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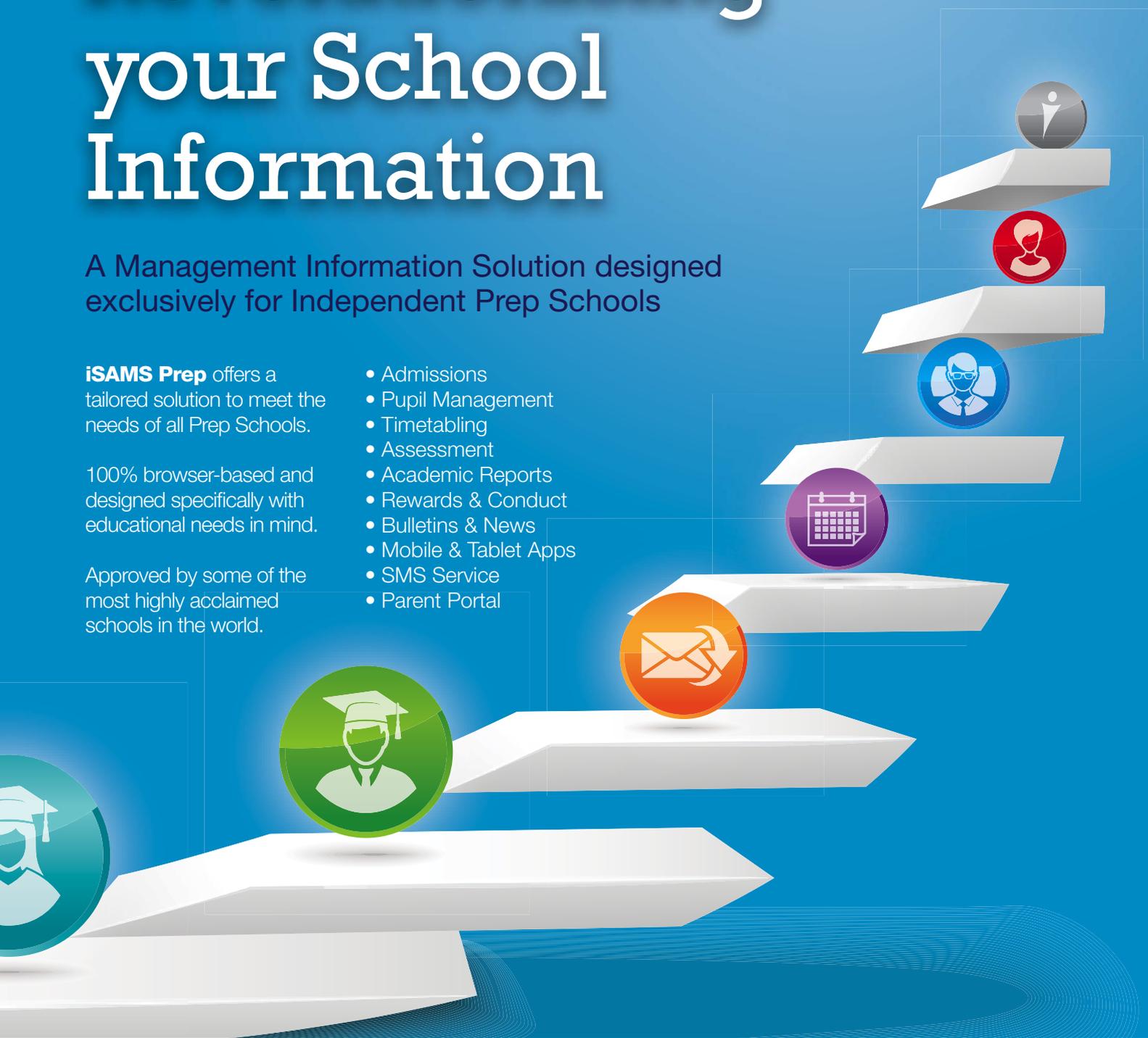
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From the editor



As a summer term begins jam packed full of trips, sport, exams and concerts give a thought to all those pupils who are enjoying their last term at your school. For many of them they have been on a most interesting journey and so many of you have been privileged to join them upon it, through the high and perhaps the low points.

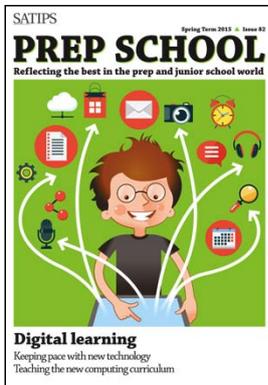
Looking back, I am always astonished by the remarkable journey these young people (aged 11 or 13) have had since they first graced the classrooms of your school as a nursery or reception child. For many of them they have tackled the challenges of exams and scholarships with huge success and for others they

have had huge disappointment, but both equally have learnt so much along the way.

This issue of Prep School reveals the huge array of talent we have both in our teaching staff and equally our pupils. I am constantly amazed by the sheer breath of talent that both offer to our sector. So many go the extra mile to make the lives of those that they come into contact with are enriched or changed. As the term progresses make sure that you seek out those who consistently go the distance and thank them, however small it will make a huge difference to them and the generations that they will continue to touch.

Don't forget to get in touch and share your stories.

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



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Why Magna Carta matters

Christopher Lloyd, world history author and schools lecturer, says presenting a big narrative to young people of the struggle for freedom over the last 800 years is now more important than ever

It was only in August last year that the slightly gruff voice of an elderly American gentleman caught me unprepared on the end of my mobile phone.

I was on my way back from giving a lecture at a school in Northamptonshire. My hands-free was playing up. I could hardly make out the words from the crackles, but I got this gist: "It's Sir Robert Worcester here – I hear you're the guy who does timelines....."

So began what has turned into what feels like the most exhilarating, high-speed partnership in the history of publishing.

In just four months, we have conceived, designed, created, written, illustrated and printed the *Magna*

Carta Chronicle – a Young Person's Guide to 800 years in the Fight for Freedom. The book is now published and available to purchase.

I vaguely remembered Bob, founder of opinion poll company Mori (now IPSUS Mori), from my days at The Sunday Times as Technology Correspondent. That was 25 years ago – now Bob, 82, still behaves as if he is not yet past his peak. Not by a long shot. I have yet to meet anyone half his age with even half his energy, commitment and attention to detail.

So it was with good cause that last year George Osborne appointed Bob to be chairman of a committee charged with donating £1m of public money to causes to help celebrate this year's 800th anniversary of the sealing of

Magna Carta by bad King John.

Like me, you may be wondering how and why such generosity can be justified in times of stringent national austerity?

Having immersed myself in the Magna Carta Chronicle project over the last few months, I am convinced that the answer lies in the power and significance of this narrative for young people. The focus of the 800th anniversary celebrations should be especially important to anyone teaching school children at Key Stage 2 and 3 and for all parents with kids aged between 6 and 15.

For a good part of the 800 years since King John was surrounded by those rebellious barons at Runnymede, Britain's national identity has been



forged by a roller-coaster story concerning the evolution of what we now call freedom and rights.

It is a heart-wrenching tale that involves the forces of mother nature and chance just as much as the heroes, heroines and villains of traditional history.

The saga hits home hardest when you design a timeline. Soon after John's humiliation, the broad narrative sweep takes in the appalling desolation of the Black Death, quickly followed by the resulting sumptuary laws designed to keep those pesky peasants who survived in check. Then comes Caxton's subversive printing press, the Reformation, settlements in the New World, the American Declaration of Independence, the French revolution and tempestuous Simon Bolivar liberating the colonies of South America.

Fast on the heels of his horses comes the abolition of slavery, the Chartists, the opening of primary schools and universal suffrage. Finally, following two devastating world wars, the UN issues its declaration of universal human rights – a 'Magna Carta for the modern age', homosexuality is decriminalised, the Berlin Wall falls, woman become priests – no, I mean bishops...

As you can see, it's a story that affects us all from cradle to grave.

The problem is it's rarely, if ever, told – at least not as an interconnected narrative like this – to children in British primary schools today.

Ever since the time of Henry VIII us British have been brilliant at preaching our idea of liberties and freedom to other nations and cultures. Exporting our views around the world has become a national speciality, be it on the Mayflower, via the Empire or through the play-by-the-rules mentality of our great global sporting contributions: football, rugby and cricket.

But in our rush to preach, we seem to have forgotten – to the drastic cost of the present younger generation – how to tell the story to ourselves. We are still so used to projecting our

narrative onto a global stage that the idea of telling it to our children is ironically alien to us.

We shouldn't be so surprised that most young people in our multi-cultural society have little idea of the narrative of British values, the very essence of what Theresa May harks on about as being critical to the future cohesion of British society.

Freedom of expression, tolerance of alternative opinions, a lack of discrimination, equal opportunities and respect for diversity - all of these are core to the evolved psyche of our nation formed over 800 years. But they are under extreme threat, not least because we have lost the ability to tell the story of how they were fought and won over generations to young people today.

The fault falls mostly to an education system that has been so chopped

up and fragmented by educational experts and politicians that telling any giant sweeping cross-curricular narrative over time has become almost impossible.

The snag is that the evolution of our national story cuts across ALL subject areas – from literature (JS Mill) to politics (The Great Reform Bill) and religion (the Reformation) to technology (Edward Snowden) and biology (The Black Death) - at the same time history, drama, debating and reading through non-fiction (literacy) course through it all.

Timetables, bells, different teachers for different subjects - they are all anathema to the big interconnected, cross-curricular picture – with the result that pitching to a young mind the fight for freedoms and liberties over the last 800 years is not especially easy or intuitive for many





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teachers (and parents). As a result our story of the emergence of our values has become lost.

So the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta celebrations may possibly be the best chance we will have to do this for a generation, if not longer.

When King John sealed that parchment in the summer of 1215 no-one could possibly know what history might make of the event. Now, 800 years later, we do. But how are we to tell the story in an engaging way in an age where young people are everything from reluctant readers to conscientious objectors when it comes to the study of history? And most schools are still in a mindset that's obsessed with fragmenting knowledge into bite size chunks...

I have three suggestions – all of which we have incorporated in to the new official young person's guide to Magna Carta – *The Magna Carta Chronicle*.

The first is to make the story irresistibly and stunningly visual. Wallbook artist Andy Forshaw has created the most beautiful giant fold-out timeline of about 100 key moments from 1215 to 2015. Let's stick it on every bedroom and classroom wall!

Second, there is something extraordinarily powerful about telling stories from the past in the style of newspaper reportage, as if they happened yesterday. This makes reading non-fiction fun, engaging and relevant. News is the heartbeat of most young people's online information fix. When seen in print, stories told in this style have more power than ever.

Finally, we must appeal to the innate sense of curiosity in a young person's mind. A 50-question multiple-choice quiz is designed to unlock conversation between pupils and teachers, children and parents. The idea is that young people challenge adults, even if only to prove how much more they know than their supposedly wiser elders. All the correct answers are hidden somewhere inside the book, of course. There is joy in the discovery of the right answer. A little shot of dopamine goes a long way to creating a lifelong love of learning.

The launch of the Magna Carta Chronicle was celebrated at a launch party in Central London. Thanks to the support of the Magna Carta 800th committee for making the launch of this book possible. Its aim will be to help revive the telling of our national

story – one that has helped form our modern identity as a tolerant, multi-cultural nation, respectful of diversity. It's as a result of this narrative that we are people who reasonably expect others who choose to come and live here to abide by our values, above all else expunging intolerance, discrimination and extremism.

That's why I can't think of a more important story that needs to be told to our young people today - the 800 years in the fight for freedom from 1215 to 2015. And to think that if Bob hadn't made that crackly telephone call just a few months ago, I may never have realised myself quite how much celebrating Magna Carta matters.

Christopher Lloyd gives inspirational cross-curricular lectures and workshops in schools all over the UK and abroad. To find out more visit www.whatonearthbooks.com/events The *Magna Carta Chronicle* is available to purchase for £8.99, visit www.whatonearthbooks.com/shop A selection of curriculum mapped activities are also available at www.whatonearthbooks.com/activities



The greatest kick ever

Karen Peterman, humanities coordinator at St Hilda's School, shares her thoughts on marking historic events

When the 'Football Remembers' booklet from the Schools Council arrived in my pigeon hole during the summer I knew that I had to do something with it, but what exactly? I already had the schemes of work in place for the coming year and was hesitant to go against the grain but this was an important event. I carried the book around with me for several weeks at the beginning of the autumn term no nearer to knowing what exactly to do. Then a gift of inspiration arrived in the form of the Sainsbury's advert set in the trenches. After showing the advertisement to my Year 5 and 6 classes I found that their imaginations had been captured. Following discussions with the Year

5 English teacher we went ahead and abandoned our previously written termly plans to instead read Michael Foreman's 'War Game' to the classes and followed this up with writing letters home from the trenches. All of a sudden there were so many ideas that we could develop from the story helping to improve the children's writing and further fuelling their imaginations.

The message of the Sainsbury's advert was of sharing and for me that meant not just sharing a history project with the English department but also involving the PE department as well. We have several keen young footballers in the school and I just

knew that the girls would jump at the opportunity. I wanted the girls to play the football match. Approaching my colleague who teaches PE was easy as I just showed her the link to the advert and we were on. The match was to go ahead. As well as leading humanities I also lead drama and of course we couldn't just play the football match in sports gear the girls simply had to dress up as the soldiers. Carols – they sang carols, well that would involve music. So more cross curricular links. But silent night was sung in German – of course an opportunity to develop MFL. A plan was now coming together. I chose some suitable poems and some of the letters and diary entries from



the 'Football Remembers' booklet to bring in the historical content for the girls to read aloud prior to the match in a ceremony. Then all of a sudden I received a message to say that the local paper had been contacted and would be there to take photos and could I just give them a call to explain exactly what we were doing?

By the time the match arrived it seemed like everybody was involved. The facilities manager extricated from the attic costume room the army camouflage that we had used for the summer play. The kitchen staff were to lay on hot chocolate and biscuits and the girls were getting excited. At lunchtime I dragged over the garden benches onto the lawn and draped over the camouflage creating two opposing trenches. Then the girls from Years 5 and 6 assembled on the netball courts in their costumes to participate in the ceremony of remembrance. The press duly arrived but I was now busy directing the proceedings so the Deputy Head filled her in on what was happening. The Soldier by Rupert Brooke has always been a favourite of mine and to hear it spoken so eloquently by one of our Year 6 girls brought quite a lump to my throat. All of the Year 5 girls recited *Trench Duty* by Siegfried Sassoon and *In Flanders Field* by John MacCrae was included. Two of the letters that the girls had written about the experience in the trenches were also read out, making it seem even more poignant in the freezing cold of the afternoon. We concluded with a prayer and then went off to the lawn to play the match.

Photos were taken to remember the occasion and then the strains of 'Stille Nacht' filled the air. As I read from 'War Game' the words came alive as the children improvised the story. Christmas trees placed outside their trenches; handshakes; exchange of gifts; a brief retire to their trenches and "then from somewhere, a football bounced across the frozen mud. Will was on it in a flash. He trapped the ball with his left foot, flipped it up with his right, and headed it towards Freddie." Well actually it was Evelyn who deftly executed the moves and headed the ball

towards Marisa. The match had started. The girls streamed out from behind their makeshift trenches and started chasing the ball. We had planned to have the girls in proper teams to play in an organised fashion taking 15 minutes each but no here was the match taking place just as the young soldiers would have done informal – just enjoying a kick about. But hang on a minute what about goals? A couple of tee-shirts marked the goal posts but no one was defending – until of course I couldn't resist joining in. I stopped a couple of potential goals but once again it was Evelyn's footwork that completed the

proceedings with an excellent shot. The afternoon was drawing to a close. The final whistle blew and the girls wandered back to their trenches. I concluded the reading from War Game and shouts of "Good Night Tommie" "Good Night Fritz" echoed across the lawn.

"Hold this moment. Hold this memory of today." I instructed the girls. "Bring it out again in 20 or 30 year's time and tell your children about how you played in a football match to celebrate the Christmas truce. It is our duty to remember and pass on the stories of the past to celebrate the lives of those who were prepared to risk and give their lives that we might be free. Share the story." That's what history is all about sharing the stories and learning from the past. The light was beginning to fade and the girls had been outside in the freezing December

air for long enough, so we retreated to the warmth of the dining room and welcome hot chocolate. Muddy boots removed. Souvenir bars of chocolate wrapped up in brown paper were collected and excited children dismissed to their parents. The afternoon had been a success.

"Best day ever at school" was the message I received from the parent of the goal scorer the next day. Yes the greatest kick ever is to feel that one has made a difference.

Making a difference leads one on to suggest other opportunities to share

It is our duty to remember and pass on the stories of the past to celebrate the lives of those who were prepared to risk and give their lives that we might be free

with the children our wonderful historical heritage. June 2015 sees the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta 1215 – now that would be interesting to re-enact. It would also be an interesting topic to explore as part of citizenship and how they can make a difference by participating in their local community. On further investigation there are other interesting anniversaries that could be remembered – for example the Viking invasion by Cnut in 1015; The Battle of Agincourt on 15th October 1415, which could offer plenty of opportunities to explore Henry V by Shakespeare. Moving forward in time there is the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo on the 18th June 1815. The Dunkirk evacuation occurred 75 years ago and VE day was 70 years ago. So why not choose one of these events and explore the possibilities?

Reducing Shakespeare

Shakespeare is back, says Matthew Jenkinson

Shakespeare is back. Not that he ever went away, clearly. But he is back on the Key Stage 3 radar, with the new National Curriculum requiring all pupils between 11 and 14 to study two Shakespeare plays in full. This added rigour has won plaudits from some areas, but not all. Dr Tim Hands, Master of Magdalen College School, has argued that too much Shakespeare, too early, will put pupils off Shakespeare for life. It will, Hands claims, 'hold back pupils, not liberate them'.

As with any topic in any subject, the extent to which pupils will be put off or held back depends on the way these plays are taught. Or it could be argued that Shakespeare's genius will transcend the mangling they are given through bad teaching. I vividly remember reading *Romeo and Juliet* at the age of 13, even though my teacher was not blessed in the inspiration department. But what debates about the new National Curriculum requirements rarely countenance, oddly, is the value of *performing*

Shakespeare. I suspect that most of us imagine unwilling pupils sitting at their desks, each being given a role – 'Freddy, you be third servingman!' – and killing Shakespeare's language with a deadening adolescent inflection.

Before the nation's armchair educational commentators start shaking their *Telegraphs* or *Guardians*, sneering that Key Stage 3 pupils are too young to perform Shakespeare plays, I will beg to differ. Indeed, as with many of my colleagues around the country – and one hopes the world – each autumn I direct a Shakespeare play that remains true to the original language. As far as I have noticed, these plays have not yet put anyone off Shakespeare for life, nor held them back. Quite the opposite: abridged and produced in the correct way, Shakespeare plays can be 'differentiated' to allow pupils to access them at many different levels.

I should clarify that we do not perform *complete* plays. The logistics of trying to get a cast of 11-13 year

olds to learn three hours' worth of lines are boggling, especially when they are also trying to do their classwork and homework, play football, practise the French horn, and surf YouTube. Our performances tend to be about an hour in length, with the original text abridged to preserve the overall plot and principal characters. This 'reduced Shakespeare' has little in common with the Reduced Shakespeare Company's excellent stage show, aside from an appreciation that Shakespeare plays can be distilled without corrupting their essence.

It appears that such an approach has some high-profile supporters. Simon Russell Beale, who has just become Cameron Mackintosh Visiting Professor of Contemporary Theatre at the University of Oxford, argues that Shakespeare is 'big enough' to survive some editing. 'You can do what you like with it,' he says, 'as long as you make coherent, emotional sense'. Deborah Warner, former director of the Royal Shakespeare Company and

It is not a book for pursuits, nor for those seeking a study text. It is, instead, for those who wish to perform (or read) a Shakespeare play, but do not have the time or resources to stage (or read) a full-length version

twice-recipient of a Laurence Oliver Award, has argued that 'you must cut to create new work'.

Three of these abridged Shakespeare plays are being published by John Catt in 2015: *Hour-Long Shakespeare* features performance texts of three of Shakespeare's greatest 'History' plays: *Henry IV, Part 1*; *Henry V*; and *Richard III*. It is not a book for purists, nor for those seeking a study text. It is, instead, for those who wish to perform (or read) a Shakespeare play, but do not have the time or resources to stage (or read) a full-length version. Naturally, cutting out almost two-thirds of each original play means that many speeches are shorter than in the original, some sections of plot have been removed, and whole characters sometimes have been excised altogether. But the integrity of Shakespeare's original language has been preserved. The lines are, in general, as printed in the first folio of 1623, with, where appropriate, some modernized spellings, and capitals replaced with lowercase letters. The words of the original plays have not been changed; there are just fewer of them.

The casting of the plays has been engineered for the greatest flexibility. There are usually approximately twenty named parts, each with different levels of difficulty. If someone wishes to be involved in a Shakespeare production, but is not confident about learning lots of lines or being on the stage for too long, there is a part for them. Equally, if someone wishes to take on a much larger role like Henry V or Richard III, there is a part for them too. And, of course, there are plenty of medium-engagement roles for those in the middle.

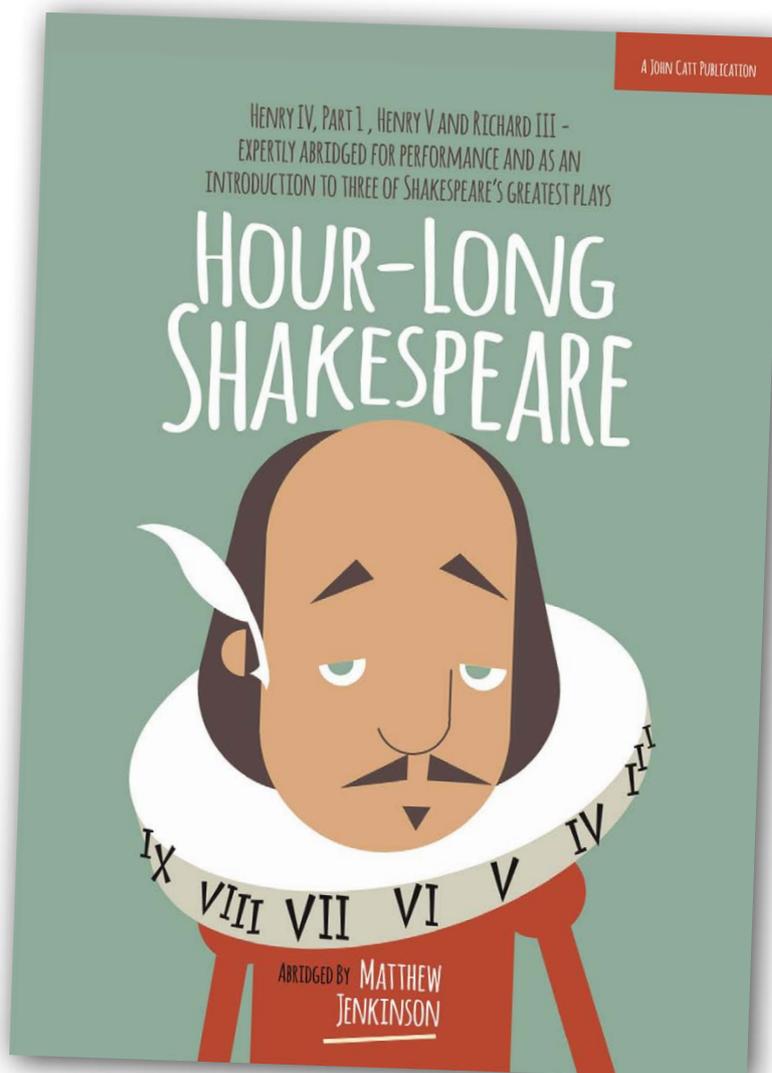
The Chorus device is used throughout the plays. While Shakespeare wrote a Chorus part for *Henry V*, this same narrator-style method has also been adopted in *Hour-Long Shakespeare for Henry IV, Part 1 and Richard III*. This enables the Chorus to provide excerpts from otherwise-excised sections of the plays, or to provide a commentary on the unfolding drama.

The Chorus device also aids flexibility in casting. It is possible to have just one individual narrating the Chorus part, or several actors can take the Chorus lines in turn. When these hour-long versions were originally staged, between fifteen and twenty Chorus members were used, sitting behind the audience 'in the round', taking each line in turn around a giant circle. In addition to enhancing the atmosphere of the performance, this also enables the Chorus to have the script in front of them, catering for those who wish to engage with Shakespeare's language and the production as a whole, but who do not yet feel confident enough to learn lines or perform on the main stage.

There is also great flexibility in the age range of those who can be involved in the hour-long productions. The original cast members were

between eleven and thirteen years old. They demonstrated that this age group really can engage with, act in, and enjoy, Shakespeare's plays. While it would probably be rare for younger children to attempt these edited versions, there is of course no upper age limit. One of the best ways to learn about Shakespeare is to perform one of his plays. Even if you only have a couple of lines, you become immersed in the language and begin to encounter and understand core themes and plots. These scripts will hopefully help in that learning process, genuinely liberating them through manageable exposure to Shakespeare's language.

Matthew Jenkinson is Director of Studies at New College School, Oxford. *Hour-Long Shakespeare* is published by John Catt Educational, £10. Discounts available for multiple copies



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Why perfection is imperfect

Dr Heather Martin explores why making mistakes when learning a language should be seen as a positive, not a negative

All of us, I suspect, have wished for a perfect memory. Not least around exam time, whether at school or university. 'If only', we dream, reaching for the caffeine...

In his unforgettable short story *Funes the Memorious*, the great Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges recounts the life of an extraordinary individual with an extraordinary memory. Even as a child he can remember everyone's name in full, having heard it only once. Then he suffers paralysis following a horse-riding accident and is confined to his cot; the consolation is that his memory is now perfect. Superhuman, in fact. Funes can remember (he cannot forget) everything he has ever seen, in the most perfect detail, every time he has ever seen it. He remembers every leaf of every tree in the forest, every strand of hair in the mane of a horse, every grain of sand on the beach. He remembers the dog seen from the front at 3:14 as distinct from the same dog seen from the side at 3:15. It's what scientists now call 'highly superior autobiographical memory syndrome'. Subtly, the

narrator allows us to glimpse the downside of the upside for Funes. His memory is a garbage heap. He cannot tell the gold from the dross. Unable to select, discriminate or simply forget, it becomes apparent that he is unable to think. Eventually, Funes is crushed by the weight of his endlessly proliferating memories; his death from suffocation is symbolic.

Yet the pursuit of perfection is hardly a vice. On the contrary, the dedication it implies is a quality we admire. And it's the underlying subtext of every encouragement to our pupils to 'do their best', to produce their best work all of the time. Do we ask as much of ourselves? Would we consider it reasonable to do so? What if our best seems never to be quite good enough?

Clearly, the paradox of perfection preoccupied Borges. In 'Of Rigour in Science' he tells the cautionary tale of a society of map makers so committed to the art of cartography that they eventually produce a map of the empire that coincides with the empire point for point, reproducing it in every detail. And thereby entirely missing the point of the map, which is to

reduce complex reality to manageable human proportions. This hubristic 3D map collapses, the world literally falls apart, and the ruins serve only to provide shelter to stray animals and crazed beggars.

Be careful what you wish for, is the message. Perfection contains the seed of its own destruction and is basically a bad thing. Lucky then that in reality it doesn't actually exist.

Borges's technique of pushing an idea to breaking point is brilliantly powerful (as well as darkly funny). But the truth is he is merely dramatising what we all already know from common sense and experience. The puzzle is why we fail to consult our knowledge in everyday life, and particularly when it comes to education.

Perhaps it has something to do with the bewitchment of mathematics, and in particular the decimal system. So neat and tidy, so rounded, so perfect. 10/10, 100%: we yearn for these magical scores. Sometimes, though, we become squeamish, feeling instinctively that there is something

Perfection contains the seed of its own destruction and is basically a bad thing. Lucky then that in reality it doesn't actually exist

wrong about reducing a humanly complex child to a simple inhuman number. So we paper over the problem with letter grades instead. *A priori*, the number system makes sense; *a posteriori*, it is undermined by the messiness of lived experience.

But parents too are under the spell of the number devil. They want to know what the letter grades really 'mean'. They want hard data, and to establish exactly where their child is in the pecking order. So when push comes to shove we draw back the veil of the grade band and produce the incontrovertible numerical evidence. Take that, we say, as we pull the statistical rabbit from the hat!

The increasingly meticulous measurement of relative success seems inescapable as pupils move through an increasingly competitive system. But we might at least try to postpone it for as long as possible, focusing in the primary years on building curiosity and confidence instead. I can give a more faithful account of individual progress through a conversation or written report, either of which allows me to demonstrate my knowledge of the child as a rich and rewarding mix of strength and weakness, success and healthy failure. Isn't it fantastic that she can explain the concept of grammatical agreement across nouns, articles and adjectives? But yes, she still has some way to go before putting

her knowledge consistently and rigorously into practice.

Perhaps I feel particularly strongly about this as a linguist, where quantifiable success is either a given (you have that kind of brain), or a matter of long and patient apprenticeship. Learning a language is like learning to play a musical instrument: even if you mostly get more wrong than right, that doesn't mean you're 'bad at it'.

In languages, we learn the value of little things. Little things matter. It's great if you aspire to become a proof-reader, or anything else that requires eagle-eyed attention to detail. A missing or misplaced accent can change the meaning of a word (in Spanish, for example, 'él' means 'he' but 'el' means 'the', 'sí' means 'yes' but 'si' means 'if', 'está' means 'is' but 'esta' means 'this' and 'ésta' means 'this one'. Similar niceties apply to the spoken language, where rhythm and cadence can determine whether or not you are understood in conversation. In theory, languages are intolerant of even the tiniest mistakes (and in the dark ages of the subject, language teachers were similarly so).

In practice, however (fortunately), languages are very forgiving. As Henry Higgins was quick to point out, few of us speak or write even our own language correctly. And the fact is that in the normal course of everyday life it turns out not to matter that much. Admittedly, your grammatical howlers will elicit a degree of disapproval from diehard purists and there are sensitive souls out there who will wince at the inauthenticity of your accent. But far more often, people will appreciate your willingness and ability to get the message across warts and all. So languages teach us the value of broad brush strokes too. As native English speakers we have the opportunity on a daily basis to admire - and be inspired by - all those sportsmen, journalists, politicians, cleaners, businessmen and

medics who can operate so fluently and coherently in English as a second (or even third or fourth) language. We don't expect them to be perfect, we don't need them to be. So why expect it of ourselves or our children?

Mistakes in language are slippery things. Something can be self-evidently wrong at first, and yet end up being not-wrong. So sort of right. This is because a) language is a living thing, not set in stone, and b) language was invented by the humans who speak it and so logically,

is constantly reinvented by them as well. Mistakes are adaptations, signs of evolution. Healthy languages are continually subject to mutation through use; the more dominant a language, the more it will change. Not only are new words invented (and discarded) in response to new technologies, for example - 'walkman' came and went with startling rapidity - but older words fall into disuse through neglect, or are preserved only in the pages of the world's great writers (Borges is an Aladdin's cave of esoteric and arcane vocabulary). Even a mistake that jars horribly on first hearing - such as 'me and my friends went shopping' - gradually loses its power to grate. Eventually, if more people say it than don't, it won't even really count as a mistake anymore. You might even catch yourself using that very same turn of phrase through (almost unconscious) choice.

The tendency to mimic or mirror those around us has something to do with human empathy. We are showing that we are sensitive to others, paying attention to them, really listening,

meeting them half way. Or maybe it's just survival instinct kicking in, proving our legitimacy, our membership of the tribe.

In the global village of social media, languages are mixing and mingling more than ever, engaging in constant cross-fertilisation, feeding off and adapting to each other. I see this particularly in Latin American Spanish, which is subtly reshaping itself to accommodate and embrace the structures of English. It is as though the language is sympathetically anticipating the mistakes native English speakers are most likely to make, so as to be more welcoming perhaps, on a sort of 'mi casa es tu casa' principle of linguistic hospitality.

our

One of the first examples I came across was the simple 'jugar fútbol' ('to play football') as opposed to the traditionally correct 'jugar al fútbol' ('to play [at the game of] football'). Next came the Anglicisation of the time, with 'Son las tres menos veinte' ('It's three o'clock less twenty minutes') giving way to 'Son veinte para las tres' ('It's twenty to three'). More recently (and this one still had the power to shock) the insistence by an Ecuadorian New Yorker on 'Es frío' ('It's cold') rather than the more Latinate 'Hace frío' ('Il fait froid',

Guten Tag

literally 'It makes coldness'): pure English, in other words, translated into Spanish. It works just fine, to be fair, so it's probably here to stay (pace the *Real Academia*).

Conversely, it is surely the influence of other languages such as Spanish that is causing English to lose its grip on prepositions. Some are just disappearing altogether. 'Excited about' is as often as not 'excited for', while 'to impact on' and 'to make reference to' have simply become 'to impact' and 'to reference'. It's hardly surprising, of course, that all those foreign language students have finally rebelled against our prepositional verbs, which are notoriously idiosyncratic and difficult to master.

I was first recruited as a primary head of languages to put an end to death by testing and breathe new life into lessons. When I opened the storage cupboard in my newly inherited department I felt like I'd been taken back in time to my grandmother's pantry. But instead of tins of baked beans and tomato soup stockpiled high against a rainy day, I was confronted by floor to ceiling stacks of

photocopied end-of-unit tests, enough to last for generations, far longer than I expected to be in the job (no coincidence, I think, that my new pupils had no idea how the language they were learning was supposed to sound). Pretty much the first thing I did was to throw them all out; we never looked back.

We have Alexander Pope to thank for the popular saying 'To err is human; to forgive, divine'. No argument with the former, but when it comes to learning, there is no place for feelings of guilt when mistakes are made. Rather it is the poisoned chalice of idealism we should fear. There are no circles or triangles in nature or human nature; they dwell with those other elusive archetypes, the True, the Good and the Beautiful, in some kind of unearthly Platonic heaven.

By all means aspire to perfection. Safe in the knowledge that you will, thankfully, fail.

Dr Heather Martin is Head of Languages and Enrichment at St Faith's School in Cambridge. She has recently been appointed Assistant Head (Curriculum) at Kensington Prep School in London.

In the global village of social media, languages are mixing and mingling more than ever, engaging in constant cross-fertilisation, feeding off and adapting to each other

안녕하세요



Notre Voyage Scolaire en France

Westbourne House School take their Year 7 pupils to Maison Claire Fontaine in Burgundy every year – here's why...

For the last ten years or so Westbourne House School has taken its Year 7 pupils to Maison Claire Fontaine in Burgundy for six days. We go at the start of Year 7s' Common Entrance or Scholarship course as it gives more time to practice grammatical sequences, expand French vocabulary as well as to prepare the 'présentations' for the oral exam.

We have been absolutely delighted with each of our stays at MCF whether we have taken 30 or 50 pupils. The centre is run by a delightful English couple, Alex and Mark along with their team of supporting teachers

and their wonderful chef, David. Maison Claire Fontaine has beautiful but not fussy accommodation and is in the most wonderful setting of the Burgundy countryside. There are absolutely no distractions near to the centre. Our families and pupils are therefore quite clear that the key purpose for going to Maison Claire Fontaine is to learn French. Lessons are both fun and purposeful and we have been able to work with MCF to tailor make our week to ensure that our pupils' needs are met.

The education offered by MCF is of the highest standard backed by genuine academic and teaching

excellence in all areas. Alex and Mark believe passionately in the creation of a safe and appropriate learning environment for all who come to their centre. They also believe wholeheartedly that the quality and effectiveness of learning is directly influenced and enhanced by the enjoyment and fun that pupils have whilst they are going through the process of learning.

Our timetable is included as part of this article which gives an idea of the range of activities and consequently the range of French experiences that pupils delight in while staying at MCF. They really do think of it as a fun

week despite the fact that a great deal of hard work is also taking place!

MCF and Westbourne House always work closely together as a team in order to develop a purpose driven week:

- together we produce a scheme of work and lesson plans to match the requirements of our pupils
- a drama activity has been introduced at the end of the week in preparation for the presentation that will be given to our parents on return
- the use of time in both lessons and during meal times has been developed in order to focus on the improvement of confidence in oral work
- at our request, MCF introduced a completely new activity at the local station so that our pupils could gain practical experience of understanding how a French station functions and have experience in 'buying' and

The quality and effectiveness of learning is directly influenced and enhanced by the enjoyment and fun that pupils have

'composting' tickets: concepts we find quite hard to teach in the classroom yet the railway station of Avallon is ideal.

- we also requested for the timetable to be slightly adapted to allow us to have organized time with our pupils each morning straight after breakfast. We consider this is an important 'us' moment as it provides space for us to discreetly deal with any issues that might arise before

they grow out of proportion and yet we are not interrupting MCF's daily programme

- also, each year before going to MCF we are in contact about the needs of individual pupils so that the necessary care is put in place ahead of our arrival.

It is quite clear that none of the above could possibly take place without a dedicated team of staff. The quality of the individual teachers is considered of paramount importance by Alex and



Langues

Mark and to such an extent that they even sent a teacher to visit our school to help develop her teaching skills and her understanding of the English prep school system in more depth.

Besides the French teaching staff, MCF engage English gap year students who are bi-lingual (French-English) to provide support and act as role models since they have selected French as a subject to study at university. We certainly saw the effectiveness of this when one of our pupils said during his stay, 'Je voudrais devenir un Ben!'.

The theatrical presentation to parents alluded to above we consider of extreme importance to each child's French experience. If our pupils can fearlessly speak in correct French in front of their parents for entertainment purposes, then we feel confident that they will be able to perform appropriately in their French oral exams in Year 8.

Pupils are also asked to write in French about their favourite day and the best are selected for publication in our school magazine that year. Here are some of their contributions for you to enjoy.

Lundi



Lundi était ma journée préférée. Le matin nous sommes allés assister à un spectacle de cirque. Nous avons fait du trapèze, c'était super. Après nous nous sommes balancés sur une grosse boule, c'était difficile. Après nous avons marché sur le fil d'Ariane. - Jack

D'abord j'ai eu une leçon de français, c'était intéressant. Après j'ai fait du tir à l'arc, j'ai éclaté sept ou huit ballons. C'était très amusant. Quand je suis rentrée du cirque j'ai mangé le dîner et puis j'ai joué à la pétanque et j'ai

terminé deuxième. George a gagné par un point mais c'était un bon jeu. A la fin j'ai dormi. - Maria

Mardi



Ma journée préférée c'était mardi, c'était mortel. Le matin nous sommes allés à Avallon et nous avons fait un questionnaire sur les magasins. Quand nous avons visité l'église nous avons vu une grenouille qui était faite de pierre. - James

On est allé à la brasserie pour boire un sirop. Je me suis assis à une table avec Clare, Flora et Hector. Clare et Flora ont pris un sirop de fraise et Hector et moi avons commandé un sirop de grenadine. On peut avoir des sirops en Angleterre. Finalement on est allé à la gare. On a fait des groupes et notre groupe a acheté un billet au guichet. Enfin on a composté le billet au composteur. - Kian

J'ai visité le Parc Aventure, c'était super! Ma partie préférée était la tyrolienne, c'était mortel! Je suis allée sur la grande tyrolienne, c'était effrayant et passionnant. Mais ma partie préférée absolue était quand j'étais sur le terrain! - Poppy

Mercredi



Nous avons visité Vézelay le matin. A Vézelay on peut voir une grande église, c'était génial. Après nous avons mangé le déjeuner, c'était sympa. Nous avons suivi un cours de français,

c'était mortel! Nous avons fait de la sculpture sur pierre avec mes amies. J'adore les activités de mercredi! - Maia

Jeudi



Le matin j'ai fait de la mosaïque, j'ai fait un voilier avec des algues. C'était mortel! Après la mosaïque nous sommes allés au cours de français, nous avons préparé la visite au marché pour vendredi. Jonathan a jeté des légumes et des fruits. C'était très amusant. - Georgia

L'après-midi nous sommes allés faire du kayak. On m'a donné un casque, une pagaie et un bateau. J'étais très mouillée, c'était mortel! - Maddie

Pour le dîner nous sommes allés au restaurant à Avallon. J'ai préféré le dessert, j'adore la salade de fruits, c'était délicieux. - Amelia

Vendredi



Ma journée préférée est vendredi parce que nous avons préparé notre propre déjeuner. Nous sommes allés au marché où ils nous ont donné notre argent de poche et l'argent pour acheter notre déjeuner. Nous avons acheté la nourriture et nous sommes retournés à MCF pour préparer. Les enseignants ont noté notre déjeuner et nous avons eu cinq points. - Alex

The experiences our pupils glean enrich their lives not only academically but also physically and socially

The success of any school trip is often reflected by the response from parents. An example of an e-mail from one of our parents following our trip this year is given below:

To you all,

A huge thank you! What can I say?! Georgie had an absolute ball - she loved the French trip. I thought she would come home tired and monosyllabic... how wrong could I be?! She hasn't stopped talking about the trip since she returned home. She couldn't tell

me what she had most/least enjoyed, it was all 'excellent'. She says her French has really improved and could not be more complimentary about all the staff from school and in France.

Thank you for all the thought and care which went into ensuring that the children, especially Georgie, had a wonderful experience.

We are often impressed by the quality of our pupils' French at the end of their week at MCF. We can but express our heartfelt thanks to all the

staff who really do put themselves out in a highly professional way to meet the needs of our pupils in order to advance their French and the pleasure of their stay at MCF.

It must also be said, that while the learning of French may be the ultimate reason for staying at MCF, the experiences our pupils glean enrich their lives not only academically but also physically and socially too. It really is an excellent trip and one that I cannot speak highly enough of. It is worth every single kilometre of travel. Madame Alice Wilson, Head of French at Westbourne House School, Chichester & IAPS Subject Leader

Please find below a copy of our timetable. As you can see it is packed with both fun and action!

To find out more visit www.maisonclairefontaine.com

	dimanche 28	lundi 29	mardi 30	mercredi 1	jeudi 2	vendredi 3	samedi 4
MATIN		Etudier le français	Faire une enquête dans la ville	Visiter Vézelay	Avoir un cours de français	Faire les courses pour le déjeuner à Vermenton	DÉPART
		Faire du tir à l'arc	d'Avallon		Faire de la mosaïque		
		déjeuner	déjeuner	déjeuner	déjeuner	déjeuner	
APRÈS - MIDI	ARRIVÉE	Assister à un spectacle de cirque	Parc Aventure dans les arbres	Suivre un cours de français	Faire du kayak	Faire un spectacle de théâtre	
				Faire de la sculpture sur pierre		Faire une randonnée	
	dîner	dîner	dîner	dîner	dîner	dîner	
SOIR	Se détendre	Jouer à la pétanque	Faire un puzzle	Danser à la disco	Soirée au restaurant	Regarder un film	

Introducing children to the world of business

Jonathan Foster, Principal of Moreton Hall School, on the importance of equipping students with the skills to succeed in the world beyond school



Politicians and the press continually question whether schools are adequately preparing students for university and careers beyond formal education. Of course GCSE's and A' Levels are the standard bench mark of educational success, but it is the depth and breadth of opportunities beyond

the syllabus which truly determine whether an education is 'complete'.

The youngest speakers at this year's *Business for Children Awards* held in Telford, Shropshire in March were two young members of 'Mini-Moreton Enterprises', Lucy Rees (Year 6) and Bridget Bould (Year 5). Along with the

senior girls of Moreton Hall school's Moreton Enterprises - who delivered an impressive business overview of operations in their limited liability company - the younger girls talked about how they are getting involved in developing business ideas and bringing them to market.



As well as being one of the country's highest achievers on the academic front, Shropshire based Moreton Hall school has the tradition of a strong business focus, with its unique Moreton Enterprises celebrating 30 years of trading. From students running the local railway station in the 1980s to today's sixth formers running a £50,000 company, Moreton girls have developed a fair grasp of what it takes to succeed in the business world.

Moreton Enterprises evolved from a working farm, an all-important Tuck Shop, an in-school branch of Midland Bank and a rail booking agency in the corner of the geography room. The initiative was way ahead of its time and provided girls with hands-on experience of 'enterprise' long before the word even appeared on the National Curriculum, or became the focus for many of the 'Enterprise Academies' we see today.

In December 1992, British Rail closed the booking office at Gobowen station and the girls stepped in to help. At

the time, rail privatisation was a hot political issue; for the girls, what happened next built naturally on the success of ten years of Moreton Enterprises. Managing a local railway station provided a real benefit to the community which also got wholeheartedly involved. It afforded Moretonians experiences which were to amaze university and job interviewers.

Today's Moreton Enterprises comprises of a shopping mall (designed and funded by the efforts of the young business women) housing six retail stores including a stationery store supported by Ryman's and a branch of Barclays Bank. The girls have their own finance and marketing teams, a board of sixth form directors, managers and 'staff'. Business mentors offer guidance, but the girls are running the entire venture themselves by learning to take calculated risks; their successes and failures are all part of the education process.

And critically Moreton Enterprises is now no longer just for the sixth form.

Recent initiatives have seen other year groups starting to take on valuable roles. This includes a course run by the Directors of Moreton Enterprises for the Year 11 students entitled: 'Inspiring Young Entrepreneurs' and 'Mini-Moreton Enterprises', run by pupils of Moreton Hall's Prep School, Moreton First. At the age of 10 and 11 these children are working with sixth form mentors to develop products such as Easter eggs, school stationery and school hoodies which they are researching, sourcing, creating business plans for and marketing. Small wonder they were invited to talk at this year's *Business for Children Awards*.

Introducing school children to the world of business has paid dividends for many Moreton Hall students who have gone on to impressive business careers. Yes, academic examinations are a critical benchmark in secondary education, but of equal value is exposure to experiences outside the confines of a standard syllabus which equip students with the skills to succeed in the world beyond school.

Ten trends, factors and shifts affecting education

The first in an exclusive series of summaries from RSAcademics' Ten Trends 2015 report

As a company immersed in the education sector, we are only too aware of the pressures that senior leaders and governing bodies face when considering school strategy. Often key decisions, sometimes multi-million pound decisions, are made based on very limited evidence about patterns and trends. No other sector would need to operate like this.

Over the last 12 months, a team of researchers has been working to produce a report that focuses on ten key topics:

- How is school leadership changing?
- The changing role of governors and governance.
- Recruiting, training and rewarding teachers.
- Wellbeing: coming to the top of the agenda.
- The state sector: the emerging landscape.
- Edtech: why is it exciting? Why is it important?
- A focus on London.
- Boarding: a world of opportunities.
- Getting complicated: the 11+/13+ debate.
- Affordability: are independent schools pricing themselves out of the market?

We interviewed over 200 heads, bursars, chairs of governors, governors and educational professionals and academics, as well as representatives from the legal, accountancy and banking sectors. This primary research together with extensive desk research has been pulled together to form Ten Trends 2015.

Over the next few editions of Prep School, we will provide a flavour of the issues that we explored. We begin the series by focusing on people: school leaders, governors and teachers.

How is school leadership changing?

A number of factors, including increased economic pressures, constantly changing regulatory frameworks and increased parental expectations have caused schools to re-examine their leadership and management structures and skill sets.

Our research shows that senior management teams are increasingly playing a role in strategic planning. The role of a head now includes the expectation that he/she will facilitate and motivate the senior team to work together, both to think strategically and to be able to follow these ideas through. A modern head will have a vision of a school that will drive strategy and will be constantly scanning the horizon for new trends and challenges, but will expect others in the leadership team to work alongside the governing body in driving change.

The size of school and/or the age of the children has little effect on the breadth of skills required in leadership. If anything, prep or junior school heads and heads of small schools can need an even greater range of skills than heads of senior or large schools. Furthermore, our researchers found that many heads of prep and junior schools felt they lacked the resources to build strong middle management and leadership teams. There has been a growth in professional development targeted



at this level of management and leadership.

We found an emerging pattern of what is termed 'dispersed' leadership across many of the schools, including junior schools, involved in our research. This trend reflects the growing culture of sharing leadership activities across a school or in many cases across a partnership or federation. The idea that everyone can and should be a leader indicates a potential change in momentum from hierarchical models to something more democratic and all-embracing.

The implications of this shift are varied, from demands on continuing professional development, to managing stakeholder expectations and identifying potential leaders, and we explore these in detail in the report. We also pose questions for governors and leadership teams to consider how they might review, develop and support leadership in their schools.

The changing role of governance and governance

Governing a school is now a demanding and complex activity and the requirements are more challenging than ever; the level of accountability is great and recruiting governors can be difficult.

There are some 15,000 people acting as governors in the independent school sector, but we discovered that recruiting and retaining governors is becoming a real challenge for schools. Building a governing body with the right skills and experience is a critical issue for chairs of governing bodies and heads alike. Just over half of the prep schools that participated in our research reported difficulties when appointing governors.

We found that schools reported that it was easier to recruit governors when they were able to work in partnership with other local or regional organisations, such as universities and teaching hospitals. However, we also found that the single largest source of new governors still comes from the networks of existing governors.

Our researchers considered how the difficulties in recruiting governors

can impact upon the length of terms governors are being asked to serve. Interestingly we found that prep schools tended to allow governors to continue for multiple terms of offices, with a majority indicating that it was not uncommon for governors to continue for five terms of three to four years. This was not the case for senior schools.

The report considers some practical ways in which governors might be recruited and supported in their roles. We also consider how blurred the boundaries between governance and management have become, especially in the light of ISI's expectations in terms of governors' accountability. Nonetheless it is clear that governors need to avoid micro-management and maintain just strategic oversight. We explore the roles of heads, leadership teams, staff and governors in achieving effective governance.

Recruiting, training and rewarding teachers

The number of people predicted to embark on initial teacher training (ITT) in 2015 fell below Government targets for the third year in a row and the forecast for the future numbers of qualified teachers is not looking good. This will impact upon the whole education sector as all types of school seek to recruit from the same pool.

However, for independent schools the difficulties of being involved in ITT have been made worse by recent Government changes to the ways in which this is organised with less focus on the so-called provider-led route of following training courses at universities. The number of training places that the Government has allocated to universities has fallen by 28% since 2012. It is this route that independent schools have traditionally recruited newly qualified teachers.

The HMC training scheme will help to improve the profile of independent schools amongst trainee teachers and to secure a supply of staff into the sector. However, all associations and their schools have a part to play in making the sector as attractive as possible to a diminishing pool of new entrants to the teaching profession.

But it is not just the numbers of newly trained teachers that is a concern, so too is the availability of certain specialist subject teachers. Our researchers found that maths and science teachers were often the hardest to recruit. We spoke to numerous heads who all reported the problems of finding appropriately qualified and experienced staff in these areas, with many reporting they had to pay more than they had budgeted to secure the best candidates. Furthermore, the Government trainee teachers figures for other specialist subject areas means there could be a concern for all types of schools, in the future when seeking to recruit other specialist staff for example languages, RE and design and technology.

Across the independent sector, our researchers found that teaching staff salaries were typically higher than those for equivalent roles in the state sector. However, with increasing numbers of academies and free schools, which are able to determine their own pay and conditions, there is a concern that these schools will also be seeking to secure subject specialists in short supply by offering enhanced salary packages.

We discussed in detail with the heads who participated in our research the impact of the introduction of performance related pay (PRP) in the state sector and sought to understand the position in the independent sector. As you might expect this provoked wide-ranging views. Indeed there was a lack of consensus amongst heads on the merits of a PRP scheme. A case study written by a head who has introduced a PRP scheme in two schools, including an all-through school, during his career draws out the benefits and opportunities for a school, but also highlights the very real challenges and makes for a fascinating read.

Ten Trends 2015 is available from RS Academics at a price of £65. For further information or to order a copy please visit www.rsacademics.co.uk or contact Jane Follows on 01858 467449 or jane@rsacademics.co.uk



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I've got funky fingers, have you got funky fingers?

Lancing College Prep in Worthing introduce a new programme they are using to help reception children develop fine motor skills



Mrs E Stephens, the reception teacher at Lancing College Prep Worthing poses the challenge: Stick a post-it on your forehead, pick up a pen and write your full name on the post-it. What does the end result look like?

How did you feel while you were doing it (apart from a little bit foolish?) Did

you have to concentrate more than usual? Was it hard to form the letters correctly, moving the pencil in the right direction? This exercise is often used to demonstrate how children with dyslexia feel when they are told to write something. However, it could equally be applied to a child in the

early years being asked to form letters. The concentration and fine motor control required for this skill are immense.

In reception we aim to help children to reach the early learning goal for physical development which includes the sentence, 'They handle equipment



and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.’ In fact the development matters statement for a child of 40-60 months is even more specific in that it states that children should be able to: ‘Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.’ This is a big challenge for many children.

Generally when you think of holding a pencil in the correct way you think of the triangulation grip of the thumb and first two fingers. To attain this, a child will need to have developed good fine motor skills. What you perhaps don’t think about are all the muscles in the back, arms and shoulders that contribute to the control that those three digits need to hold a pencil and use it effectively. If the back, chest, arm and shoulder muscles are not strong then a child’s grip will be weak and ineffective.

Children develop their physical mark making skills from using mainly their shoulder pivot and making big movements holding their pencil in a palmer supinate grip (grasped in the palm of the hand), before

refining this to using an elbow pivot and then a wrist pivot, using smaller movements and gradually using the fingers to hold the pencil. Each stage needs different activities to support and develop a child’s physical development. For example, large, gross motor movements such as using roller brushes, mops or brooms to strengthen the upper back and shoulders, sawing and stirring to develop the elbow pivot and threading, weaving and sewing to develop the wrist pivot. Once the wrist pivot has been developed then the final pivots come into play – the fingers. It is the final development of the fingers that will enable children to wield mark making equipment effectively and with control.

Last year, I embarked on a quest to improve the quality of fine motor teaching in my Reception class, giving children better skills for writing and using tools and improving the quality of handwriting in the process. The first thing my TA and I did was to assess the children’s grip in order to put in place the correct kind of activities they would need. We had

no-one with a palmer supinate grip but several with a static tripod grip and inverted tripod grip. To support shoulder and elbow pivot development we made use of our large whiteboard in the outside area, used paint rollers with water on the outside walls, covered the walls of our role play area in paper for vertical mark making, and encouraged mark making inside enormous boxes for upside down mark making. To support wrist development we created miniature blackboards and provided threading and sewing activities. For fine motor development we put in place what was to be the success of the year – ‘Funky Fingers’ time!

Funky Fingers is the brain-child of Alistair Bryce-Clegg (*Getting Ready to Write, Bloomsbury, 2013*). The idea is that every day the children in the class work at a fine motor activity for a specific length of time – in our case the length of a pop song. We changed this routine slightly, working on fine motor skills three days a week and doing hand, arm and shoulder exercises on the other two days. The Funky Fingers ‘exercises’ involved

the whole class working together, rolling shoulders, rotating wrists, pushing hands together for a specified length time (a great opportunity for counting forwards and backwards too), making 'windscreen wiper' hands and performing different types of brain gym with our fingers. Each session began with a rhyme: 'I've got funky fingers. Have you got funky fingers?' spoken whilst alternately touching the tips of the fingers of each hand to the thumb, first in one direction then the other. On the other three days we divided the class into three groups. Each group worked at a different fine motor activity at the same time and rotated through all the activities each week. Our table top activities included putting paper clips onto cardboard tubes, rolling tiny balls of play dough, using knives and forks to cut up play dough sausages, threading, picking up individual grains of rice and putting them in a grid, screwing nuts onto bolts, popping bubble wrap...

the possibilities were endless. The activities were made more challenging throughout the year, for example, graduating from picking up large beads with tweezers to picking up golf tees. The children all worked at their activity at the same time – every child was on task and concentrating hard for the length of the song being played (our class favourites were *Roar* by Katy Perry, *Happy* by Pharrell Williams and *I like to Move it, Move it* by Reel to Reel). Every day for nearly a year the children would cheer when it was Funky Fingers time – if it ever had to be cancelled there was disappointment. The children referred to their thumb and first two fingers as their 'tripod' fingers and would do their exercises in the line whilst waiting for their lunch. Sometimes we enjoyed Funky Fingers a little too much – on one occasion the Head arrived in the middle of a Funky Fingers session with a group of visitors and asked, 'Are you having a party?'

And the results? Well, by the end of the year every child was holding their pencil in a triangulation grip or was on their way to developing a good triangulation grip. Handwriting and letter formation had improved and more children were writing on lines with control, not only meeting the early learning goal but exceeding it. Scissors and other tools were being used effectively at the creative table and every child in the class could tie knots – a great help when den building or making hats and other creative items. Knives and forks were being used properly and with control at lunchtime. Every child could do up and undo the buttons on their shirts when changing for PE. After three weeks of the new school year the Year 1 teacher's verdict – 'Wonderful!'

Funky fingers is now an ingrained part of our week. All together now, 'I've got funky fingers. Have you got funky fingers?'



A school needs energised teachers like a pen needs ink

Andrew Hammond on the importance of energising teachers

The prolific author and educationalist, Eric Jensen, tells us, 'How we feel is what's real; it's the link to what we think.'

The emotional well-being of pupils is high on any school's agenda and rightly so. When children are happy they feel self-confident; when they feel self-confident they try their best and when they try their best they reach their potential. All good teachers know that children learn best when they are in a positive disposition; a 'can-do' attitude is the best springboard for curiosity and creativity.

Laughter is important too. It rejuvenates us; it gives our heart a little workout. It puts us in a better disposition to learn something. Many inspirational teachers know that the learning which occurs right after a giggle is understood and retained most effectively. Our brains are more alert and on 'receive' when we've shared a laugh. That's why good teaching is so exhausting.

Another great influence over the learning that takes place in schools is the physical environment. Bright, colourful classrooms, with plenty of light and space are bound to yield better learning experiences than cramped conditions with plain walls and nothing to excite our senses. The physical environment outside our heads has such a significant impact on what goes on inside them, doesn't it. We are, after all, an emotional species, sensitive to atmospheres



and ambiances. Good teachers know this, that's why they work hard to create a learning environment that is stimulating and inspiring.

I remember once helping to create a thinking garden at a school where I worked. I thought long and hard about the choice of furniture, plants and statuary. Together we created a garden we were all proud of – a calm but colourful space which seemed conducive to reflection. I'll never forget the words of a colleague at

the opening ceremony. 'A thinking garden? Great!' he said, 'At last we have a place where I can send naughty children to go and *think* about what they've done!' Nevertheless, the garden was a success and I'm sure it pepped up the children when they needed a little boost or a place to recharge.

But aren't we teachers just the same? Aren't we also sensitive to atmospheres, and positive or negative working environments? How we feel

A self-motivated, inspired teacher enables active learning to flow through the school. Energy is the life blood of any school and it needs to be carefully maintained.

is no less real for us as it is for our pupils. We deserve thinking gardens, calm spaces and creative places that will inspire and re-energise us. In fact, one might argue it is imperative that we have the chance, and the space, to re-charge our batteries now and again. Every child deserves a refreshed, energised version of their teacher.

Schools require a flow of energy like a pen needs ink. Energised and enthusiastic teachers instill a 'can do' attitude and a growth mindset in their children. A self-motivated, inspired teacher enables active learning to flow through the school. Energy is the life blood of any school and it needs to be carefully maintained.

But every teacher, no matter how experienced, may feel from time to time that their cartridge is running on empty. They need topping up – with tried and tested ideas, suggestions, cathartic anecdotes, learned wisdom and a reassuring reminder of why they went into the profession in the first place. Let's face it, few of us go into this for the financial incentives; there is something else that drives us to get out of bed in the morning. It's the hope that we *will* make a difference to someone's life today. And with a positive attitude, we usually do.

A good CPD course should have delegates returning to school refreshed and ready to inspire the children in their care, and to enthuse colleagues too. We have all been teased for going 'on a jolly' now and again and we all recognise the piles of marking waiting for us the next morning. (Why do covered lessons always seem to produce so much written work?). There is the travel too – the sitting on the M25 or the waiting for a delayed train. But think

back to the time when you've attended a course that *actually* inspired you. It may have been the speaker, with amusing anecdotes or inspirational ideas, or it may have been the break-out session or lunch break, when you could share experiences with like-minded colleagues and pinch those creative ideas you overhear – how to teach abstract nouns or long division for the twentieth time but in a way you've never thought of before. It is worth the time and effort to attend.

If how we feel is what's real, and is the link to what we think, CPD courses must not only be informative, they must be enjoyable experiences too. Enthusiasm and energy are infectious, after all; a teacher returning enthused and confident from a CPD course will increase engagement and interest in the classroom like no one else can. Enthusiasm will always conquer those corrosive forces of cynicism and apathy in a staff room. Positive teachers will always succeed – but they need support, and they need a fix of inspiration now and again.

At INK Education, we have recruited an array of charismatic and knowledgeable speakers whose combined experience in the classroom spans many decades. Our speakers will not only offer practical advice and ideas for use in the classroom, they will entertain delegates with amusing anecdotes that will serve to remind them why they went into this profession, and help them to rediscover the creative teacher within.

If the environment in which we learn, even as adults, has a significant impact on what we think and how we feel, then CPD courses should take place in creative spaces. We've chosen some exciting and creative locations

in which to hold our INK teacher conferences. Our venues for this year include: Brunel's SS Great Britain in Bristol, the National Railway Museum in York, the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, the Cinderella Bar at the London Palladium, the Durham Street Theatre at the RSA and the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. At each venue, delegates are given behind-the-scenes access and tours during the lunch break.

But being passionate about delivering CPD training in energising ways doesn't mean we're not serious about the quality of the content delivered too. We host conferences on issues that really matter in schools and have real impact on teaching and learning. Just as academic rigour and creative teaching & learning need not be mutually exclusive (it's not either/or, it's 'and'), so too INK conferences are entertaining and intellectually challenging at the same time. One can take the business of education seriously without taking oneself too seriously. But then, as good teachers, we know that there's no better way to instill a disposition for active learning than *laughter*.

Andrew Hammond is Managing Director of INK Education Ltd – www.ink-ed.com – and author of the new *Invisible Ink* series published by John Catt Educational.



Aim high, be kind, be brave

Andrew Jim Walton, Headteacher at Elizabeth College Junior School, Guernsey, sets us a challenge

Arrival in Guernsey 18 months ago presented the opportunity to consider in depth the aims and ethos of Elizabeth College Junior School. In September we launched a simple strategy: Aim high, be kind, be brave. All too often pupils and staff can struggle to remember a myriad of core values set out with the best of intentions but too numerous to recall. 'Aim high, be kind, be brave' is not revolutionary in educational terms and I am sure that if I spent long enough trawling school websites there would be equally laudable and definitely more ambitious and aspirational goals. Imagine, however, that we were just brave enough to extend this mantra beyond pupils to the whole school community.

Let us imagine, too, that we take this strategy beyond a mere set of guidelines to govern behaviour and attainment and turn the microscope on ourselves as teachers and indeed leaders in education. We all know what constitutes the very best and most attractive elements of the school day for we fill our websites and prospectuses with bright photographs of children learning through play, engaging in extra-curricular activities, playing musical instruments and enjoying the delights of learning outside the classroom. It would indeed be a less inspiring world if we saw instead images of children sitting exams, parent meetings and our medium term planning documents. This is not to undermine the value of all these aspects of school life, but are we brave enough to make some changes that would impact

Time currently devoted to homework can be used to climb trees, play with friends and to nurture a love of literature

significantly on the learning of pupils? For years, authors such as Carol Dweck have talked of a 'growth mindset' where we are encouraged to focus on the process of learning rather than the outcome. If we enjoy learning then the results really will take care of themselves.

So, what if...

What if we were brave enough to stop setting homework for primary aged children? We are not taking our eye off the academic 'aiming high' ball, but valuing time outside school. Parents might well be rushing their primary aged children off to swimming or ballet so even more reason for them not to return home to a bag full of homework. We are starting to see empirical evidence from medical and teaching professionals of a worrying rise in the number of pupils with mental health concerns, partly attributable to the excessive demands of school life and parental expectations. Surely we share the responsibility to do what we can to reduce such stress, by being aware of this in schools and by educating parents to ensure that school days are the best days of our childrens' lives.

Time currently devoted to homework can be used to climb trees, play with friends and to nurture a love of literature in all children; reading being the single most important skill that pupils will learn at Prep school. We should encourage children to read for enjoyment, not in order to write a review or answer a comprehension.

The starting point for the aim high, be brave, be kind objective was to consider what we want for our pupils when they reach the end of their Prep school education. I do not have all the answers by any means, but that they should love books and be good and happy human beings seemed a good place to start. It sounds simple enough. All too often we hear parents say how a particular school is obviously very academic because they set a lot of homework. This is quite simply not true. We consider Elizabeth College Junior School to be academic but this week we shall ask pupils to complete some of the following tasks out of school: load the dishwasher, bake a cake, recommend a book to an adult, practice a musical instrument, help a neighbour. Would these challenges encourage us to aim

high, be kind and be brave? Would the impact of re-thinking homework be felt beyond the individual pupil and the benefits be evidenced in improved relationships with our children? I believe a resounding 'yes'.

Hopefully, we have all moved away from a week of revision followed by a week of exams and then a third week of education lost going through the exam papers. But do we have exam week in the school calendar to send out a clear message of our academic standards or to allow parents to re-double their tutoring efforts in the week beforehand?

We know the truth. Homework and exam weeks have very little impact on the academic progress of any pupil, but are we brave enough to let them go? In a world where independent schools need to respond to market forces and customer demands there is still plenty of work to do to persuade parents and staff that quantity does not mean quality. The difficulty here is that we, as adults, all experienced a school system where we were weighed and measured on a regular basis and if it was good enough for us then... surely we should want

better for our own children. Last week homework was cancelled and parents, grandparents, pupils and friends were invited to design their dream outdoor learning space. There was an overwhelming response. The challenge generated family discussion around meal tables, collaborative design work and even scale models with moving parts. What are we hoping to achieve by providing such challenges at home? Communication, enjoyment, curiosity, engagement, imagination: it's beginning to sound like an education for the 21st century. In the work place employers are still interested in academic achievements but top of their list of requirements come communication, teamwork and resilience.

Breaking news: pupils make excellent progress when they love the subject and their teacher. If we can get the motivation right for pupils and, just as importantly, staff, then we might be heading towards a more sophisticated education. There are those in the profession who love to see a good set of plans in place: long term, medium term, weekly, daily. It gives us a warm glow to have everything in the right

place, but we must also acknowledge that some of the most inspired teaching and learning happen when we depart from the plan.

Planning is crucial to ensure curriculum coverage, balance, cross-curricular links and to keep the director of studies happy. What if we asked new teachers to plan less, ask the pupils what they know already before starting, involve the pupils in the planning and make sure practical experience is to the fore. Experienced teachers need to take some risks, make changes to what they taught last year and let the children see them make mistakes. We always say to our pupils that we learn from our mistakes, that mistakes are a natural part of taking on a challenge, but this has to be evident in practice. None of this is ground breaking or cutting edge educational theory, but we need to be brave enough to let go of the reins. Planning in pairs can lead to braver decisions by staff, sharing the responsibility for anything that might go wrong. There is, after all, safety in numbers. Try the orange star on the classroom door idea to let the world know that you are trying something



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*Gaynor Sbuttoni
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new and to welcome them in to have a look. You never know, we might all learn something.

In EYFS parents are excited to see their children learning through play, but based on their own experiences of school there sometimes appears to be a rush to formalise the writing and reading process. Parents want grades and marks, they often want to know where their child is in relation to other pupils. We know that practical experience is the best way for all of us to learn and that self-referenced goals hold the key to improvement. Aiming high is about being the best you can be and in educational terms is perfectly illustrated in James Kerr's book *Legacy – 15 Lessons in Leadership: What the All Blacks can teach us about the business of life*. We read of the most successful sports team in modern history, where the focus is firmly on the individual being the best they can be, not limiting themselves by simply being good enough to defeat the opposition. With sustained focus on individual performance, once again standards are raised.

How do our three aims impact on the adults in the school community? As parents there is a desire to aim high and be the best parents we can be, however hard this might be to define. Again, I find myself not having the

answer, but I feel sure that it is not about perfection. What is also certain is that as adults it is essential that we model empathy and compassion for our children.

With compassion evident in our schools we are able to develop resilience in pupils. We can create an environment in which pupils feel secure and where failure will not be derided but rather seen as part of the process of moving onwards and upwards with their learning.

James Shone, www.icanandiam.com, suggests that we are entering an age of 'pastoral proactivity'. We need to focus on what pupils can do, not what they can't. Compassion is the key to happiness. If happy children learn, just imagine what happy teachers could do. This is more than simply being 'mindful', but taking time to look beyond ourselves and be interested in others too. Pupils can feel really challenged when asked to find something complimentary to say about the person sitting beside them in assembly. As parents and teachers we have a key role to play: practice what we preach. To be kind and patient with each other, to put ourselves in our children's shoes and not sit in judgement of the mistakes that they have made. We have all made mistakes and it is often in

these darker moments that the most significant learning occurs. It is easy to justify the hectic nature of school life by saying that it is excellent preparation for the adult world that lies ahead but it is important that we take time to enjoy the successes and live in the moment before rushing on to the next challenge. Slow down. Do less. Do it better. Enjoy.

I shall not pretend to have the formula for developing happy, compassionate and high achieving pupils, and mistakes are being made along the way but, for many of our pupils the challenge to aim high, be kind and be brave has been accepted.

If asked by a prospective parent, I would not hesitate to say that *we aim high* academically and that our pastoral system, house structure, school council and active encouragement of an empathic atmosphere help us to *be kind*. After all we want our learning in school to go beyond the school gates: kindness should underpin all that we do - we are in the business of supporting our children to become better human beings. The children are encouraged to try new experiences and take risks with their learning that requires them to *be brave*. Are we willing to follow their excellent example?

Sweet success

How one school contract caterer is combating the sugar epidemic in children's diets

With childhood obesity now reaching worrying heights, the war against sugar is a hot topic. The latest Public Health England statistics show that around one in five reception year children are overweight or obese, and by year 6 this figure reaches around one in three. Over the last 12 months, contract caterers for the independent school sector, Holroyd Howe, have found a simple and effective way to battle sugar content in its own client schools - introducing a new half measures sugar reduction programme into a pilot school in Surrey.

The scheme, which was spearheaded by head chef, Matt Potts, has seen the amount of sugar used in school desserts reduced by half, cutting sugar content down by 20 kilos per week. This dramatic reduction in sugar was initiated after Matt Potts attended a course on nutrition through the Holroyd Howe Chef Academy, and decided to look for areas in his own school where he could improve health and nutrition for pupils. His research showed that sugar intake in schools lacked regulations within the UK, and this was an area in which he could take action.

He spent six months developing the concept; experimenting with regularly used recipes by cutting their sugar content by 50% and trialling them in the school-dining hall. When the pupils did not notice any difference in taste or texture, Matt knew he was onto something.

Researching the history of sugar content in traditional recipes, Matt looked back at famous cookbooks for inspiration, one being probably the most famous cookbook in history, Mrs Beeton's Household Management, dated 1861. Mrs Beeton was no keen

cook and often stole her recipes from other cooks, some dating back to the 1700s. Recipes like rice pudding had a simple statement under sugar in the ingredients - 'add to taste'. Matt wondered if this type of instruction is the reason current recipes contain so much sugar? Are we simply craving the hit of an over-sweet sensation, which releases dopamine in the brain, and in turn leads to the feel-good factor? Throughout the years, we have simply been adding more and more to our food.

Matt also remembered learning how to make a classic army recipe as a young private in 1999. The 'steamed duff' was a huge hit amongst the soldiers; a recipe that combined equal quantities of sugar, flour and margarine, plus eggs. No rubbing in, or creaming method was used - it was all simply beaten smooth in the mixer, and then cooked. A splash of vanilla removed the eggy taste you sometimes experienced. Almost all recipes for sponges are similar. In the old days it was common to weigh the eggs in their shells then use the same weight of flour, sugar and fat to produce a sponge. The method varied as to how light you wanted the finished product, but the weights remained equal.

Looking then at more recent recipes, he discovered they now contain slightly more sugar than flour/fat. Coincidence or tailored to taste? It's definitely not because the recipe won't work without it.

On sharing his thoughts about reducing sugar in school desserts with the Headmaster of his school, the scheme was met with huge enthusiasm. Matt comments: "We live in a world of refinement, not

invention. I often studied government and various companies' nutritional guidelines and realized that the biggest drug for children (sugar) is allowed to be unregulated across UK schools. This needs to be refined immediately, and half measures is setting the standards which I am certain others will follow."

The initial programme took six months to devise, and has been trialling in More House School since September 2014. Now the school delivers 50% less sugar in all school desserts, resulting in a saving of three quarters of a tonne of sugar each year.

The money saved has also been pumped back into the business and used on other produce, such as fresh leafy green vegetables that are incorporated into popular sauces, and ingredients used to replace sugary cereals with homemade healthier alternatives.

The scheme has sparked a much-needed conversation around sugar within the school, leading to further initiatives such as diluting the much debated 'one of your five a day' fruit juice. This not only reduces sugar intake, but also the carbohydrate level to around 7% in order to create an isotonic for maximum hydration when starting the school day. It has also inspired the school staff, who now monitor school boarders' sugar intake during supper and breakfast, only making sugar available at the staff table so they have limited access to add it to hot beverages and cereals.

A recent school survey revealed 99% of pupils are happy with the change, and the remaining 1% is only unhappy because they want bigger puddings! Matt says a definite favourite with the pupils is his simple spongy recipe,



RECIPE

Half measures chocolate pots

Ingredients (makes 4)

100g Callebaut Dark Chocolate Callets
 250ml Double Cream
 10g Muscovado Sugar
 Splash Vanilla Essence
 1 Egg

Method

Place the cream, sugar and vanilla in a saucepan and gently bring to the boil.
 Place the chocolate callets in a food processor.
 Pour the cream over the chocolate and turn the processor on.
 After 20 second, add the egg and mix for another 10 seconds.
 Pour into ramekins/espresso cups and chill for 2 hours minimum.
 Top with raspberries, granola crumble or fresh cranberries.

which uses the 'all in' method. The sugar is simply cut by half, but it doesn't have any effect on the texture or the way it cooks.

Both the senior management team at Holroyd Howe, and the Headmaster at More House School, are delighted with the initiative and have enjoyed being the trailblazers for such a positive step towards healthier eating.

Holroyd Howe's work doesn't stop at the kitchen however. Whilst feeding children healthier, more nutritious food is important, the company also recognises the importance of food education and developing life skills in pupils.

In pre-school, children are being introduced to kitchen gardens where they can sow and grow their own salads to eat. Farm visits are also part of school life, where children are introduced to their local producers, and can start to understand where food really comes from.

Older children are offered cookery classes to grow their confidence in the kitchen. Managing Director, Ronan Harte, often cites a 16 year old taking his first lesson at one of the classes and trying to peel an uncooked egg. As confidence grows, so does the opportunity to explore foods, and the company has recently introduced

sushi-making classes - a great example of giving pupils a chance to taste and prepare new foods. All of these initiatives encourage the younger generations to consider provenance and health and nutrition, whilst having fun.

The new scheme is certainly a sweet success for all concerned, and the national rollout of the half measures programme in Holroyd Howe's other client schools will begin in April 2015.

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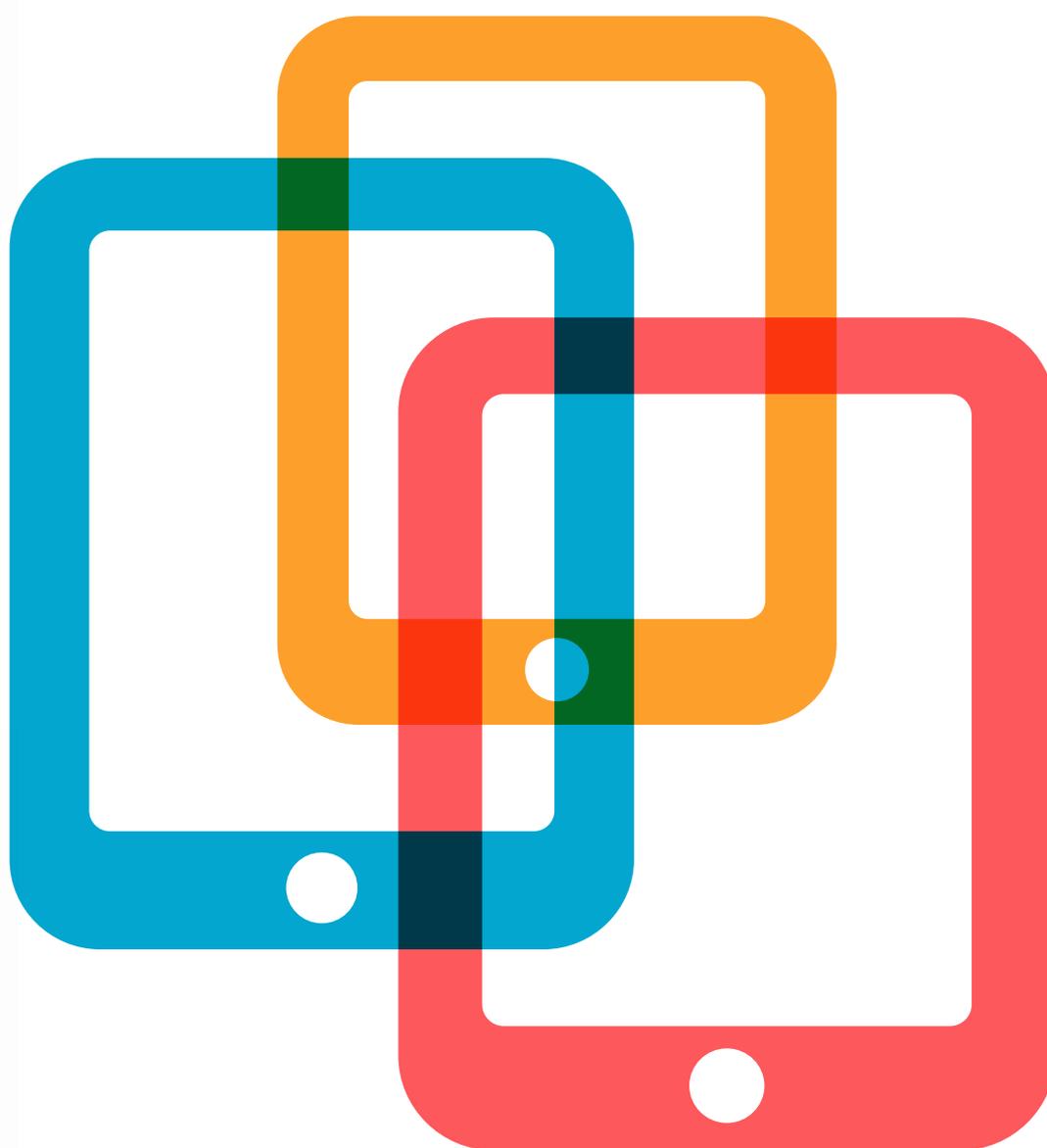
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Integrating iPads into learning

The Banda School, Nairobi, Kenya, integrates iPads into the school curriculum as part of the school's strategy to effectively use technology in teaching and learning.





“iPads have transformed teaching and learning at The Banda School. iTunes U, an e-learning tool accessible through the iPad, has enabled our pupils to access educational content designed by teachers, which has in turn enhanced their learning experience.” -Ali Francombe, Headmistress, The Banda School

Background

The Banda School is a co-educational and multi-cultural preparatory day and weekly boarding school for children between the ages of one and 13. The Banda is set on a beautiful 30 acre site adjacent to the Nairobi National Park, on the outskirts of Kenya’s capital, Nairobi.

It was started in 1966 and has earned a reputation for outstanding academic, sporting and cultural achievements.

The school is currently aiming to further its acknowledged academic excellence by being a leader in the implementation of cutting edge technology for teaching and learning, whilst ensuring that the learning process remains enjoyable and fulfilling for every child.

Why tablets for pupils at The Banda?

“Research indicates that children who use computing technology have greater gains in structural knowledge, problem solving, and language skills compared with those who do not use

technology in their learning,” asserts Miss Hannah Lowe, the Director of Teaching and Learning at The Banda School.

Before adopting the new technology, The Banda School relied upon projectors and interactive whiteboards

“iTunes U has improved the way that we organise our teaching resources and make them available to students. There is better engagement by pupils in what is being taught in the classroom as well as greater availability of a wide range of research material. Pupils use the photo and video capabilities of the iPads to collect data and provide evidence of their work. Accessing resources in this format has allowed us to reduce wasteful printing and photocopying.

We use Popplet to create mind mapping and brainstorming diagrams, Socrative for educational exercises, Keynote and Pages for word processing and presentations, Dropbox for storing pupils’ work, and a vast range of other subject specific apps wherever they are relevant within the curriculum. The pupils have thoroughly enjoyed the use of Periodic Table, Siemens Energy Island, Science 360 and Building Parallel and Series Circuits to consolidate their learning of certain topics.”

Hannah Lowe, Director of Teaching and Learning and Head of Science

as a way to infuse computing technology to the learning objectives found in the various subject areas of the school curriculum. That model required the teacher to use a computer that had to be attached to either a projector or to both the interactive white board and the projector.

“The new technology does not restrict the teacher to one location or space in the classroom in the manner that a laptop that is tethered to a projector does. This flexibility means that the teacher can monitor student activity around the room in an efficient way,” explains Mr. Steve Winchester, The Director of Academic Systems at The Banda School.

Mr. Winchester goes on to explain that the use of the Apple TV in combination with the iPads in the classroom provide the much desired flexibility and mobile platform from which classroom activities can be initiated. The school partnered with an Apple Distributor, Micro Conseil International, in order to successfully roll out the iPads. It also had to upgrade its ICT infrastructure. “Micro Conseil helped with the shipping of the iPads and organised training for the teachers by introducing the school to an Apple Distinguished Educator (ADE),” explains Mr. Isaac Mbuthia, Director of ICT at The Banda School.

“We had important decisions to make, such as which mobile device manager to deploy, and interesting challenges, such as how to create hundreds of Apple IDs for the pupils,” says Mr. Mbuthia. The school’s ICT department was able to find solutions to all the challenges.

“When teaching English it is always beneficial to have instant access to a large range of texts. iBooks has enabled the download and reading of textbooks and novels. The War Horse app even has the voice of the author reading and highlighting the text which is enormously beneficial for the lower ability pupils.

iTunes U has enabled students to use courses relevant to the various aspects of literature being studied. The courses, containing a mixture of texts, exercises, video clips and pictures have been very useful in terms of organising all the material required for a particular unit of work. They have also helped provide the relevant material for pupils to work on when carrying out independent work at home.

The ability to instantly publish writing has saved a great deal of time. With Printer Pro, we are able to easily print the pupils’ work and therefore keep copies of their writing in exercise books as well as on their iPads. Pages, Book Creator and Keynote have been particularly useful for this.

Immediate access to an iPad allows for instant research which enables the pupils to answer the many questions that will often arise in discussions in English lessons. Similarly, access to an online Dictionary and Thesaurus has been very valuable. Fun games such as Letter Smash and Ruzzle have been useful as starter activities and rewards during lessons. At times iMovie has been utilised for the recording and presentation of drama activities.”

Lucy Haywood, Director of Pastoral and Head of English

Mr. Mbuthia also explains that the school had to invest in a campus-wide wireless network infrastructure, additional Internet bandwidth and advanced network segmentation and content filtering mechanisms.

CASE STUDY

Objective

The Banda School wanted to maximise the potential of tablet technology to facilitate pupil

learning. This was in line with the school’s strategy to incorporate new pedagogies which utilise ICT to enhance learning in new and dynamic ways.

What did we do?

Prepared ICT infrastructure with extended wireless network to all parts of the school.

Unlike traditional blackboards or interactive whiteboards, teachers do not need to erase to keep going. They have infinite digital space

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“iPads have provided a spark to students when learning about music. The mere fact that they have access to a wide-range of musical instruments to play with, without necessarily being experts on their application, has heightened their enthusiasm. (The teaching and learning of key concepts is made easier through the use of iPads).

We use Garageband for teaching music composition, structure, harmony, chords, tempo, key and time signature. Virtuoso aids in understanding the piano keyboard as well as how to play the piano. Music Tutor is useful in learning music notes and pitch as well as interpreting scores. We use iWriteMusic for writing a pupil’s score and teaching notation. It also helps us to prepare sheet music for rehearsals, music lessons and home assignments. Piascore is useful for performing and analysing published scores.”

Julius Ngare, Head of Music

Deployed a Mobile Device Manager for the devices based on Apple’s Profile Manager.

- Installed Apple TVs in classrooms to allow pupils and teachers to display content on their iPads to the projection screens as well as play digital content from the iTunes Store, YouTube, iCloud and other sources.
- Deployed iPad carts in the classrooms for use in the storage and charging of the iPads.
- Created Apple IDs for all teachers and pupils.
- Registered the school with Apple for the use of the iPad-based iTunes U e-learning platform.
- Introduced iPads for teachers.
- Contracted an Apple Distinguished Educator from the UK to train the teachers on how to integrate the iPads into the learning environment.
- Held multiple training workshops for teachers on the use of iPads for teaching and learning.
- Teachers prepared courses through the iTunes U Course Manager. They also explored various educational apps in the

different subject areas.

- Introduced iPads for pupils in Years 7 and 8.

IT improvements

The introduction of iPads has enabled the school to meet its ICT strategic objective of having a 1:1 ratio of pupils to computing devices in Year 7 and 8.

The school has also achieved its strategic target of providing students with access to digital learning materials from anywhere, at any time.

The Mobile Device Manager solution allows the IT staff to remotely manage all the devices, by pushing apps to the devices from a central server and controlling the content that students can access.

School benefits

The combination of the Apple TV and iPads in the classroom has offered a complete, flexible and cost-efficient alternative to the traditional interactive whiteboards.

Through the use of several apps, teachers can provide notes, display steps and processes to problems, initiate the display of media (pausing and resuming as needed from any

location in the classroom), and allow pupils to participate from their own seats in a variety of interactive activities.

The iTunes U app, especially, has been of great use. It allows pupils to play video or audio lessons and take notes that are synchronized with the lessons. They can read books, view presentations, see a list of all the assignments for the course and check them off as they are completed.

Unlike traditional blackboards or interactive whiteboards, teachers do not need to erase to keep going. They have an infinite digital space.

Teachers can archive and share their presentation after class with the pupils. They can easily overlay annotations on images, and can incorporate rich media into their classrooms.

The way forward

Following the successful implementation of this technology in Years 7 and 8, the next step, is to extend the use of the technology throughout the rest of the school. The school aims to use the lessons learnt so far to inform this next step.

The invisible lifeblood of learning

Andrew Hammond's new Invisible Ink series sheds light on the invisible elements of school life - those human capacities that are seemingly immeasurable and difficult to report on, but no less important in the world outside. Book one is *Teaching for Character*

Before the 20th century, a classical view of science held that the description of the nature of an object and the measurement of that object were the same thing. Reality was as you measured it to be. If you could identify what an object is made from then you could accurately describe its state, its existence in the universe. We now find that such a theory fails spectacularly at the subatomic level. When inquisitive scientists discovered that particles of mass can behave like a particle and a wave (with no mass) at the same time, then everything changed forever and the modern, technology-rich world as we know it today, but unimaginable a century ago, was born. The concept of accurate measurement was challenged by the invisible concepts of potential and probability. As Jim Baggott (2011) tells us 'we began with the certainties of knowledge and ended with the knowledge of absolute uncertainty'. The scientific revolution had begun.

Quantum Mechanics is taxing because it is describing something that is entirely hidden from view and, in many respects, counter-intuitive to our classical view of the world around us. Secondly, it is often explained in language that belongs to the era of classical science - it's like using English to describe the English language to an alien, or lighting a

stadium with a pocket torch.

And so it is with education, where a similar revolution is long overdue. There are many elements of teaching and learning that remain hidden from view, and the language we use to try to describe these invisible elements belongs to an era in which only the visible counted. The measurements we take must not be misinterpreted as the only truth, or else the law of self-fulfilling prophecies applies.

To suggest that a child's actual ability and potential can be encapsulated in his predicted grades for GCSE, or his Common Entrance results, or his row of A*'s at A' Level is as absurd as suggesting that the state of an object can be defined and described with certainty through classical measurement. Or that your torch can light every seat in the stadium.

There is an invisible quality to the existence of things: a relationship between mass and energy, and a reaction to the environment in which things exists, that means, in theory, anything and everything can happen. We cannot perceive reality as it really is, only as it seems in response to the questions we ask of it and the measurements we take. And as QM tells us, the very act of taking measurements can alter the state of that which we're measuring.

And so it is with education, again. What lies behind an A grade in French, after all? Or a B in history? How was it achieved? This is only the visible element - the physical examination paper with etchings on it - the downloading from a term spent genning-up. But the grade itself can all too often become the accepted description of the child's ability: you're a B or a D or 120 VR or a 96 NVR.

There is much more behind an academic grade than the child's computational capacity or his mastery of the 3Rs (to receive, remember and regurgitate) on a given day. The results of an exam cannot, unfortunately, be attributed solely to the extent to which the pupil listened and worked hard in class or crammed the night before. There is an infinite number of variables at play, an infinite number of observables: his character traits and attitudes to learning, his creativity, his motivation, his levels of curiosity, his thinking skills, his rapport with the teacher and his ability to communicate his ideas, his willingness to join in and work with others. It is these invisible elements that combine to create *immeasurable potential* in the child - and whether we know it, or like it, or not, they form part of an invisible curriculum that is being taught and learned in schools everyday.

The *Invisible Ink* series sheds light on these invisible elements of school life – those human capacities that are seemingly immeasurable and difficult to report on, but no less important in the world outside school: our character, curiosity, creativity and our intrinsic motivation; the way we think; the way we communicate with each other; how we work together and depend on others to succeed. These qualities are the lifeblood of learning, our energy, so let's call them *invisible ink*.

Such qualities are equally important inside school too. They are essential if children are to reach their academic potential whilst preserving their emotional well-being and self-esteem. Schooling can be an arduous voyage, and it requires far more than academic competence to stay afloat, after all.

One cannot separate the visible curriculum from the invisible one; they are interconnected and interdependent. But progress in the invisible curriculum cannot be encapsulated in a grade nearly so easily as for the visible curriculum. Neither can it be articulated in level descriptors or attainment targets. How can one give a student a B- for curiosity or a D+ for self-motivation? How can one child's creativity be graded higher than another's? At best, such measurements only give us a glimpse of the child's ability on assessment day and at worst they become self-fulfilling prophecies – grades perpetuate a fixed mindset after all, not a growth mindset.

But the invisible curriculum can and should be recognised and even 'taught' in schools. How? By addressing the *learning environment* in which the invisible learning takes place. Each title in this new series takes one aspect of the invisible curriculum (character, creativity, motivation, curiosity, thinking, communication and collaboration) and considers how the learning environment in a school can be re-designed to allow it to flourish – rather than disappear in the race to deliver those visible, academic grades.

Six key features of the learning environment are addressed in every

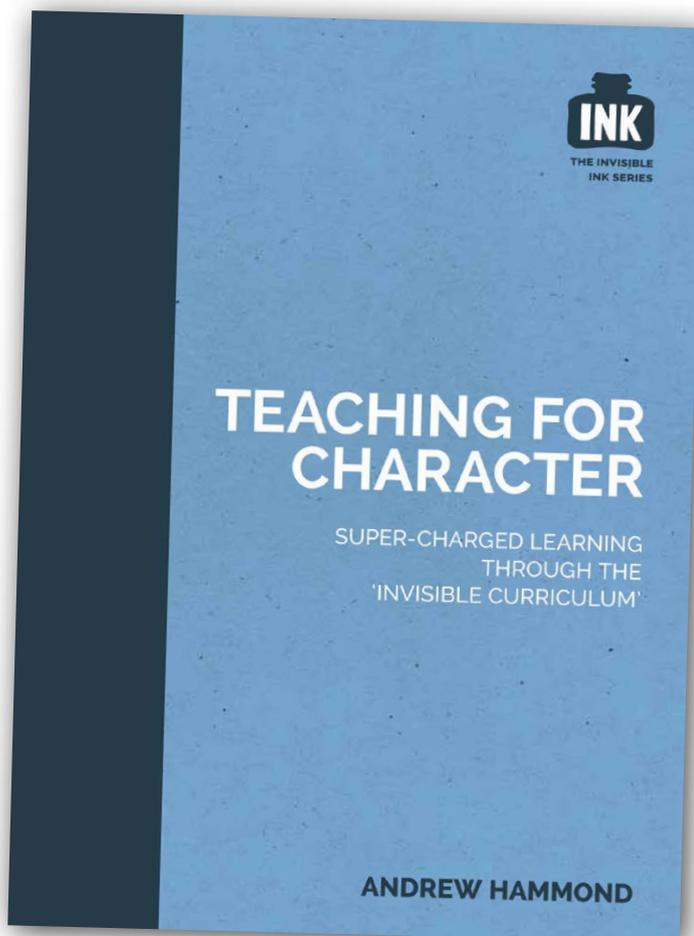
book in the *Invisible Ink* series, in the context of each element of the invisible curriculum, and these features are: teacher as model learner; the language of learning; group dynamics; choices & challenges; the element of doubt; observation.

In Book 1, *Teaching for Character*, Andrew Hammond considers the difference between moral character and performance character. Some of the character traits and attitudes (CTAs) that lead to an effective learning performance are profiled, including: grit, adaptability, optimism, self-control, empathy, discernment and trust. The author offers practical advice and suggestions for how these CTAs can flourish when the learning environment is right. Arguably, this is better than pouring them into a scheme of work and teaching them discretely in a separate subject, divorced from anything else. Having a separate lesson called 'character education' is no more beneficial than learning how to be a good citizen only

on a Thursday, period four, between English and Geography; a whole-school, cross-curricular approach is needed.

The learning environment in schools, compartmentalised and carefully timetabled, has for too long been dominated by the need to show academic progress via academic certification. Important though this is, few teachers would argue it is the sole purpose of education. When we consider the invisible curriculum, other important functions of school come into view: teaching children how to learn, how to think, how to live and work with others, and how to gain a greater sense of their own identity and potential.

Teaching for Character, the first book in the *Invisible Ink* series by Andrew Hammond, is published in May this year, by John Catt Educational. Andrew is Managing Director of INK Education Ltd: www.ink-ed.com



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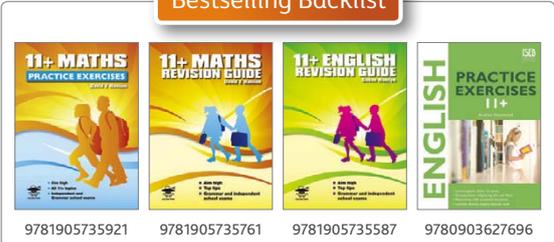
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Teaching maths

Margaret White, Director of Studies at St Faith's, Cambridge, considers elements of excellence in maths teaching

Alongside English, and the secure acquisition of reading and writing skills, maths is probably universally regarded as the highest academic priority area in schools.

We certainly value maths because of the integral role it plays in scientific, engineering, medical and economic endeavours. But we also know that maths is important in its own right for the development of reason and rigour, acquisition and appreciation of accuracy skills, and the ability both to think in the abstract and to apply principles to solve practical problems. Further, there is an aesthetic quality to maths which means that when it is taught well and understood confidently it is a hugely enjoyable and satisfying endeavour. In short, it matters that children grow up being able to do maths well. This means it is imperative that it is taught well in schools.

At St Faith's this is interpreted through three key words which characterise learning – and learners – in the maths department: secure, confident and ambitious.

Firstly it is essential that pupils' personal knowledge and understanding is secure – that is, fully and reliably accurate. The earliest years require the laying of secure foundations of knowledge – a sound grasp and recall of times tables for example – as well as understanding the foundational concepts underlying this knowledge, including notions of symbol, shape, measure and pattern. Since maths is a logical construct, with each piece depending and building on what has gone before, it is imperative that each part of the structure is fully secure in order that the whole may develop effectively. Such security remains essential irrespective of new technologies which may assist those

engaged in mathematical endeavour: rigorous practice so as to cement the foundations at every stage and as each new topic is introduced enables strong roots of learning to be put down, establishing good learning habits for the future in mathematics and beyond.

If children's knowledge and understanding is secure from the outset, and continues to be so as each new element is introduced, it follows that they can be confident, an essential element of learning. Parents can help boost confidence, by enjoying puzzles or number games even with young children – and by avoiding communicating any personal apprehension some may feel. At each stage, experience of success in maths breeds confidence, which children need in order to attempt new and harder topics and concepts which will become increasingly difficult to visualise. They need to be confident that with perseverance and application they will achieve success, even if this is not immediate. Of course, the patient and kindly support of the teacher is of key importance here too; respecting that in some pupils, confidence can sometimes be fragile, teachers boost pupils' confidence with their own belief in their pupils and commitment to them.

Thirdly, however, maths teaching must be ambitious. While all pupils must be confident of success, some pupils will naturally excel in this area and develop a passion to do so. Maths must be taught in a way which encourages such pupils to stretch high, tackle intellectually demanding concepts and problems, and push themselves on as far and as fast as possible. In an academically ambitious school, such as St Faith's, fostering an independent love of learning and an appreciation of a subject for

its own sake is a hugely important driver within teaching. Lessons will create a sense of appreciation and awe at the beauty of maths – studying Fibonacci numbers; or the simplicity of logic – watching algebra unfolding; or the creative power of reason – as they move from manipulating simple positive integers towards an understanding of irrational and imaginary numbers and the new possibilities that they create.

Secure, confident and ambitious maths pupils will be intellectually engaged, questioning and curious in lessons which will be rigorous, paced and adopt variety of approach. In such maths lessons at St Faith's, pupils may be found investigating the number of hops frogs take to leap across a lily pond, given stringent rules of engagement, and discovering the underlying mathematical formulae; they may be out of doors measuring the height of a tree by applying their understanding of trigonometry; or they may be applying their computational or problem-solving skills to science or computing challenges, calculating the circumference of the wheel of their eco racing car so as to determine its speed, for example. They will experience and understand the necessity and value of grappling and struggling, whether working collaboratively or independently towards a common goal of achievement. In doing so, they will confidently observe, explore and pose questions as well as develop powers of accuracy, judgement, imagination and critical interpretation of findings. The successes experienced as a result will spur them on to ever-greater heights in the future, mathematically and beyond.

Finding a solution to keep on top of ISI

Clifton College Prep School is the first in the independent education sector to benefit from an online resource that ensures it is fully prepared for inspectors at the touch of a button.

Now, after new investment in 'intelligent' software from Mesma, the school is better prepared for inspections by both the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) and Ofsted while the senior management team benefit from real-time access to critical information about the school's development plan at the touch-of-a-button.

Mesma is a web-based management tool that provides access to self-assessment activity and improvement plans, bringing transparency and efficiencies to an otherwise time intensive process.

A key feature is its ability to deal effectively with the intricacies of the preparatory school's development plan, which outlines the provision for curriculum, pastoral care, sport, marketing, ICT and administration, to deliver an easy-to-use resource. This enables personalised accounts to be set up quickly and easily and authorised staff notified automatically about assigned actions and tasks which need to be undertaken.

The software features intuitive properties, guiding staff through the process of evaluation, grading and planning, and storing the supporting documentary evidence to ensure it is readily accessible for internal purposes and external inspection.

Over the last year, Clifton College Preparatory School has been looking at how the management of the

development plan can be improved, while ensuring staff are better placed to implement, measure and report back on the progress of assigned actions and duties against key yardsticks.

Similar to other independent schools, Clifton College is also subject to ISI inspections, often undertake at short notice and without a great deal of time to prepare. This requires the Headmaster and his management team to have ready access to relevant information and important 'live' documents to show to the inspectors.

This led Headmaster John Milne to introduce Mesma after reviewing the software and dismissing alternative off-the-shelf systems as too inflexible for meeting the requirements of the independent schools' sector. Currently department heads, administration and marketing staff (approximately 15 people) use Mesma but John Milne expects that this will more than double as the school's development plan continues to unfold and more require access.

"Mesma's self-evaluation capabilities are extremely good. It provides a head start to being ready for inspections, which often take place at short notice, while its flexibility and versatility enables us to meet the requirements of running a large school campus."

"The easy-to-understand summaries provide a clear view from a management

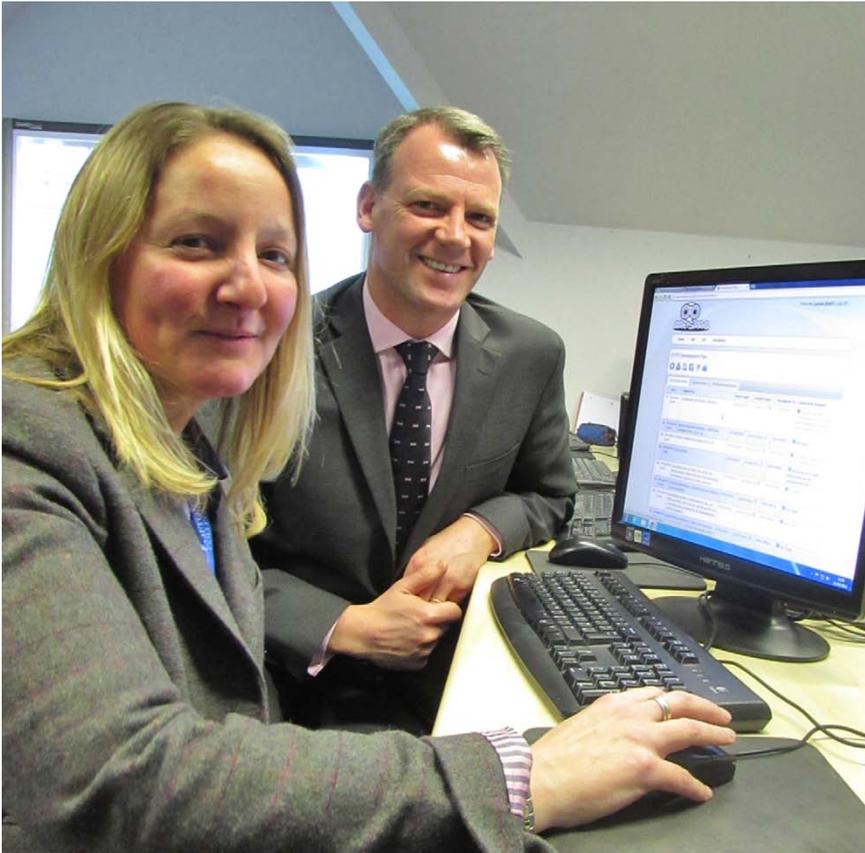
perspective of where the school currently stands, and the direction in which it is heading, at any single moment in time. This gives me greater control and the reassurance that tasks are being properly undertaken and completed on time."

"I can see at a glance the evidence of achievement, actions implemented and the progress of the development plan from anywhere in the school, or even when I'm away on overseas business. Using the system also enables the senior management team to proactively spot any potential problems or concerns and rectify them very quickly and easily."

The versatility and ease-of-use that lies at the heart of Mesma's multi-function capabilities also offers staff a highly engaging and intuitive tool for up-loading documentary evidence to confirm curriculum delivery and progress. For instance, teachers can upload images and videos as evidence in support of their evaluation. In time, the school governors will also access Mesma to support the functions of governance.

Mesma also keeps John Milne informed of progress relating to specific tasks and actions he has set-up and assigned to individual staff, providing reassurance that people are performing their duties diligently. This includes sending him an automatic alert reminding him to follow up on a specific action, or if an email deadline has passed.

In his mind, there's no doubt Mesma



is a highly valuable and beneficial tool that's destined to become an integral and indispensable part of the school's overall management process.

"Mesma undoubtedly gives us an advantage, providing an affordable and tailor-made management resource that puts us in control of vital processes, enabling us to have at the press of a button all the important information required for the school inspectors.

"Furthermore, the fact that Mesma can be easily adapted and tailored to operate within the ISI regulatory framework, and can be specifically written to meet individual needs, adds real value and speaks volumes for its potential in the independent education sector."

Although it's early days, Mesma is undoubtedly proving its worth at Clifton College Preparatory School and John Milne is already advocating its value as a user-friendly, college-wide management aid with his managerial colleagues in both the early years' and senior schools.

Mesma was set-up in response to changes implemented by education watchdog Ofsted, which led to schools, colleges and independent providers

receiving reduced notice of inspection. It is owned and operated by three directors - Neil Donkin, Carole Loader and Louise Doyle - who between them have more than 30 years experience in business and working in with the education sector. More at www.mesma.co.uk

Heads, teachers and support staff are able to use Mesma to rank their school's status against key criteria and identify areas requiring urgent attention or improvement. This enables them to focus more time and resources on teaching provision and less on paperwork, helping to complete a raft of self-assessment tasks quickly and easily, ensuring they're properly prepared for when the ISI inspectors arrive.

Mesma is a web-based resource, which allows the user to rapidly set-up dedicated accounts and allocate important areas of the self-assessment report and improvement plan to authorised people within schools. A key feature of the software is its intuitive properties: it enables authorised people to incorporate their guidance notes to allow other members of staff to add and store their own information to ensure all relevant documentation is up-to-date

and readily accessible during inspection.

The system allows the user to devolve responsibility for self-evaluation contributions, saving time while enabling them to retain overall control of the process and view information, which can be accessed at the touch of a button.

Now, a newly enhanced RAG status 'dashboard' has been incorporated within the Self Evaluation Report (SEF) feature of Mesma. This enables the user to see at a glance how a school's evaluation compares against a series of key questions based on grades to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses.

For example, key sections within the overall 'Quality of Leadership and Management', 'Pupil Achievement' and 'Quality of Teaching' part of the SEF can be marked red, amber or green to indicate whether or not certain performance criteria across multiple departments requires urgent attention.

A new SWOT analysis has also been added against each key question along with the ability to move these individually to the Section Summary at the click of a button. The screen has also been reformatted with the 'Aspects' appearing down the left hand side and their associated 'Key Questions' to the right of the screen.

RAG and SWOT reports can be produced and downloaded to compliment traditional SEFs for sharing and integration with improvement plans. The new features are an integral part of Mesma, which is an intuitive, beneficial and engaging management tool to encourage greater participation by staff in the self-evaluation process.

Reports, policy documents, quality assurance processes and guidelines and other important documentation can all be stored on line in one place within Mesma for convenient access and reference from any location. The system can also monitor activities allocated to other staff to track progress and completion. Mesma is available through an annual subscription and is tailored to meet specific requirements and individual needs.

To find out more visit www.mesma.co.uk

Does your school pass the financial test?

Mark Cummins asks that all important question

A relevant question for governors and senior management team of any school is;

How would you assess the financial position of your school?

- a) Excellent
- b) Good
- c) Sound
- d) Unsatisfactory

From my experience, many responses are given without a thorough understanding of the overall picture. A tendency to focus on the current and short term situation, often without a thought for what could be looming around the corner!

To be able to answer this question, the key components of financial performance need to be understood and assessed.

The following will help in this understanding and assessment.

1. Monitoring cash

CASH is King - a very wise, old business saying, which applies to all schools. If there is no working capital, then there is no viable school.

It is important that the peaks and troughs of your school's cash flow is understood. The cyclical nature of school fee income means that in general the peaks will appear three times a year in September, January and April. (Unless parents pay fees through an instalment plan). It is, however the troughs, where you need to keep a close eye. Will it mean working capital issues for the school?

The following demonstrates the cash flow pattern of a small prep school, 150 children with an average termly fee of £4,000. It makes a small annual cash surplus of £50,000 which is invested back in to the school in the summer term through capital projects. The school has very little in the way of free reserves and relies on the support of its bank with a £100,000 overdraft facility. It also demonstrates the impact of a fall in pupil numbers by ten.

To summarise:

Understand where issues may arise, when will cash be at its lowest and does this create working capital issues? No school wants to be in position where staff cannot be paid.

The cash position should be re-forecast every term, things change (pupil numbers fluctuate). What impact will this have going forward?

Keep on top of capital or other significant one off expenditure. There is a tendency for costs to escalate, leading to an obvious impact on cash flow.

2. Management information

It is stating the obvious but all schools should be producing timely, accurate and effective management information. This is needed to assist in making key day to day and strategic decisions.

From my experience there are some key questions that need to be thought about in the overall usefulness of management accounts;

Monthly or termly? Whilst reporting on some of the key areas such as cash

flow is monthly essential, it is termly accounts which make more logical sense (due to the nature of fee income trends).

Actual to budget? This is a very useful exercise that helps gain an understanding of the sensitivity of a change in pupil numbers to fee income, of cost control and any areas which may need a red flag warning. However just as important is projecting forward each term to an expected outcome for the year. Situations change, they can have an impact on the budget, so the school needs to know how this will impact the outturn for the year.

Is the management information understood by all governors and senior management team? From my experience this is unlikely. I often see schools producing page after page of detailed numbers, which are fine for the accountants on the team, but the majority aren't!

I strongly advocate the use of concise information for non-accountants in a format where it is easy to understand the key issues. Consider a simple format of a short variance analysis which summarises the difference between the planned and actual bottom line results. This can be as simple as one page, highlighting under each category of income and expenditure any significant variances. Remember the detail is always there if people have questions.

There are also other key financial

measures which are extremely useful to governors and senior management, which again could be summarised on a simple one page. These could include current and projected pupil numbers, fees collection debt position, bursaries update, cash flow concerns, unbudgeted costs, future potential issues and capital expenditure update.

Now could be the time to refresh this approach!

3. Key performance indicators

The sector is awash with surveys for schools to complete which includes annual benchmarking reports. They come with a HEALTH WARNING, be careful what you are comparing your school with. All schools are different and so you may not be measuring ‘apples with apples’. However there are some useful key performance

indicators all schools can benefit from using as part of their financial performance monitoring. The table below highlights some which your school may find useful.

Used in the right way key performance indicators are great financial tools for schools. The key is setting the right benchmarks, particularly in relation to comparison with other schools.

4. Financial plan

Thinking long, as well as short term is essential for the success of your school. Part of this plan should include focusing forward on the financials of the school. Why not have a five year rolling plan, which can become an essential tool in assisting with strategic decision making? Of course there will be assumptions to make (particularly in relation to pupil numbers, fee levels and salary

changes) but the plan can be critical in highlighting future issues in relation to cash flow, timings of capital projects and the impact of changes in pupil numbers as different year groups move their way through the school. I would argue strongly that behind a successful school is a sound financial plan.

Conclusion

There is relative complexity to the understanding of your schools financial affairs; however it is important that those in decision making positions have a good grasp of that understanding, which the above will help with.

Mark Cummins is a partner with Russell New Limited, sector auditors and adviser specialists, based in Sussex.

Key Performance Indicator	Comments
Average net fee (net of bursaries, scholarships and discounts) per pupil	A useful year on year comparison and to flag up issues such as large leaving year groups being replaced by smaller pre-prep groups
Bursaries, scholarships and discounts as a % of gross fees	Think about public benefit and ensuring percentage remains under control
Pupil break even number	Important to understand at what point your school becomes loss making
Teaching salary costs as a % of net fees	The largest cost for your school. This percentage needs close monitoring. The percentage will vary depending on type and size of your school, but you should be able to set a solid benchmark. Changes in teachers’ pension and national insurance rates over the next 12 months will have a significant impact.
Total salary costs as a % of net fees	Same comments as above apply
Average cost per pupil	A useful year on year comparison will flag up significant increases from over spends or a fall in pupil numbers.
Net surplus before depreciation as a % of net fees	A well-managed school should be able to achieve a surplus in excess of 10%. Schools that have significant borrowings should have a higher percentage (closer to 15%) and for schools planning major capital projects then they should be aiming to exceed 10%.



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Expanding overseas

Marlborough College Malaysia and Sherborne, Qatar share experiences

Establishing British independent schools overseas has gained momentum in recent years with a number of schools achieving significant success. At a recent seminar for UK independent schools considering overseas expansion, two school leaders, Bob Pick of Marlborough College and Michael Weston of Sherborne School, shared experiences of developing their brands internationally.

Taking Marlborough Overseas

Marlborough College Malaysia has been in operation since 2012 and was the first independent British boarding and day school to open a campus in Malaysia. Initially the challenge was one of time for Founding Master, Bob Pick who spent his holidays scouting potential locations and then trying to get the Malaysian project off the ground, whilst maintaining his role as Second Master in the UK. “We decided that our first international school ought be in the East; India or South East Asia, because we saw that area as the economic powerhouse of the 21st century,” he explains. “We also wanted to find a region that understood a British education. Ultimately we came to Malaysia because we were provided

with a 90 acre site and we found a brilliant partner in the Malaysian Government.”

Throughout the process of developing the new school, Bob explains that lessons were learned. “In the establishing phase, we were far too reactive rather than proactive,” he admits. “However, we managed to open in 2012 with 350 pupils, which was fantastic as we were effectively marketing a building site! We sell ourselves as a British public school abroad. People like to buy into a British education,” he explains. It was for this reason that the school selected a mix of curricula including the National Curriculum of England in the Prep School, Common Entrance as the basis of a syllabus for Years 7 and 8, then IGCSE, and the IBDP for Years 12 and 13.

Bob stresses the importance of being realistic with aspirations during development. “Don’t set out to have a school full on day one, and don’t think that you can suddenly fill an upper school without having established a reputation in the region; start from the youngest year group and work up.” Bob suggests starting out with a prep school. “That’s your building block for the years ahead,” he says.

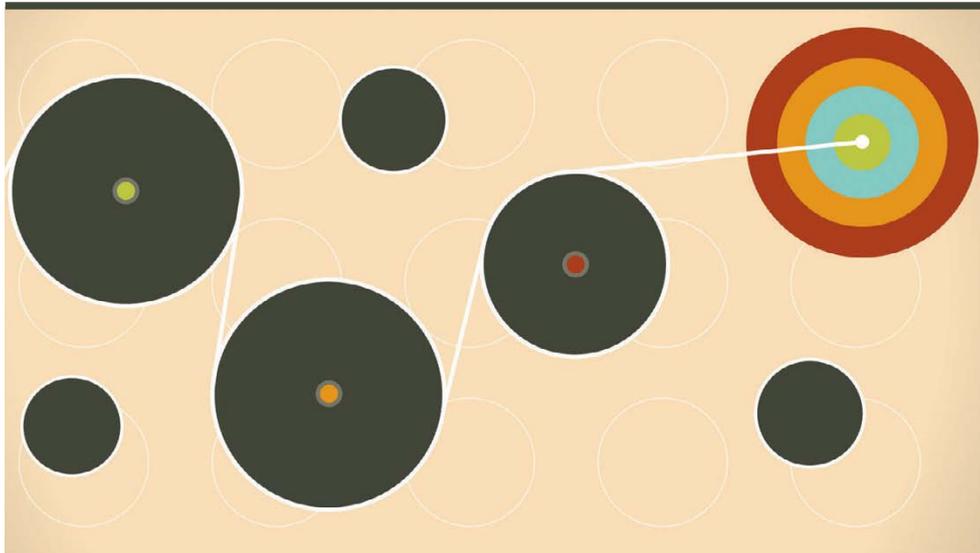
Differentiating from local competition is an important consideration in the competitive international schools market and, for Marlborough Malaysia, its 90 acre site and being a genuine expansion of Marlborough was the answer. “Such space seems to be outrageous in this part of the world; most schools are a concrete jungle or have one or two green fields to play on,” Bob explains. “For us, this was critical for replicating the Marlborough model.”

Other advice Bob Pick shares: “Be very aware that such an experience is labour intensive. Find a good partner – that is a critical factor. We were looking for support rather than interference and were able to agree conditions from the start; that’s been very important because it has meant that today we’re in a very good position financially and in the way the school is operated.”

Two years on from opening, Bob says that Marlborough College has settled in to Malaysia extremely well. “We will soon be operating at full capacity and have achieved our vision of creating a school with a wholly British ethos in an international setting, nurturing global citizens for the 21st century.”

Differentiating from local competition is an important consideration in the competitive international schools market

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Establishing Sherborne in Qatar

The journey to establish Sherborne Qatar followed quite a different path. Sherborne was selected by Qatar's Supreme Education Council (SEC) as part of its outstanding schools Initiative. As a result, the process of setting up the school happened very quickly. Planning began in May 2008 and the school opened its doors in September 2009. A building was provided by the SEC, with administrative operations carried out from Sherborne in the UK.

All private schools in Qatar are closely regulated by the SEC which sets the fee levels, monitors the admissions process, and ensures that key components of the Qatari national curriculum are implemented by the school. 20% of a student body must be Qatari. However, Senior Headmaster, Michael Weston stresses that Sherborne Qatar remains a "thoroughly British, English-language school upholding the standards of Sherborne UK".

Located in a region with an extensive number of international schools and where demand for places at the best international schools outstrips supply, Sherborne Qatar takes the approach of co-operation rather than competition with its neighbouring British curriculum schools. "With such demand, one of our challenges is making sure that we can offer places to all children of one family; it can be a difficult balancing act," Michael explains. When it comes to reputation, he says that the Sherborne UK brand counts for a great deal. "But we've also proved ourselves as a school in our own right with good standards

and accreditation," he adds. "We remain competitive by making sure that we're talked about."

Today Sherborne Qatar has two schools with over 1,000 pupils studying the National Curriculum of England with enhancements. There is a pre-school, pre-prep and prep school, and a senior school taking GCSEs, IGCSEs and A' Levels. The majority of its 90 teachers (with the exception of some Arabic staff) are recruited exclusively from the UK. As for student body, there are 40 different nationalities, the majority (55%) are British.

Offering advice for UK schools considering international expansion, Michael says: "Ask why you want to expand and why you want to expand internationally – do it for the right reasons. In-country expertise during the initial planning stage is critical. A dedicated back office at home, one that can concentrate on dealing with the new expansion without draining the resources of the mother ship, is important. Be prepared for knock-backs. Don't expect a quick return on the investment; slow growth is important for long-term success. Clear understanding between the UK school and the overseas developer is essential".

Bob and Michael are united in some key advice:

Be culturally aware – ensure your representative body is sensitive to the culture and customs of your host country.

Obtain trusted advice - work with a respected local expert who will be honest with you about the realities of the project.

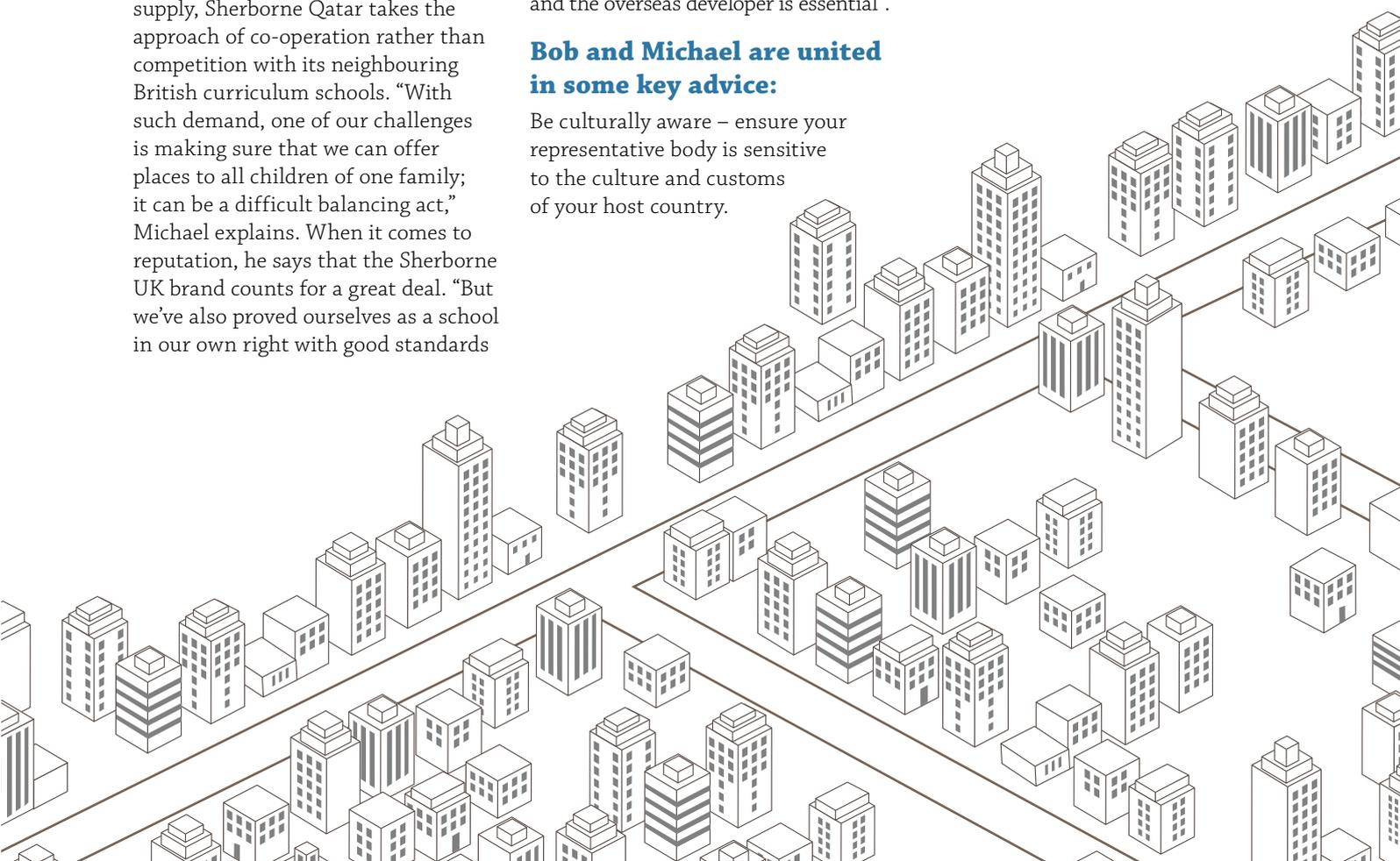
Be realistic in your aspirations - proceed with caution and be prepared for any eventuality.

Dedicate sufficient planning and development time – do not rush the process.

A supportive partner is crucial - do not drain the resources, either financial or manpower, of your UK school.

The seminar for UK independent schools was hosted by the International School Consultancy (ISC), the leading provider of data and market intelligence on the world's international school market. Market intelligence reports from ISC inform the decisions for many UK independent schools considering and progressing with overseas expansion.

More details about these reports, including the ISC Global Market Intelligence Report and key country reports (including reports for Malaysia and Qatar) are available from www.iscresearch.com or call 01367 246009





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Building senior leadership capacity

Paul K Ainsworth reminds us that this is the point of the year when many senior leaders are looking at their staffing structures and scratching their heads





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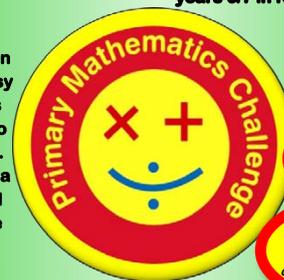
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It is likely that you will now have some idea of how many pupils are entering your school and you know how many are leaving. You or your bursar may have spent the last few months working your magic to calculate your budget. With low inflation there is a pressure on Prep Schools to keep fees constant, yet there are still increases in utilities and salary on-costs. It therefore feels that if we do not have a rising role there is a reduction in our funding.

Staffing

The biggest proportion of school budgets is always the heading, staffing, both teaching and non-teaching staff and hence with a reducing budget this is one area which is always carefully scrutinised. If staff are leaving the school, the question is always asked, do we need to replace them like for like or is there another way of performing that role? In the state sector many schools are conducting staffing reviews for teaching staff, support staff or both. However any such savings will take longer to affect the budget position due to protected salary or redundancy costs.

In terms of teaching staff, most school leaders are loathe to look for reductions, as unless there is a falling role, any change would give an increase in class size. In the ever competitive world of pupil recruitment, class size continues to be a major selling point for Prep Schools and hence school leaders are loathe to increase this.

However one area where schools can make savings without increasing class sizes is in the area of senior leadership. We all know of schools where senior leaders have taken retirement, gained promotions or left for other reasons and the post has not been replaced, leading to a smaller senior leadership team. It may be that the role has been shared by existing senior leaders perhaps with a corresponding decrease in contact time, or even this may have been unaffordable. It may even be more cost effective to give elements of the role to a member of support staff.

Reasons for building senior leadership capacity

Whilst there are financial pressures to reduce school leadership teams there are many educational reasons for retaining the status quo or even an increase. In the most effective schools, high quality senior leaders are crucial in driving the vibrant improvement of a school.

If you want to implement a new project in your school, develop your ICT provision, organise a new residential experience or gain a national standard it is likely to be a senior leader who moves this forwards.

How can you build capacity?

Secondments

If a school has a particular task or project which they wish to undertake, they may give a teacher the opportunity to apply for a secondment on the senior leadership team. The successful candidate may be given additional re-numeration and non-contact time. Such secondments are often for a fixed term whilst the project is completed. You could even have a rolling programme of secondments which can be applied for each year. The colleague is also likely to have all the additional responsibility of senior leadership for this time period and be expected to attend senior leadership team meetings.

Extended senior leadership team

Some schools may invite certain teachers to attend certain senior leadership team meetings as members of an extended senior leadership team. This can give senior leaders a good opportunity to gain valuable feedback from the staff room. It also means that if the senior leadership team is trying to implement certain new innovations, the involvement of a small number of prospective senior leaders at a strategic level can ensure that potential banana skins are missed and the innovation has more ownership in the staff room. This type of capacity building may have no

additional costs but relies on having ambitious teachers who see this request as a privilege.

Growing your own senior leaders

Some schools are developing their own training programmes for aspiring senior leaders. In one academy, colleagues had to write a letter of application to gain a place on the programme and were then given a number of training sessions. Once this had been completed the trainees were given a school improvement project which gave them the opportunity to put their new skills into practice. Such projects are likely to be smaller in scale than for the other models but can be very suitable for evaluations of existing practice or to operate trial activities. This could be run along side a Masters qualification or another academic route.

The senior leaders of tomorrow

With the reduction of senior leadership roles there is a danger that some young and talented teachers will not have the opportunity to make the impact that they have capability to do. It is therefore important that Prep schools provide routes to senior leadership in their own school as otherwise their best teachers will be forced to pursue their career development ambitions at other schools or even take posts outside of schools.

Paul is a former Head of an 11-16 school and the author of *Developing a Self-Evaluating School* and *Get that Teaching Job*, both published by Bloomsbury.



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SUMMER TERM 2015

Boys Will Be Brilliant

Breaking through the barriers of boys' achievement

Presented by Gary Wilson

Tuesday, May 19 Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London

Friday, June 12 National Railway Museum, York

Thursday, June 25 SS Great Britain, Bristol

Making Maths Magical

Building enjoyment and success into Primary Maths

Presented by Andrew Jeffrey, 'The Mathemagician'

Wednesday, May 20 Cinderella Bar, London Palladium

Thursday, June 18 Botanical Gardens, Birmingham

Character Development in Schools

A structured programme for building character AND raising pupil engagement in learning

Presented by Andrew Hammond

Tuesday, June 9 The RSA, London

Thursday, June 11 National Railway Museum, York

Making Space for Creativity

Planning for creativity and independent thinking across the curriculum

Presented by Andrew Hammond

Tuesday, June 16 Cinderella Bar, London Palladium

Friday, June 19 National Railway Museum, York

Wednesday, June 24 SS Great Britain, Bristol

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AUTUMN TERM 2015

Teaching for Motivation

Raising engagement and improving communication by identifying pupils' intrinsic motivations

Presented by Andrew Hammond

Monday, September 28 SS Great Britain, Bristol

The Resilient and Fulfilled Child

Giving pupils, parents and teachers skills to develop well-being and strategies to cope with the twenty-first century

Presented by Tim Pitman

Tuesday, September 29 SS Great Britain, Bristol

Interpreting and Evidencing Teacher Standards

Meeting the criteria for leadership impact, career development and promotion

Presented by David Livsey and Mark Turner

Thursday, October 8 The Deep, Hull

Thursday, October 15 Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London

Interpreting and Evidencing the New

Leadership Standards

Interpreting the new leadership standards to maximise performance and impact on attainment

Presented by David Livsey and Mark Turner

Friday, October 9 The Deep, Hull

Friday, October 16 Durham Street Theatre, RSA, London

Creativity and Mastery in Maths

You can have both – and here's how!

Presented by Andrew Jeffrey, 'The Mathemagician'

Wednesday, October 21 Botanical Gardens, Birmingham

The Constant Leader

Surviving and thriving in leadership

Presented by Max Coates

Thursday, October 22 Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London

Teaching for Curiosity

Supporting (and evidencing) enquiry-based learning in the classroom

Presented by Andrew Hammond

Tuesday, November 10 Museum of Science and Industry,
Manchester

Unboxing Classroom Technology

Developing the will and the capability to use the latest technologies in the classroom

Presented by David Horton

Tuesday, November 17 National Railway, Museum

Whole-school Literacy

Making the rhetoric a reality

Presented by Geoff Barton

Thursday, November 19 Cinderella Bar, London Palladium

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

2 June	Coding for the new Curriculum EFYS/KS1	TBC
2 June	"Get out! ...and explore opportunities in outdoor learning"	Chesham
4 June	Challenging the most able in subjects	TBC
9 June	Coding for the new Curriculum KS2/KS3	TBC
14 July	IT in Classics	TBC

Other courses and events

BSA

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

3 June	Work life balance - How to thrive in your boarding role!	London
9 June	Leading the Boarding Team	London
11 June	E-Safety - Managing the Risks	London
16 June	Boarding Essentials - A workshop for staff about to start in a boarding role	London
29 June	Preparation for a new senior boarding role	London

GSA

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

8 June	Summer Briefing	London
23-24 Nov	Annual Conference	Wales

ISA

4 June	EYFS Course	Northampton
9 June	School Development Planning - Writing Workshop	Waltham Abbey
11 June	Appraisal and Performance Planning	Waltham Abbey
16 June	Developing the inspector skills to raise standards	Waltham Abbey
17 June	Inspections - The Regulatory Requirements	Waltham Abbey
24 June	Deputy-Assistant Heads Conference	London

Society of Heads

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

9-10 June	New Heads Induction (Part 1)	Oxford
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Hit 'send' and collect your P45!

Dear Parents,

As I sit in my office, the sun is shining and I am truly looking forward to a term ahead with your gorgeous offspring. This year I have decided to set out my expectations for parents, in advance of the long summer weeks, rather than venting my spleen at the end when I am fatigued and rather less tolerant of the behaviours of some of our esteemed parent body. When we work on behaviour management with your children, we make clear our expectations and then redirect their behaviour when they go off course. This term I will try the same strategy with you.

My first topic is scholarship exams. As always in the summer term we run our in house scholarship assessments, for the children moving into their final years with us. Thank you to the many parents who have already submitted their children's application forms for these assessments. As you are aware the scholarship process should be an enjoyable one and my staff team are very astute when it comes to ascertaining if your child is trying to gain a scholarship or if, in fact, it is you. Last year I enjoyed an impressive portfolio of gallery visits with beautifully crafted commentary on favourite artists from a pupil who could not, in discussion, tell a Lowry from a Picasso. They did however have an excellent knowledge of the FA cup and the cricket season ahead. Another child produced a brilliant 'alternative website' with simply excellent graphics and complex coding but couldn't work the remote control for the television. We do have a sixth sense when a child's involvement in a portfolio is low.

We also keep rigorous, objective notes on each aspect of the assessment, purely in order to evidence in court why a child was not successful. Being told we have 'got it wrong' does not endear parents to my hard working staff team. Demanding a full set of the assessment scores and issuing legal proceedings when we decline, simply makes a lot of work and eventually makes you look foolish. Employing a silk to suggest court proceedings is one step too far, especially when your children, quite frankly, don't care.

Drowning your sorrows whilst watching the cricket is, I suppose, a natural response to a failed scholarship application. Please may I request though that you contain these moments to the league matches not the school ones. Last year saw a proliferation of mothers enjoying the school cricket matches, well equipped with blankets, chairs, parasols, cooler boxes, candelabras, Pimms and champagne. I do not feel that drinking is a sin; in fact I do enjoy the odd tippie myself. However, the level of consumption at some matches was more fitting for a hen weekend in Blackpool than a cricket match against our illustrious local rivals. When our cricket master had to call for quiet from the ribald crowd he was more than a little embarrassed.

My real sorrow though was for last year's head boy and sports scholar whose mother could not be located at the end of a match tea, to take him home. After much concern and frantic searching she was located by the grounds men, in the gathering darkness, slumped at the side of the cricket pitch, sleeping off the excesses of a resounding home win. Her response to being woken was less than appreciative. I did, as requested, investigate how the photographs of her inebriated slumber ended up on various social media networks but sadly the culprits could not be identified.

Wishing you a wonderful summer term.

Miss E.Doff

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