professional Development Programme visit: www.gsa.uk.com/professional-development

11 Feb	PAs' & Heads' Secretaries Conference	London
9 Mar	Pastoral Focus Conference: for heads of year	Oxford
18 May	Effective Data Delivery	Oxford
6-7 May	GSA Junior Heads Conference	Harrogate
19-21 May	GSA Heads' Induction Part 1	Stratford-upon-Avon

ISA

4 Mar	Appraisal and Performance Management	Cheshire
12 Mar	Secondary iPod and Android Course	Waltham Abbey
22 Apr	Curriculum Planning	Cheshire
23 Apr	CEM Assessment and Tracking	Cheshire

Society of Heads

Further details on Society of Heads courses can be found via www.thesocietyofheads.org.uk

12 May	New Heads' Conference (Part 3)	Market Harborough
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Hit 'send' and collect your P45!

Dear Mrs Cloch

I am sitting in my office and the little hand is one the nine and the big hand is on the six. There is still no sign of Tick and Tock and no calls to the School Office. In light of this all too familiar tardiness, I feel the time has finally come for me to put pen to paper and to underline the harsh reality of punctuality. Habitual lateness really winds a Head up.

Time is of the essence in so much of what happens in school. Indeed the day is frame-worked around the curriculum timetable – a considered daily order of lessons and not somewhere to enjoy a long lunch. In honour of it, we horologically ask all our parents and children to abandon their desire to be time travellers (ie to flit in and out of GMT at their whim) and to rather synchronise their expensive timepieces, satellite devices and au pair alarms to SST (School Start Time). It is not only good manners, it is also what is best for your child's education.

Parents should set off early enough to avoid the 60mph foot-to-the-floor dash to the drop off zone which puts mankind in peril. Children should be in their classrooms in advance of registration and not drift into assembly dishevelled, rubbing the sleep out of their eyes looking as if butter wouldn't melt in the mouths (when in fact the last minute gobble of toast and marmalade en route has left it dribbling down the chin and onto the shirt and tie in an unsightly slick). Teachers should be given the chance to focus the whole class on the day's plan without fear of repetition, repetition, repetition.

The time of your arrival in the school car park should not be governed by how long the queue is in Costa. Having to wait longer for your double skinny latte with foamed cream, goji-berry syrup and sprinkles is not a valid excuse for missing first lesson. Costa will be still be there (and indeed be arguably more enjoyable and relaxing on your return trip home) after you have dropped the children. This constant dash-and-blag cannot be good for the old ticker. Those precious moments in the classroom can never be retrieved or relived.

All we ask is that you use the same punctilious nature that you employ when heading off for your half term, Christmas, Easter and Summer holidays. May I suggest you think of school as an eight-week break in the Seychelles. Pack your bags the night before in preparation, make sure your children are early to bed ready for the next day's adventure and turn up at the airport (aka school) well in advance of take-off. The teacher is the pilot; the teaching assistant is the cabin crew. They cannot be kept waiting and those who do not take heed of the time of departure will be left at the boarding gate, unable to join friends on the trip of a lifetime. Your average classroom may not offer three escape routes (although to be compliant the exit in case of a fire is clearly marked with a running man) and there may not be lifejackets under every seat, but the daily opportunities to experience new and wonderful things at school more than match the excitement of a family holiday in the Indian Ocean.

To you it may only appear to be a few minutes here and there but over a week, a term, these lost moments can add up to hours and even days. Face up to it, this is valuable time which could be put to a far better use. A few extra pore cleansing minutes in the steam room, an additional game, set and match on the courts or an extended visit to that newly opened boutique perhaps? Not to mention one-to-one reading, 8x table revision, handwriting practice, the Battle of Hastings, golden circle time, gym practice and experimental science.

I look forward to hearing from you and moreover to seeing you in the car park catching the worms with the other early birds.

Yours, in a hurry (don't want to be late for the staff meeting)

Mrs Bella Chime



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