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FROM THE EDITOR

“Welcome...”



Due to the quirks of print publishing and lead times over the festive season, I write these words ahead of a Christmas holiday that promises to be far closer to ‘business than usual’ compared with last year, but one still haunted by the creeping spectre of COVID and the seemingly steady spread of its younger Omicron sibling.

Who knows what fresh surprises and upsets the UK public will have had to endure by time you read this in January? Best case scenario, things don’t become substantially worse, I get to look back on my sense of foreboding with a kind of detached amusement, and you proceed to read the rest of this issue having had a chance to properly rest and recover over the preceding couple of weeks. (Though that seems unlikely, given the working holidays and general teacher antipathy towards the first long break of the academic year identified by Teacher Tapp on page 19.)

Even assuming all goes well and schools get to fully reopen in January as planned, there’s still the rest of that spirit-sapping month to contend with. We’ve got you covered though, as on page 81 Nicola Brooks shares some advice for getting through those gloomy first few weeks.

Indeed, optimism does seem in somewhat short supply at the moment. If it’s not the continuing complications of the stubbornly persistent pandemic responsible for that, it may well be the resumption of proper Ofsted inspections (albeit with a week-long suspension at the very end of last term to allow schools to put in place Omicron-ready protection measures). What the regulator is actually looking for is one of those perennial questions that will keep popping up in perpetuity, but executive headteacher Anthony David has a go at answering it all the same on page 60.

Clichéd though it is, the only thing any of us really can rely on right now is the prospect of ever more rapid change. Though if we’re talking change within education settings and broader policy objectives, the time has perhaps come to make sure that new ideas and reforms don’t trample on the perfectly serviceable knowledge and traditions of the past, as noted by Harley Richardson on page 14.

So Happy New Year, everyone. Let’s hope that 2022 proves friendlier than its predecessor...

Enjoy the issue,

Callum Fauser
callum.fauser@theteachco.com

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Anthony David is an executive headteacher



Jean Gross CBE is a psychologist, author and former teacher



Dr Andrew Atherton is an English teacher



Alex Weller is a head of drama



Tom Campbell is a chief education officer



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Word Coordinator and Assistant Principal,
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The newsletter

Grab a coffee and spend five minutes exploring the lighter side of CPD...

The UNINFORMED teacher's guide to...

UNACCOUNTABLE SOCIAL MEDIA GIANTS



Normally, this is the bit of *Teach Secondary* where we have a pithy, light-hearted take on some trend that's obsessing your students and say sarky things about it. This month? Not so much.

TikTok, of course, has hit the headlines again for the umpteenth time, due to reports of students using said platform to harass, belittle and intimidate their teachers. Obscene insults and malicious accusations that would have once travelled no further than the wall of a toilet cubicle are now routinely being uploaded in video form to hastily created accounts, acted out on camera and beamed to audiences of potentially millions. You know it, your students know it, and make no mistake, TikTok knows it too.

This can end in one of several ways: 1. We wait for the craze to fall out of fashion, only to be replaced by something even worse. 2. Government officials pass blunt, sweeping legislation to tackle the problem that ends up inadvertently causing major hassles for countless internet users. 3.

TikTok gets its house in order.

Let's go with option 3, shall we...?

DON'T SAY

"We'll get back to you"

DO SAY

"We hear you"



BEAT THE BUDGET



What are we talking about?

Digital STEM resources by Winchester Science Centre and Planetarium

What's the targeted age range?
KS3

What's on offer?

12 science activities based

around several different topics, including climate



and the environment, space travel and the physics of sound

How might teachers use the resource?

Each activity includes accompanying Teacher Notes and lesson materials, and most come with a brief introductory video

Where are they available?
bit.ly/ts111-wsc

DON'T QUOTE ME...

"While this was work-related... we accept it would have been better not to have gathered in this way at that particular time."

DfE spokesperson commenting on an office party attended by Gavin Williamson on 10/12/20, while London was in Tier 2

Think of a number...

60%

of children and young people in need of mental health services are currently unable to access them

Source: Commons Health and Social Care Committee

17%

of UK teachers say they're uncomfortable discussing LGBT+ topics with their pupils

Source: Just Like Us

2%

of teachers in the country's most disadvantaged schools report all of their pupils having adequate home access to digital devices and internet connections

Source: Teach First and Teacher Tapp

ONE FOR THE WALL

"Find out who you are and do it on purpose"

Dolly Parton



Present and correct

Education Secretary Nadhim Zahawi has convened a new 'attendance alliance' tasked with improving attendance figures within education settings.

The alliance's members include Ofsted Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman, Children's Commissioner Dame Rachel De Souza and Chief Social Worker Isabelle Trowler, among others. At an inaugural meeting held on 9th December, the alliance resolved to liaise with parents, teachers, social workers, GPs, police officers and other professionals working with children to encourage best practice and boost efforts at getting students to attend every possible school day.

The DfE has stressed, however, that the specific impact of COVID on attendance figures lies outside the alliance's remit, citing a rise in persistent absence at secondary to 16.3% in 2020 from 15% in 2019, when adjusted for COVID-related non-attendance.

The alliance will thus be examining a range of factors affecting school attendance, including anxiety and other mental health issues, children's home lives and bullying.

According to Nadhim Zahawi, "Where children aren't in school without good reason, or don't want to be in school, something has gone substantially wrong and needs fixing. This new attendance alliance includes the people with the power to do just that.

"They will be working over the coming months to make sure everyone working on the ground with children ... has the tools and resources they need to break down barriers to children attending school."

SAVE THE DATE

STATEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Forget the media-friendly soundbites – what else was in those speeches and letters you missed?



THE STATEMENT:

ASCL comments on ventilation in schools

WHO? Julie McCulloch, director of policy at the Association of School and College Leaders

WHAT? Response to concerns raised by the Labour Party regarding a lack of government-mandated ventilation measures in schools

WHEN? 9th December 2021

"We welcome Labour's intervention over the government's lacklustre response to the critical issue of ventilation in classrooms as a key measure in reducing the risk of COVID transmission.

It took the government until the start of this autumn term even to reach the modest point of rolling out carbon dioxide monitors to schools and colleges. However, these devices merely inform staff when a classroom needs ventilating, which in practice means opening an external window despite the difficulty in maintaining a comfortable learning environment during cold weather.

The government is now finally providing air cleaning units for special educational needs and alternative provision settings, but expects all other schools and colleges to buy this equipment from an 'online marketplace'. This penny-pinching and foot-dragging approach is wholly inadequate, and this equipment should be provided to all schools and colleges as required."



THE LETTER:

NEU leaders call on UK government to waive intellectual property rights on COVID-19 vaccines

FROM? Mary Bousted and Kevin Courtney, joint general secretaries of the NEU

TO? Prime Minister Boris Johnson

WHEN? 7th December 2021

"We urge you to urgently support the proposed 'Waiver from certain provisions of the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement for the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19' at the World Trade Organisation and work constructively to reach an agreement on the matter with other WTO members.

As representatives of educators in the UK, and members of the global education union movement through Education International, we are concerned about the impact of your position on the TRIPS Waiver on education worldwide. Previous lockdowns during the pandemic have clearly demonstrated the longer-term negative impact of school closures on children and youth, including the disproportionate effects on already disadvantaged groups of students. Efforts to keep education institutions open also depend on ensuring equitable access to vaccines across the globe."

19-21 JANUARY 2022 Bett 2022 | 7-8 JULY 2022 Festival of Education | 10 NOVEMBER 2022 The Education People Show

19-21 JANUARY 2022

Bett 2022
ExCeL London
bettshow.com

The education networking, professional development and product showcase extravaganza is set to reopen its doors once again this month, with this year's overarching theme being 'Create the future.' As seasoned Bett visitors will know, expect myriad CPD talks, informative drop-in sessions, attention-grabbing edtech demos and much, much more.

7-8 JULY 2022

Festival of Education
Wellington College
educationfest.co.uk

Following a COVID-prompted two-year hiatus, the 12th Festival of Education will once again be held at Wellington College this summer. Organisers plan to host stimulating talks and presentations by more than 200 speakers drawn from across the profession, and attract a crowd of more than 5,000 educators to what remains perhaps the most relaxed and convivial event on the education calendar.

10 NOVEMBER 2022

The Education People Show
Kent Event Centre, Maidstone
theeducationpeopleshow.co.uk

Formerly the EduKent EXPO & Conference, the retooled Education People Show is pitched as a free-to-attend, major networking event for school leaders and policymakers across Kent and neighbouring counties, combining inspiring keynotes with engaging workshops and an extensive exhibition of leading school and academy suppliers.



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Science, biology, geography

After their adorable rescue dog Todd causes them to be evacuated from their urban home for incessant barking, John and Molly Chester decide to follow their dream of creating a sustainable farm together. They move to a rural area outside of Los Angeles and have 200 acres of land to mould into their own vision, aided by their mentor and friend, Alan.

Shot over eight years, this enlightening documentary highlights their various struggles, challenges and triumphs as they aim to create a biodiverse haven for all creatures great and small. *The Biggest Little Farm* educates young audiences about the food chain, farming practices, nature and issues around life and death in an accessible way.

Discussion questions:

- What did the farm look like? How would you describe it? What sort of different animals lived there?
- What were some of the challenges and obstacles John and Molly came up against as they tried to develop the farm?
- Why do you think the film opens with a scene of wildfires? Did it grab your attention?

Head online to intofilm.org/films to stream the film and download the film guide for *The Biggest Little Farm*, including Teacher Notes on the above discussion questions and much more.

Find more Into Film selections that tackle environmental themes at intofilm.org



Retweets

Who's been saying what on Twitter this month?

Miss Hudson @MissHudsonHist

It's just too hard. Too demanding. Too many deadlines. Too many meetings. Too many contact hours. Too many people pulling me in too many directions. I just want to stand still and teach. I want to sit at the end of the day and not think about work. I want a proper night's sleep.

Keith Campion @keith_campion

The DfE want 7 year olds to remember everything they have been taught and how it links to previous learning or the school is failing, but no one in their department seems to be able to remember if they went to a party or not

Follow us via @teachsecondary - and let us know what you're thinking!

TEACHER TALES

True stories from the education chalkface

In the doghouse

When I first started teaching back in the 70s, 'design technology' hadn't been invented - I was simply the woodwork teacher. In one class I had a lovely young lad who was deaf, and who made use of an old-fashioned hearing aid that could be switched on and off. The project he'd chosen was to construct a dog kennel - an enormous one, presumably for a very large dog. One day, as his project neared completion, he wriggled inside and began happily hammering away. Unbeknownst to me, he turned off his hearing aid to stay comfortable amid the banging.

At the end of the lesson I distributed some written work, and the lad in question - for reasons best known to himself - chose to go back inside the kennel to do it. The lesson then duly ended, I dismissed the class, locked the workshop door and went off to break.

Half an hour later, I let in the next class

and commenced their lesson. Imagine my surprise, and indeed that of the whole class, when five minutes in, out of the kennel popped a head, asking "Is it break time yet, sir?"

True tests, real answers (Y7 general knowledge edition)

Q: What would you expect to get out of a decanter?

A: A ride on a horse

Q: What are Doberman Pinschers?

A: A pair of trousers

Always proofread (Teacher's report edition)

[Name of student] is making very good progress in religious studies

Find more true tales and amusing anecdotes at schoolhumour.co.uk

A FEW MINUTES OF DESIGN

#19 FICTIONAL OBJECTS

Give one or all of the objects on the other side of this card a meaningful role in a short story.

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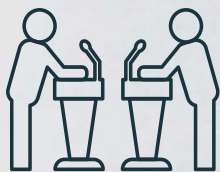
Support your students towards better language use, with the help of our resident word-wizard, **Alex Quigley...**



TRY THIS TODAY: 'I SPY...'

Everyone is familiar with the family game 'I Spy...'. Well, we can transfer this simple game into the classroom with a little academic spin. A key factor in pupils' understanding of academic vocabulary is their ability to notice it as they read texts in class. 'I Spy...' offers a simple formula for developing this a little more strategically.

For instance, if pupils are reading a textbook chapter in a given subject, they can be encouraged to play 'I Spy...'. That it is to say, 'I spy ... a phrase that indicates an unreliable source' (in history), or 'I spy ... an adventurous adverb' (in English). Over time, this practice can translate into pupils developing a keen eye for retrieving evidence and identifying critical vocabulary.



Cracking the academic code

One of the most common forms of writing in school is argument writing. From RE exam questions to English and history essays, pupils need to develop their own arguments and include different

perspectives on a debate. We can model and scaffold such arguments with 'balanced debate phrases'.

Pupils benefit from manageable sentence level development. Phrases such as 'Though A asserts [X], B reveals that [Y]', 'A reveals [Y], yet B contends [Z]' and 'A challenges the argument of B by articulating [X]' all provide an academic sheen for pupils' comparative sentences. Strong verbs like 'asserts' and 'contends' can lend pupils' arguments greater clarity and direction.

DO THEY KNOW?

Only 5% of words in the English dictionary are borrowed directly from Greek, but the majority of terms used in biology have their origins in said language

ONE FOR: FOOD / BIOLOGY STUDENTS

CHLOROPHYLL

Derives from: the Greek words *khloros*, meaning 'pale green', and *phyllon*, meaning 'a leaf'

Refers to: The chemical substance that enables photosynthesis and gives plants their green appearance

Related terms: chlorine, chloroform, chloroplast, chlorocarbon

Note: The word was originally coined from Greek roots by French chemists



I DON'T THINK IT MEANS WHAT YOU THINK IT MEANS...

FORCE

In physics

A push or pull upon an object, resulting from the object's interaction with another object

In history

Compulsion or coercion, especially using violence, and often in relation to military forces



One word at a time



The music curriculum is unique in that it includes a range of vocabulary derived from Italian, variously describing all aspects of musical rhythms and techniques. The word 'allegro' is one such term, borrowed from Italian, albeit with Latin origins. It means 'brisk, spritely and cheerful', thus providing an accurate description of a specific type of piece or song.

Pupils will learn these foreign loan words best by getting to know their English equivalents, but also by contrasting them with other words. A term commonly juxtaposed with 'allegro', for instance, is 'adagio' – which conveys slowness, and comparably less jaunty rhythms. With some vocabulary instruction, pupils can collate a strong working knowledge of Italian musical terms and use these to convey vivid musical soundscapes.



Alex Quigley is a former teacher and the author of *Closing the Reading Gap* and *Closing the Vocabulary Gap*; he also works for the Education Endowment Foundation as National Content Manager



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[MATHS PROBLEM]

WHAT IS AN ANGLE?

Angles crop up in a lot of topics in mathematics, but students are often confused about what exactly an angle is.

In this lesson, students go back to basics on angles and think about what makes one angle bigger or smaller than another.

THE DIFFICULTY

This task is intended to bring to the surface possible confusion over angles:

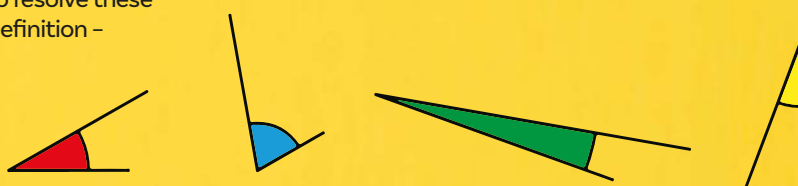
What does 'angle' mean?

This is a hard thing to explain in words, and students' answers may include words like 'distance' or 'how far', which may indicate confusions that this lesson will address. There is no need to try to resolve these yet or provide a better definition – that will come later.

Look at these drawings.

Which one shows the **biggest angle**?

Students may find this difficult, because it's quite hard to compare the angles when they are presented in different orientations. But they may also find it hard to compare the angles because they confuse angle with other features, such as the lengths of the arms, the arc length or the shaded areas.



THE SOLUTION

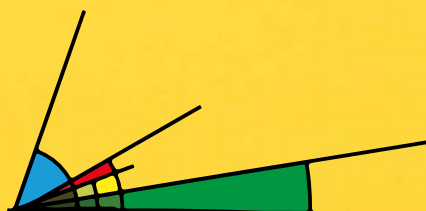
The best way to resolve this kind of difficulty is to take the time to print these four angles onto paper [a resource sheet containing these is available at bit.ly/111-angles] and allow students to cut them out.

Once the angles are separated, students can reorient them so that they all have one arm pointing in the same direction, like above.

Now, students should be able to decide the order, at least of Red, Blue and Green, but

they may still be unsure or wrong about Green and Yellow.

If so, the other really useful thing about cut-outs, if they are trimmed right down to the arms, is that they can then be placed **on top of each other**, and this should resolve any remaining uncertainties.



Now, students should be able to see that $\text{Green} < \text{Yellow} < \text{Red} < \text{Blue}$, and they may be quite surprised with aspects of this order – particularly that $\text{Green} < \text{Yellow}$.

In addition, students may realise that all four angles are all integer multiples of

the green angle, which is actually 10° . By moving this around inside the other angles, students should be able to determine that $\text{Yellow} = 2\text{Green}$, $\text{Red} = 3\text{Green}$ and $\text{Blue} = 7\text{Green}$; or, $\text{Yellow} = 20^\circ$, $\text{Red} = 30^\circ$ and $\text{Blue} = 70^\circ$.

Checking for understanding

Conclude the lesson by asking students the same question as at the start:

What does 'angle' mean?

They may still find it difficult to give a good definition (e.g., that it is a **measure of how much something has turned**), but they should at least be clearer about what an angle isn't. You could ask:

Why is 'the distance between two lines' not a good explanation of angle? and encourage them to critique that attempt, perhaps using Red, Blue, Green and Yellow to help.



Colin Foster (@colinfoster77) is a Reader in Mathematics Education at the Mathematics Education Centre at Loughborough University. He has written many books and articles for mathematics teachers. foster77.co.uk

Let's change the conversation around change

We need to get over the idea that tomorrow's great discoveries will somehow invalidate our prior understanding of how the world works, argues Harley Richardson

Things are always changing / But don't be sad and blue / Change can make you happy / 'Cause it brings you something new...

So sings Hoot Owl in an old scene from *Sesame Street* (bit.ly/ts111-tp1) that I'm very fond of. Young Muppet Jimmy can't sleep, because he's anxious about moving to a new neighbourhood and worried about losing touch with his friends and everything familiar to him. Hoot's jolly song reassures him that there's lots to look forward to in the new and unfamiliar. Jimmy switches out the lights, excited about what lies ahead.

Readers may wonder why I'm writing about a song for pre-schoolers in an article for *Teach Secondary*, but bear with me. I bring up Hoot's song because it joyfully conveys a healthy and positive attitude to change and the swerves that life can throw at us.

By the time children reach the upper stages of secondary school and start brushing up against the adult world, they're likely to encounter a subtly different and altogether more disenchanting view of change. I'm talking about the notion that change is the defining feature of the

modern world – one which renders our knowledge and understanding of the world up to that point all but worthless.

In education circles, this is put about by those who firmly believe schools should be reorganised around teaching children '21st Century Skills' such as creativity, problem solving, and 'learning to learn'.

Many readers will doubtless be familiar with the following chestnuts: *'Jobs for life are a thing of the past, so transferable skills are what people need'*; *'The western canon was created by Dead White Males and is irrelevant to the lives of young people today'*; *'Problem solving and creativity are what society requires, not dead facts and knowledge'*.

As it happens, I do think a good education should foster creativity and independent thinking, but I object to claims like those above, because they implicitly assume the modern world's pace of change renders

specific knowledge irrelevant as soon as it's been learned, if not sooner. By contrast, flexible skills unburdened by the 'baggage' of knowledge, are supposed to be the answer.

Running to stand still

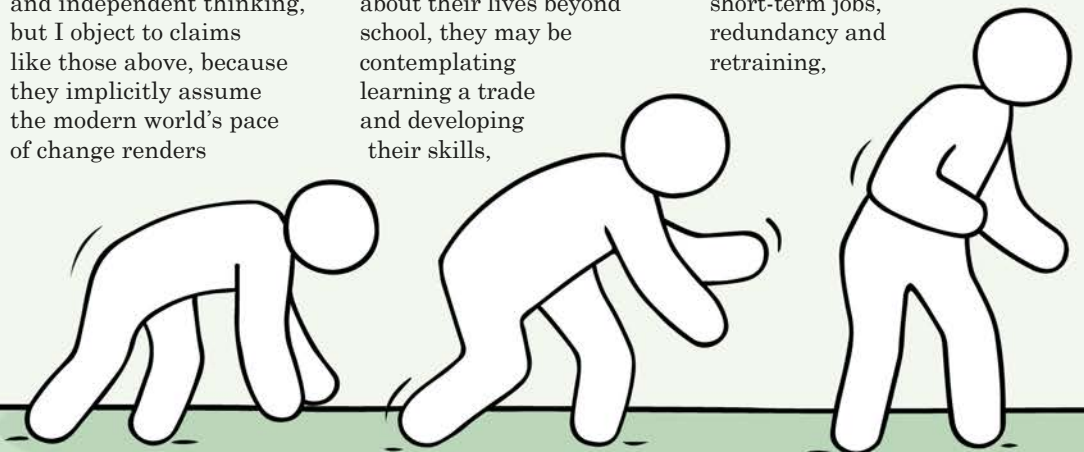
This directly contradicts the view of knowledge that's motivated people throughout history to fight for the right to education; that education gives us a better purchase on the world, and a fighting chance of dealing with whatever life might throw at us.

Instead, we're told in 2021 that any such purchase is illusory; that we may be standing on the shoulders of giants, but that those giants are sinking into the sand beneath their feet.

This is a deeply depressing message to pass on to young people. As students begin to think about their lives beyond school, they may be contemplating learning a trade and developing their skills,

knowledge and expertise over the course of a working lifetime. But it won't take long before they encounter the received 'wisdom' that such expertise has a naturally short shelf life, and that "The future of work demands continuous upskilling and reskilling" –as Coursera's Global Skills Report 2021 rather bluntly puts it (see bit.ly/ts111-tp2).

Attempts to make a virtue of this apparently inescapable churn of skills, by presenting it as an opportunity for lifelong self-development and personal discovery, remain unconvincing. Middle class professionals might get excited at the prospect of a string of careers, culminating in well-paid work as a consultant or advisor – but for many young people, 'continuous upskilling and reskilling' will look like an exhausting and precarious cycle of short-term jobs, redundancy and retraining,



Join the CONVERSATION

The Academy of Ideas Education Forum gathers monthly to discuss trends in educational policy, theory and practice. Find out more at academyofideas.org.uk/education-forum

culminating in being left on the scrapheap at 50 once finally considered to be irredeemably 'old school'.

Concrete thinking in extremis

If we examine more closely this notion that the modern pace of change renders the past irrelevant, we can see just how strange it is, and how at odds it seems to be with the attitudes you'd expect to find in the education sector.

On the surface, it might appear to be saying something profound about society's relationship with its past, but what it boils down to is the assumption that no situation can tell us anything about any other situation. In other words, every situation is entirely novel, and must be responded to on its own terms – naively, *as if we were children*.

It's an example of concrete thinking in extremis: *This is 'this', and has nothing in common with 'that'*. Which seems ironic, given that '21st century skills' are supposed to promote creative

thinking and problem solving – both of which typically involve making imaginative leaps, and require abstracting out the common features of apparently unconnected phenomena.

If taken seriously, it would be a frightening way to look at life. In the real world, however, *'this'* often has similarities with *'that'*; few situations are truly unprecedented; and our prior understanding of the world can and does provide useful footholds we can use when grappling with the supposedly unknown. Take, for example, the 'unprecedented' pandemic we're currently living through, which has seen us build upon existing knowledge of vaccines in order to reduce the impact of a new and deadly virus.

Despite what some people might say, it's still the case that in many – if not most – professions it's entirely possible to develop a range of skills and knowledge over the course of a single career, and that an individual's

experience and expertise still counts for a lot. New industries don't appear fully formed out of nowhere, but rather develop organically out of existing ones, and will tend to rely heavily upon established skills and knowledge.

This is just as true of the edtech world in which I work as it is in more 'traditional' industries, despite the technology sector being almost synonymous with those 21st Century Skills. You'll still find plenty of accountants, writers, designers, salespeople, trainers and project managers in tech firms. Their specific job titles might be unfamiliar, but you'll struggle to find any role within a modern organisation that doesn't draw upon some form of existing skills.

Intellectual roots

Thankfully, we've seen a growing number of people highlighting these and other issues in relation to the 21st Century Skills agenda in recent years. As a result, the government's focus has returned to more practical and meaningful skills and knowledge, which have the potential to open up doors for young people and prove useful to them throughout their lives.

Yet this idea that ceaseless change gives existing knowledge an ever-shortening 'half life' still dominates education conferences, the proclamations of business leaders and reports put out by NGOs such as the World Economic Forum. Taken together, these continue to set the tone for

a great deal of public discussion concerning the role of education.

It's as if we're still living in, well, the past. Specifically the 20th Century, when the idea that was to become '21st Century Skills' was first articulated by thinkers such as John Dewey and Margaret Mead.

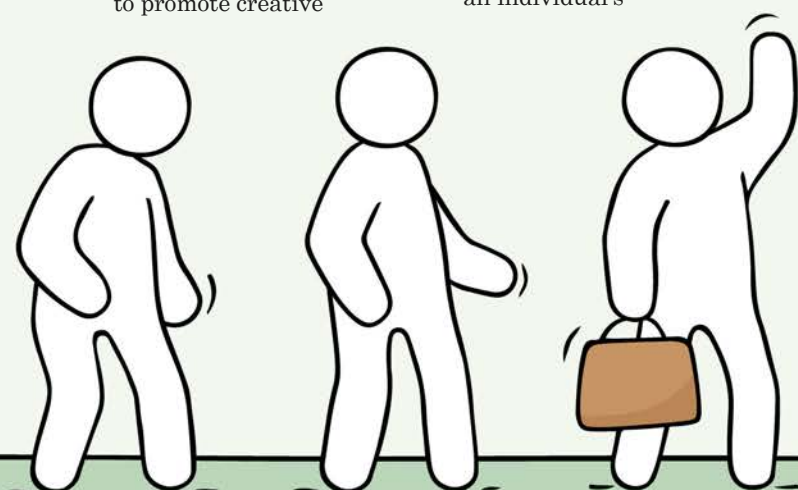
Sociologist Frank Furedi's 2021 book *100 Years of Identity Crisis* traces the development of the idea over the past century, and is well worth reading if you're interested in understanding how change came to be, as he puts it, "Portrayed as an omnipotent and autonomous force that rendered irrelevant the customs and cultural legacy of the past."

Given the changes the world has been through in the last few years, it behoves us all to keep in mind that no matter how dramatic or frightening they appear to be, such changes are rarely the dramatic breaks from the past we're invited to see them as. Things are indeed always changing, but I'd hope that teachers take a leaf from Hoot Owl's book and reassure young people that the skills and knowledge they have now won't go to waste.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Harley Richardson works in education technology, helps organise events for the Academy of Ideas Education Forum and blogs about learning through the ages at historyofeducation.net; follow him at @harleyrich



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RSE one year on

Jonny Hunt highlights the lessons schools should take away from what turned out to be an eventful first year of having to teach RSE content...

It was hardly the start we were hoping for. After being delayed and delayed again, the new statutory guidance for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) stuttered into the curriculum last year without any proper funding, training or celebration. Schools were left to answer parental concerns themselves and find their own way – and then COVID hit.

Despite the less than ideal circumstances, however, the need for quality comprehensive RSE has never been clearer. Here some lessons to take away from the past 12 months...

Relationships are key

If lockdown taught us anything, it was how important our personal relationships and emotional wellbeing really are – both being the cornerstones of comprehensive RSE. For the majority of us, the thing we missed most was connecting with friends and family, as we sought to manage our emotional health while being effectively held prisoners inside our own homes.

The eventual full reopening of schools presented an ideal opportunity for us to focus on relationship-based practice and emotional wellbeing – though then Education Secretary Gavin Williamson's preference was to emphasise the need for discipline and propose banning mobile phones!



The public outcry lamenting a year of 'missed education' (despite every educator I know having become experts in online learning virtually overnight and subsequently working themselves beyond the point of burnout) focused largely on maths and English, with barely any thought given RSE lessons. The fact that a generation of kids has reached puberty, started their first relationships and/or spent their lockdowns sharing nudes without any guidance has gone unremarked.

The DfE stipulated that parental consultation should play a key role when implementing the new guidance, but this shouldn't involve simply asking parents for permission. It's rather an opportunity to ask parents how we can support them with talking to their children at home.

Many parents, especially those with concerns about RSE, lack information regarding what RSE should be, and hence feel unable to

talk to their children, due to lacking the required knowledge or experience – and naturally, parents haven't been given RSE training either. As in school, we should be giving parents messages that will open doors between young people and the safe adults in their lives.

Our messaging needs to change

Almost as soon as lockdown arrived, many of the messages we'd been peddling to young people in PSHE lessons about 'screen time' and 'social media' began to ring hollow. All those warnings about the negative effects of spending too much time online were suddenly cast aside, as we asked young people to take part in 7.5-hour days of schooling via Zoom. Apparently, not all screen time is bad after all...

It's difficult to impart sober messages concerning social media

and framing mobile phones as inherently problematic when these have presented the only practical means most of us have had of staying in touch with loved ones.

We should consider the messages we give to young people more generally, from policy down to practice. Ofsted's review into sexual harassment clearly showed how hard it's been for young people to come forward and ask for help, out of fear of being blamed or shamed. As one safeguarding lead put it, *'Why would a young person come and tell us they were having trouble on social media, when we spend all our time taking their phones off them?'*

If the first item on your behaviour policy addresses uniform, rather than how students treat each other, there's an issue. As one Y10 girl once told me, *"Teachers are more concerned with the boys having their shirts tucked in than them calling us slags."* This might not be the message we intend to send, but it's the one young people have been hearing and seeing.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jonny Hunt is an independent RSE consultant and the author of *Sex Ed for Grown-Ups: How to Talk to Children and Young People about Sex and Relationships* (Routledge, £18.99)



POWER UP

Membership networks

SSAT – the Schools, Students and Teachers network – talks us through the many benefits of connecting with fellow practitioners nationwide

Need to know

What are the benefits of networking for leaders in education? School leaders around the country are currently trying to juggle the standard demands of their role with finding opportunities to maintain self-care and promote pupil outcomes – and networking could be the key to succeeding at this.

Networks afford great opportunities for supercharging how we support lifelong learning, and can provide us with a more rounded view of education.

Digital transformation has accelerated exponentially over the past two years, with the result that access to networks, comprehensive information and support are all just a click away, enabled by communication structures from which school leaders and teachers can all benefit.

Education leaders can network in the way businesses often do – to develop best practice or save costs. The ability to engage with peers outside your local community is a key benefit of joining a nationally recognised network, and can contribute in a positive way to CPD activity.

Networks also have the potential to create societal change. At SSAT, we encourage our members to consider issues relating to social justice and engage with outstanding leaders across the profession. We prompt members to consider their ‘non-negotiables’ – the principles that drive them, and practice that can improve outcomes for their students. We aim to connect members with other practitioners and leaders based all over the country, thus forming a sophisticated support network.

Educators are natural collaborators, frequently drawing on interpersonal skills to derive value from teamwork. This is the ethos that informs SSAT’s social media platforms, where individuals can regularly be found building empowering relationships with others working within the profession.

Being part of a network will give you opportunities to:

- Improve your skills and knowledge
- Re-ignite your motivation and purpose
- Work on generating solutions with like-minded peers
- Be the change you want to see in education
- Find future work opportunities.

What next

Embracing technology, SSAT holds free webinars every month for our members, offers leading CPD programmes online and facilitates access to online conferences that bring together educationalists from all over the country.

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TECH TALK

The ability to network virtually, seek counsel or offer counsel to your peers has become increasingly critical to how we teach, learn, and interact with others.

Of course, having a powerful resource of evidence-informed publications and school improvement tools, webinars, policy documents and whitepapers on all things education focused are just some of the benefits of joining a membership organisation like SSAT.

Online CPD programmes

As experts in areas such as Lead Practitioner Accreditation and Embedding Formative Assessment, and with a portfolio of one of the country’s best suite of CPD programmes for educationalists at all levels, SSAT has, for over 30 years been the membership network of choice for thousands of schools across the country.

Support, wherever you are

SSAT has embraced digital transformation, allowing its members to experience remotely all the benefits that membership affords.

3 things we've learnt about...

THE LONGEST TERM OF THE YEAR

The start of a new academic year is always a busy time, but how did teachers contend with the COVID-related complications that kicked off 2021/22?

1 Autumn 2021/22 half-term was worrying

Last term was a difficult one for many teachers. Amid the continuing pandemic there was the return of Ofsted, just as the longest term of the year was ramping up. Over 70% of teachers told us they were, at best, able to only prioritise their wellbeing at weekends, and expected challenging behaviour to peak during December. As the longest term of the academic year approaches its final few weeks, teachers can often be prone to feeling tired and burned out. At any rate, teachers certainly had to contend with classes that were regularly disrupted. When asked if learning had been disrupted for any students during a recent lesson, only 36% of teachers said that it hadn't, with 11% saying that over half of their lessons had been disrupted! And that was just in November...

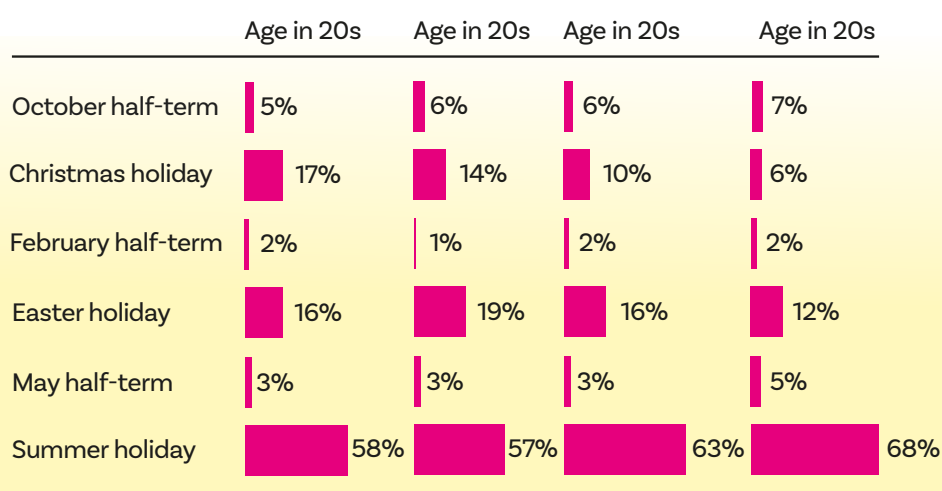
2 Holidays don't always involve a break

The October half term arrived at a crucial time, giving teachers a much-needed breather. Despite the promises of rest, however, it wasn't exactly a half-term break for everyone. Only 15% of teachers reported not doing any work at all over the October half-term – in fact, most teachers performed an average of one day's work across the five days, leaving them with the equivalent of just four days to properly recharge. Headteachers were the exception here, on average performing two days of work over the break. Many teachers did at least catch up on some sleep, though, given the lack of early starts and late-night marking sessions. Teachers without children gained an extra two hours' sleep per night; for those with children, the gain was typically limited to around an hour more each night.

3 Teachers like the Christmas break the least

As the countdown to Christmas began in earnest last November, we found that just 12% of teachers were looking forward to it more than any other holiday. The Easter holiday proved more popular, with 16% of teachers voting it as their favourite break. Naturally, the six-week summer holiday came out as the top favourite from a whopping 60%. It seems the youngest teachers look forward to the Christmas break the most, with 17% of teachers in their 20s rating Christmas as their favourite break, compared to just 6% of teachers in their 50s. Still, despite its relative lack of popularity, the Christmas break nevertheless gives teachers two welcome weeks in which to rest, recuperate and see friends and family ahead of the new year and a new term.

WHICH IS YOUR FAVOURITE BREAK?



Question answered by 6,146 teachers on 17/07/2021 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

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In the face of a dismissive administration, Melissa Benn argues that the changes the education system needs most will come from below – and that like-minded teaching professionals can now avail themselves of the ideal ‘how to’ manual...

Melissa Benn



Over the past few years, there's been a slow-building sense that our education system isn't working well. Whether it's exams, Ofsted, funding issues or the future of technical education, more quick fixes by sleek new ministers won't solve the deep problems we face. In fact, they might just make them worse.

The experiences of COVID have laid bare the ugly inequalities currently shaping educational achievement (or rather lack thereof), but also fortified the determination of school leaders. Having helped their communities through the COVID crisis, many are now beginning to show some signs of rebelliousness, particularly in the direction of Ofsted.

It therefore feels like a good time to explore those changes we need to see the most – even if the chaotic Johnson government remains unreceptive to the majority of voices calling for reform. After all, politics isn't just about persuading legislators and Whitehall in the short term; it's just as important to shape public views and effect shifts of opinion that eventually filter through to MPs and Ministers.

Open-hearted

I've written in this column before about the work of The Foundation for Education Development (fed.education) – a coalition of policymakers and educators that's building a 10-year plan for education. Another influential alliance of politicians and school leaders is Rethinking Assessment, which has spent the past 18 months making the case for introducing major changes to our qualifications and assessment system.

More recently, a new book by Mick Waters and Tim Brighouse called *About Our Schools – Improving on Previous Best*

has advanced a host of interesting and realistic proposals for change. What makes the book stand out is the accumulated experience of its authors, both of whom are former teachers. Brighouse spent time as a chief educational officer in Oxford and Birmingham and was the Schools Commissioner for London between 2002 and 2007, while Mick Waters was previously director of curriculum at the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in the latter half of the 2010s.

About Our Schools doesn't lapse into the aggressive, know-it-all, stridency we've seen from so many leading voices in education over the last decade. Instead, Brighouse and Waters present their thoughts on a field they know better than most in a remarkably open-hearted, even ruminative manner.

There is, for example, a fascinating chapter consisting of interviews with 13 former Education Secretaries. From their responses, it quickly becomes clear just how many constraints Ministers have to operate under, prompting the authors

to conclude that “Few ministers make any significant impact.”

Foundation stones

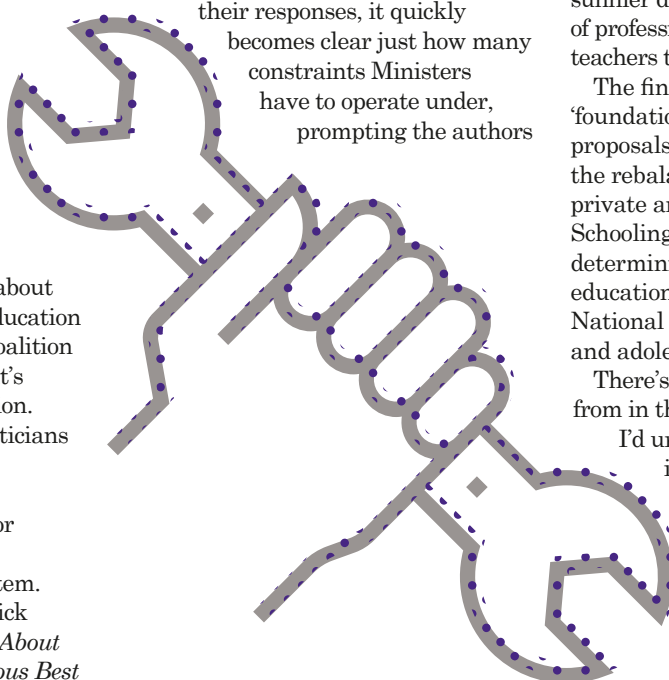
The book takes as its starting point the profound shift in policy and public attitudes that followed then Prime Minister James Callaghan's famous Ruskin Speech in 1976, after which doubts began to be expressed regarding the autonomy of teachers and role of local government that had hitherto shaped schooling since the 1944 Education Act.

What followed was an era of centralisation, markets and managerialism, pursued with differing degrees of enthusiasm by all political parties. Brighouse and Waters are critical of many of the resulting changes, including a punishing and often inefficient inspection system, and an ever narrowing, increasingly policed curriculum. Yet as the book's subtitle implies, they also highlight some sunnier developments, such as the spirit of professionalism that now informs how teachers think about the work they do.

The final chapter sets out six ‘foundation stones’ and 39 specific proposals for positive change, including the rebalancing of funding between private and state schools, a new Schooling Framework Commission for determining the long-term purposes of education and a richer, more flexible National Curriculum for childhood and adolescence.

There's much to enjoy and learn from in this long, penetrating book.

I'd urge readers to not just read its many proposals, but also discuss them with friends and colleagues. We can't go on as we are – but nor can we leave the future of education in the hands of ever-more powerless Ministers...



Melissa Benn is a writer; her latest book is *Life Lessons: The Case for a National Education Service*, published by Verso; *About Our Schools: Improving on Previous Best* by Tim Brighouse and Mick Waters is available now from Crown House Publishing

“The outdoors is a space for everyone”

Kate O'Brien explains how The Outward Bound Trust has its sights set on becoming more diverse



30 SECOND BRIEFING

At Outward Bound, we give young people life-changing experiences they won't get from home or inside the classroom. Our tailored outdoor learning courses deliver an alternative education, giving them the confidence to tackle the real world head-on.

What is Outward Bound's 'Right to Explore' programme and what's the aim?

At Outward Bound, we're committed to ensuring the outdoors is a space for everyone. Right to Explore is a partnership programme to create outdoor leadership opportunities for young people from Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. Our aim is to diversify the role models young people work with on our courses and in the outdoor sector.

How did you first identify the need for the programme?

In 2018 we led some research to help us understand the barriers to participation in the outdoors for different groups in our society. Under-representation by people from BAME backgrounds is largely linked to people's experiences in the UK, rather than negative attitudes towards the outdoors stemming from ethnicity, culture or religion. Evidence also shows that role models make a difference to how young people view themselves, and their sense of what's possible in their own future.

What impact has Right to Explore had so far?

The results show that so far, 64% spent more time doing outdoor activities than before, and 82% of the group introduced one or more family members to the outdoors through informal leadership. 82% of the group now also have more interest in working or volunteering in the outdoor sector.



Do you have any plans to expand the programme?

We extended the programme in 2021 with new partners and new geographies. We currently have 24 BAME young leaders supported by partner organisations: Lindley Educational Trust's youth projects in Ashton-under-Lyne, Manchester and Pitsmoor, Sheffield; Shadwell Basin Outdoor Activity Centre, East London; and Coventry City Council.

We also appreciate that this is still the beginning,



ABOUT KATE:
Kate O'Brien is a project manager at The Outward Bound Trust



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with long term commitment important to ensuring we can make a real difference. Thanks to The North Face for continuing their support, Sport England and their Workforce Diversity Fund, and to DEFRA, which is providing funding through the Generation Green initiative.

What benefits can you see the programme delivering for schools and their students in the years to come?

We know through evaluation of our courses that quality engagement between instructors and groups / individuals, makes a real difference to outcomes for young people attending residential. We hope that by working towards attracting and retaining a greater diversity of role models, that positive outcomes for young people from BAME backgrounds are increased both at home and in classrooms.

Making a difference

- + We hope to show young people that outdoor activities can be multicultural and inclusive
- + As a charity, we are also here to help drive social change and positive impact
- + To find out more about our Diversity project visit outwardbound.org.uk/generation-green

By observing a few practical steps and reassessing our expectations, we can start to tackle the complex impact of social class on students' motivation and academic outcomes

Jean Gross CBE



What can we do for Jason?

You'll recognise him – aka Connor, Liam, Ashley, Jordan. White boys from what politicians like to call the 'working class', and on average, the lowest-achieving of any student group, aside from pupils from Gypsy Roma and Traveller backgrounds.

Did you know, for example, that in 2019 only 35% of non-EAL, white disadvantaged boys got a standard pass or better in English and maths, compared to 65% of all pupils? It's a similar picture in terms of Attainment 8 outcomes.

Two by ten

Don't those numbers simply indicate low ability? Well, research shows that cognitive ability, while not irrelevant, surprisingly accounts for only just over a third of the parental social class effect on individuals' educational attainment. Other factors seem to matter more – such as spoken vocabulary levels and self-efficacy (the belief that you can make a difference to your own life and learning). Teacher-pupil relationships also show up as being important.

So what can we do for Jason? Well, first of all we can go all-out on building a strong relationship with him. Inclusion expert Daniel Sobel tells the story of one school where a group of boys weren't doing well in maths and hated the subject. Instead of placing them in a maths intervention programme (thus providing more of what they hated), staff arranged for the boys to go on a five-day camping trip with their maths teachers. Upon returning, their attitudes and progress were transformed.

Simply making time for one-to-one conversations in school can have a similar effect. It might be as simple as asking a pupil how their weekend was, or how their football team has been getting on. Where there are behaviour issues, try the proven 'two by 10' strategy – for two minutes each day, 10 days in a row, have a conversation with the student about one of their interests. If attendance is a problem, try *'We missed you'* instead of *'Where were you?'*

Make sure the pupil feels 'seen' as an individual. I like the idea of asking all pupils in your new Y7 class to fill out a personal profile that includes a photo of themselves, alongside their written responses to prompts that might include *'What I'm interested in'*; *'What I'm good at'*; *'What I find hard'*; and *'What teachers need to do to help me.'*

Challenge expectations

It's easy to expect more of some children and less of others. At some point, we've all heard ourselves saying something like, *"The thing with Jason is ... he's bright but*

doesn't want to learn ... he doesn't try ... he's just like his brother.' But expectations can be limiting.

This can occur in schools where growth mindset has been taught to students, but where teachers still talk about and plan for their 'low ability' (rather than 'low-attaining') pupils and/or groups.

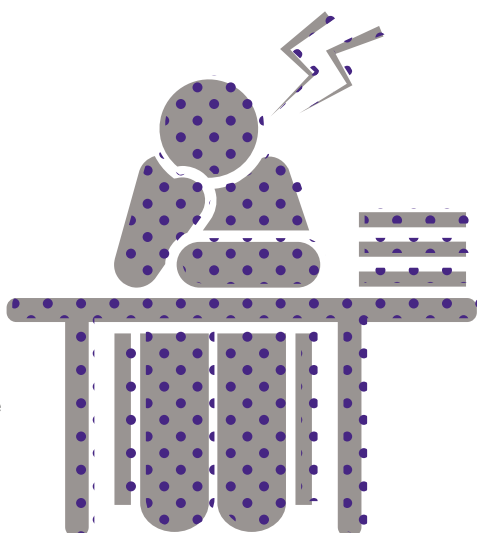
What works is challenging our expectations and those that children hold of themselves. Let's instead say things like, *'This particular piece of work is a little below what I think you're capable of'*; *'That wasn't the behaviour I expect from a considerate person like you'*; *'Some people may have decided you're not that good at science, but I'm not interested in that. I think you have it in you to surprise a few people – maybe even yourself.'*

Teach self-efficacy

Another useful strategy can be to build students' self-efficacy by assigning them real responsibilities, and drawing their attention to things they've done to help themselves. We can say:

- *'You've put a lot of hard work into your maths lately – and it's paying off'*
- *'You've remembered to edit your writing, and it shows'*
- *'You've done really well to get yourself to school every day lately – 100% attendance, up from 80% before. How did you do that?'*

Pupils need to feel powerful in their own learning. They need to know people believe they can succeed. And they need to feel their teachers like and care about them as individuals. We can all make that happen – for Jason and others like him.





CLASSROOM LIFE

Changing course

For **Lynn Mayes**, principal at Queen Katharine Academy in Peterborough, gaining a better understanding of the difficult backgrounds experienced by some of the school's students meant going the extra mile...

Our school has been through a great deal of change. After converting to an academy in 2014, initially called The Voyager, it went into Special Measures, before being rated as Requires Improvement in 2016. It was then re-brokered in 2017, becoming part of the Thomas Dekin Education Trust and changing its name to Queen Katharine Academy in the process.

I became principal in 2019, the year in which we secured the first Good rating from Ofsted in the school's history. Since then, things have really progressed, with steady improvements to our Progress 8 scores and a growing population – from 951 on roll in 2018/19 to 1,452 today.

This year has also seen us secure a run of national awards, including 'English Teacher/Team of the Year' at the Tes Awards, a commendation from the Prince's Trust initiative and a Gold Award at the Pearson National Teaching Awards for the work we do with our Gypsy-Roma students.

Eclectic mix

A persistent feature of our school is that we have a lot of

'churn' – students that come and go mid-year, after the normal admissions round. Since the start of the 2021/22 academic year, we've had 78 students join us outside of the usual period and 36 leave, related in part to our high proportion of EAL students.

At present, 53% of our student population have EAL and at the last count

– though it seems to change weekly – we had 47 languages regularly spoken in our school. The most common is Lithuanian, followed by Portuguese. In third place is Slovakian, then Polish and Romanian.

As such, we can't treat our EAL learners as a single group, because it's a hugely eclectic mix. Many are first generation, who come to us unable to speak English. We have a particularly large cohort of students from Gypsy-Roma families that we estimate at being around 20%, though they don't always necessarily self-identify as being Gypsy-Roma, given their families' prior experiences of education in their home countries.

After successfully securing some funding via the Erasmus Programme, we were able to send some of our children to Slovakia so they could experience the country's education, accompanied by myself and my school deputy, because we wanted to understand more about where our Gypsy-Roma children had come from.



THE SETTLEMENT'S NEAREST SCHOOL INITIALLY CAME ACROSS AS A SMALL, ALBEIT QUITE LOVELY ENVIRONMENT - BUT THEN I SUBSEQUENTLY HEARD THE HEADTEACHER SAY OF THE POPULATION LIVING IN THE SETTLEMENT, "WELL, THEY SMELL."

LYNN MAYES, PRINCIPAL AT QUEEN KATHARINE ACADEMY



Opening doors

One school we visited outright segregated its Gypsy-Roma pupil population, prompting me to ask the head about his reasons for having such different expectations of these children. It turned out that the respective expectations we both held were so at odds, he queried why I'd even think to ask such a thing.

At Queen Katharine Academy, we always try to ensure that we're regularly opening doors for some of our most



vulnerable children. By contrast, the schools we visited had virtually written off those very same students.

The Slovakia trip also saw us visit a settlement where some students and one of our TAs once lived – one largely comprised of wooden huts with no running water or heating. I saw children there without any socks on. The settlement's nearest school initially came across as a small, rather lovely environment – but then I subsequently heard the headteacher say of

the population living in the settlement, “Well, they smell...”

I asked him why he didn't just make the first lessons of the day focus on hygiene, and allow parents to use facilities at his school they might lack at home – but his engagement levels seemed to suggest that he wasn't particularly interested.

Striking a balance

When children first join us, they'll complete cognitive ability tests that help us gauge their reading abilities and other academic skills. We'll also measure how long they've been out of school, which is how we know that 42% of our children never received a full primary education.

Our response has been to develop two distinct curriculum pathways. The 'Accelerated Curriculum' is reserved for students with certain gaps in their knowledge that they'll need in order to develop their interpersonal skills and cognitive academic language. Some will go straight into it when they first arrive; others will stay there for half a year before eventually moving out into our main 'Aspire'

curriculum.

Accelerated Curriculum students spend 50% of their time with a qualified teacher, learning subjects through an approach that prioritises their linguistic development. The rest of the time they will attend other, more universal subjects, such as maths, alongside everybody else. We always try to ensure that there's a balance between teaching them the required curriculum content and delivering those linguistic skills.

Maximising ability

Some of our children have achieved A's and B's at A Level and gone on to study at university. We've done various things to help them get there, such as establishing a Gypsy-Roma leadership group to produce role models for the rest of the school and organising visits to Cambridge University.

We recently received a visit from representatives of another school in the Czech Republic, arranged through our links with the learning charity Compass. That's how I found myself before a group of 11 teachers, alongside two of our students who had transferred from their education system into ours, there to talk to them directly about the differences.

The teachers were simply blown away by the students – they couldn't believe that

they had been able to achieve so much when placed in a different setting. I particularly remember one of the teachers asking me, “*When you find out that a child is retarded [his words], what do you do with them?*” I replied that that was a label we'd never give anyone; that every individual has different needs and abilities, and that our job was to find out what those needs and abilities are, and do our best to maximise them. And yet, he didn't seem understand my explanation, maintaining instead that it was simply necessary to write some children off.

We have children in our school whose lives can, and have been transformed. Children who now know that something they once thought completely unachievable is, in fact, possible to pull off. We want to show them that it doesn't matter where they've come from – that we can give them the tools to change the direction of their lives, as well as those of other students and adults around them. It's a sense of purpose that's echoed throughout our staff, and something that I believe comes through clearly in the daily life of our school.



DOWNLOAD

An EAL resource for teachers developed by Queen Katharine Academy from

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THE TS GUIDE TO... CAREERS

From the possibilities of apprenticeships in the tech sector, to the work opportunities offered by one setting to students with SEND, we take a look at the current state of schools' careers provision

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IN FIGURES:

WHAT DOES THE LANDSCAPE LOOK LIKE WITH RESPECT TO YOUTH EMPLOYMENT?

631,000

The number of 16- to 24-year-olds not currently in any form of education, employment or training

Source: Office for National Statistics

7%

Proportion of 16- to 24-year-olds currently in employment who possess no qualifications

41%

Percentage of employers who feel the pandemic will have a negative impact for young people in their sector over the next three to five years

Source: 'Facing the Future' report by The Prince's Trust and HSBC UK

3 TEACHWIRE ARTICLES FROM THE ARCHIVES

CAREERS EDUCATION IS STUCK IN THE PAST

Meaningful work experience is invaluable in ways you may never have considered, and could conceivably shape choices, careers and ultimately lives, says Edd Williams

bit.ly/111special1

HOW BALANCED IS YOUR SCHOOL'S CAREERS PROVISION?

Balancing careers education at scale with a truly personalised approach isn't the impossible ask it's sometimes made out to be, argues Jim Burton

bit.ly/111special2

WHY EVERY TEACHER IS A CAREERS TEACHER

There's a good chance you're already linking curriculum learning to careers, says Liz Painter - so why not make those links even clearer?

bit.ly/111special3



Learning without LIMITS

Renee Flourentzou talks us through West Lea School's approach to helping students with SEND navigate the transition into post-16 independence

West Lea School in Enfield is an inclusive environment, supporting pupils with SEND between the ages of 4 and 19. In everything we do, we aim to equip young people with a 'suitcase' of skills to help them develop as individuals and progress beyond education, into the world of work.

We believe in tearing down walls and encouraging every young person to believe in themselves and their potential. Our values of innovation, inclusion, community, kindness and

learning for life bind our school community together and drive us to challenge the status quo.

A daunting prospect

Young people, especially those with SEND, understandably often find the transition from education to work difficult. For some, leaving behind the safe confines of school to find their own path and become independent can be a daunting prospect.

That's why our teaching approach embodies learning for life at every step of the way – from the moment a

student joins us, right up to the point that they leave – as this helps prepare them when transitioning into the real world and seeking employment.

Our curriculum supports students in working towards preparing for adulthood (PFA) outcomes, which include employment, good health, independent living, friends, relationships and community. To help achieve this, we run several programmes and initiatives centred around forging meaningful relationships within the local community and gaining key employment skills.

These include our Independent Travel Training Programme, the work experience opportunities enabled by our social enterprise projects (which comprise charity shops, a furniture upcycling facility, an online eBay shop and a coffee cart for retail and barista training) and our supported internship programme.

There's also a bridging programme aimed at facilitating access to further education via our West Lea @ College post-16 provision.

Passports to opportunity

Throughout each student's journey at the school, we'll utilise a 'passport' approach. These passports contain details of five key areas – drawn from research and evidence-based practice – in which

young people need to build skills in order to succeed. The areas in question consist of 'community engagement'; 'travel and work skills'; 'managing medication'; 'self-care and daily living'; and 'social and communication skills'.

The passports are used to guide students throughout their lives at school, both inside and outside the classroom. As students develop key skills in each of those areas and complete specific elements within them to gain a certain level, they'll receive stamps and certificates that celebrate their achievements.

Their journeys begin at primary level with regular visits around the local community, where they'll visit shops, learn how to handle money and budget. They'll also be taught basic cookery skills and the knowledge needed to navigate transport systems. For many, this will be their first taste of genuine independence, which we hope will inspire them and give them the confidence to try new things and take on new challenges.

As they progress through the school, we'll gradually seek to build on this further. From the age of 11, students will begin to focus on more advanced elements, such as learning how to travel to school independently, taking part in residential and participating in after-school clubs and trips.

It's hugely important that





“We believe in tearing down walls and encouraging every young person to believe in themselves”

students are able to engage in, and interact with activities – not just at school, but also within the communities where they live, particularly as they come to learn about the process of taking managed risks.

The working world

At 14, West Lea School students join our ‘Learning for Life’ campus. Here, we focus on ensuring that students are prepared for work, putting everything they’ve learnt and all the skills they’ve acquired up to that point into practice.

For example, all of our KS4 students will visit college one day a week and take part in work experience activities. These experiences of the working world, combined with elements of further education provide them with a greater understanding of what to expect and reduces their anxiety about making

the transition.

Our Horizon campus meanwhile provides supported internships for students aged 18 to 24 across Enfield. The programme offers four days a week in a workplace with the support of a West Lea job coach.

Valuable contributions

According to BASE UK/ NHS Digital (2019), only 5.9% of people with a learning disability are in work, with disabled people more than four times as likely to be out of work than non-disabled people (Joseph Rowntree Foundation). That, coupled with Enfield being situated within one of the most deprived districts in England, demonstrates just how important it is that students with SEND be equipped with the skills they’ll need to build relationships in their community and gain

employment.

We’ve therefore partnered with employers that include the Co-op, Nandos, M&S and Sainsburys, matching students to roles that are suited to their interests and abilities. Recently, for example, a group of students has been working at Co-op stores across Enfield, in roles spanning customer service, till operation and shop floor duties, supported by a West Lea Job Coach, to ensure everyone benefits from the experience.

Our students tell us that the experience they’ve gained through completing internships has been beneficial and inspiring. It’s helped them realise their own potential, and restored belief amongst themselves and their parents that there are plenty of opportunities available, and that they can make a valuable contribution to society.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PROJECTS

We’re a proud member of the Enterprise Cooperative Trust, a partnership of like-minded schools, charities, community groups and businesses with a shared purpose – to extend the life chances of young people, by providing holistic education that goes beyond academic achievement.

As part of this, we work alongside the Learning for Life Charity to offer work experience placements and paid employment in not-for-profit and social enterprise environments. These placements include access to training, and opportunities to develop workplace skills and engage with the local community.

Thus far, students have been able to get involved with Learning for Life’s charity shop, coffee carts and eBay stores, as well as local businesses such as Building BloQs – a social enterprise that specialises in upcycling furniture.

Since 2017, 75% of our students completing the programme have gone on to gain paid employment, demonstrating the power of working within the community to benefit employers, individuals, and our wider society.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Renee Flourentzou is director of education at West Lea School; for more information, visit westleaschool.co.uk or follow @westlea_school

5 REASONS TO TRY... First Star Scholars UK

Inspiration and support for children at your school who are living in care



30 SECOND BRIEFING

FSSUK partners with universities, virtual schools, community organisations and national agencies to improve the lives of looked after children through innovative university-preparatory programmes. FSSUK empowers looked after children to invest in their future, giving them the hope, motivation and guidance needed for academic achievement and self-sufficiency.

1 FIRST STAR PROGRAMMES

First Star – for teens in Care (14-18yrs): academic skills include GCSE English, mathematics, science – science experiments, problem-solving, writing skills, and revision sessions. Post-16 we develop vocational, leadership and transition skills. Life skills, including self-soothing, anger management, emotional regulation, nutrition, financial literacy, selfadvocacy, technology enhanced learning, career readiness, resilience, social justice, philanthropy, health and wellness.

Exposure to, and a sense of belonging in higher education is at the heart of the First Star experience. Students embrace campus life, experiencing living together during residentials.



social spaces. This creates a vital peer support network for the scholars.

2 RESIDENTIALS / FIRST SATURDAY

The First Star programme runs monthly sessions and an annual summer residential where participants are considered part of the university's student body and mentored throughout by youth coaches – current students at host Universities. First Star programmes enable individual development, and most importantly scholars grow into a First Star Family. Scholars embrace campus life, experiencing living in university housing during the residential; eating, socialising, exercising, sharing learning and

3 FIRST STAR – OUR FAMILY

First Star improves lives – delivering academic and life skills, and successfully supporting transition to higher education, employment and adulthood. First Star **bridges the gap**, offering one-to-one, small and whole group support where only 1 in 4 experience no placement move, no school move and no social worker change within a year. First Star is more than an intervention, “These

people here are not just people on a programme; they are my friends, family and siblings now.”

4 GCSE AND BEYOND – SCHOLAR PROGRESSION AND OUTCOMES

41% of First Star graduates progressed to university, compared to 32.6% of peers nationally (UCAS, 2021) and 6% of 18- to 21-year-old care leavers (DfE; CSJ, 2019). Studies include psychology; biosciences, law, nursing, music, film, and business.

FS attainment 8 score is 47.1 compared to 50.2 nationally and 21.4 for CLA. The average EBacc score for all pupils is 4.38; for FS Scholars, it's 5.28 compared to 1.7 for CLA.

5 PROGRESSION TO HE, EMPLOYMENT AND CAREERS

Led by our Programme Directors, each programme is supported by volunteers and university staff – from professors and lecturers, to security, catering, and admin. First Star tutors deliver our academic sessions; specialists, volunteers, and charities provide life skills sessions, enabling the immersive university experience to become a reality for scholars.

Interested in making a difference?

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Contact:

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07706 908 079

www.firststaruk.org

lorna.goodwin@firststaruk.org



**first
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SCHOLARS UK

FIRST STAR TESTIMONIALS

"All the staff members are so easy to talk to and they support us, no matter what"
Winchester Programme recruiting Y10 scholars; contact leanne.heath@winchester.ac.uk

"I joined for a better education, a better start, and that's what the programme has given me"
St Mary's recruiting Y12; contact nick.turk@stmarys.ac.uk

"I learned to be an advocate from First Star, which fights on my behalf"
Virtual Programme recruiting Y9; contact tom.kelly@firststaruk.org

STEAM Sessions for GCSE and post-16 teens in care – discover new careers and untold aspiration, and study with industry experts; contact tom.kelly@firststaruk.org

Careers advice needs to change

Jenifer Cameron outlines why traditional thinking around careers guidance ought to give way to a different, more far-reaching approach...

It's long been common practice in schools for students to complete work experience placements as a complement to their education, but these programmes usually provide only a brief glimpse of a specific work environment.

Additionally, the careers advice students receive is typically designed to help them with their immediate next steps after school, rather than broadening their aspirations and arming them with the broader skills and knowledge they'll need to succeed in the world of employment.

As a result, we've seen a growing gap between the preparation for work that employers expect to see and the preparation that school leavers have actually received. However, there are several measures schools can start adopting now to ensure their students possess skills they'll need to thrive in their subsequent.

Confidence building

Developing confidence in students is a vital step towards helping them lead happy and successful lives. Confident people are more likely to believe in the skills they possess, the goals they have and their ability to succeed, and thus become motivated and proactive workers.

Schools should therefore pursue learning opportunities that encourage students to build up their levels of competence, improve their



problem-solving skills and develop their readiness to work independently.

Alongside that, there should be efforts made to foster students' curiosity and encourage them to see mistakes as building blocks for learning.

Schools need to open doors to new experiences, which could mean having to think outside the box. Traditional careers education will often involve presentations from experts in particular fields, but schools can also look into more novel approaches – visiting an art gallery or a live performance, for example (albeit once pandemic restrictions are sufficiently eased). Cultural projects and experiences will help students better understand the place of art and creativity within wider society, and the job opportunities available in the creative industries, but also allow them to explore their own means of self-expression, which can, in itself, help boost an individual's confidence.

Community spirit

Helping students develop more in the way of real-world skills is obviously important for ensuring school leavers and graduates can successfully negotiate the transition from education to employment.

It's notable that Ofsted, following feedback from employers and a review of its own inspection framework, has determined that careers education is an important area that it needs to assess.

To deliver a well-rounded careers education, schools should look beyond how careers advice and guidance has traditionally been defined, and do more to demonstrate direct links between core subjects and the real world. To this end, community links can be an incredibly valuable resource; they can demonstrate to students the sheer breadth of opportunities available to them, while also providing practical and meaningful experiences that students can get involved with.

Your local police station,

for example, might host a 'go and see' day, where students can learn powerful lessons around importance of clear and rapid communication.

Partnering with a local charity to set up a volunteer programme can help raise awareness and perform a social good, while also instilling different aspirations among those students considering a more altruistic career path.

Alternatively, why not try setting up a workshop on business development that includes a 'pitch to investors' activity? This can help vividly illustrate how important critical thinking, communication and creativity skills are for business development and growth.

I would urge all teachers and schools to reflect on their existing practice and consider whether it's enabling students to truly flourish after school. If there's room for improvement, now is the time to develop a new approach – one that will genuinely address the knowledge and skills gaps that are being identified among school leavers.

We should leverage the power of community resources, in a way that sets today's students on course to really thrive in the years ahead.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Jenifer Cameron is the CEO of Action4Youth; for more information, visit action4youth.org/enrichment

Laying the FOUNDATIONS

Olivia Wolfheart highlights how a digital apprenticeship can serve as a gateway to a rewarding, well-paid career

Tech skills have never been in such high demand by employers, but there remains a shortage of people with the required knowledge. Once appropriately trained and qualified, some may therefore be able to pick and choose from a range of job prospects, put out there by firms lacking the necessary expertise.

Indeed, digital skills are becoming ever more vital across a range of sectors, from construction, health, media, retail, travel and hospitality, right through to the more traditional banking and engineering. Name an entry level role, and chances are that candidates will be required to possess some form of digital skills.

The apprenticeship opportunities currently showing most demand include those in the areas of business analytics, software development, digital marketing and cybersecurity. A digital marketer, for instance, will likely find themselves helping deliver promotional campaigns via social media. A cybersecurity expert will be engaged in pursuing computer hackers. A data analyst will be tasked with providing the facts and context for crucial decisions.

Or perhaps artificial intelligence or machine learning appeals? AI isn't just about self-driving cars;

it's already being used to manage incredibly complex commercial operations with high levels of speed, efficiency, and insight. Then there's working as a business analyst, where the day job may involve looking at how companies can make the best use of their technical systems, and using data analysis to create further efficiencies.

equivalent to degree level and upwards.

Yet for all the opportunities and variety of experiences available, it's still the case that young people tend to view careers based around digital skills, computing and technology in a very particular way. The careers to which young people are most readily attracted tend to be highly

live, which opens up numerous opportunities to demonstrate how technology can help. Examples might include the successful development of COVID-19 vaccines, or the range of ways in which technology is being used to combat climate change (such as improving waste management schemes in smart cities), and improve our overall levels of security (by protecting individuals and businesses from fraud and cyber attacks).

“Young people are often driven to improve the world in which we live”

Working while learning

An apprenticeship lasts a minimum of one year, and will typically see the apprentice spending 80% of their time learning and getting valuable experience in the workplace, and 20% 'off the job', participating in structured training.

Apprentices therefore benefit from simultaneously earning a wage and gaining qualifications, with no cost involved for the training itself. The qualifications needed to commence an apprenticeship will largely depend on its level, the organisation involved and specific job role. Level 3 apprenticeships are approximately equivalent to two A Levels. Level 4 apprenticeships are equivalent to foundation degrees, while higher-level apprenticeships are

visible – think doctors, vets, sportspeople, teachers – though it's worth driving home that these areas of employment all contain a digital dimension to them. Digital health solutions, for example, or the technology solutions now routinely deployed in classrooms.

Young people are often driven to improve the world in which we



Relatable careers

A career in technology opens the door to a process of continual upskilling and pathways out to numerous exciting sectors. Whichever path students eventually choose for themselves, if they possess up-to-date digital skills and the ability to apply them, their employability will increase considerably.

A career in computing will help to enhance a number of transferable skills, including computational thinking and logical problem solving. A great way of making such careers more visible and relatable can be to take learning outside the classroom on occasion, or by bringing the outside world in.

There are numerous competitions and events open to schools, which are

designed to inspire and inform young people about the career opportunities available to them in tech. Many teachers report finding such events helpful in positively influencing students to pursue technology-related career options. At larger scale events, there will tend to be technology professionals present who are willing to visit local schools, provide talks and demonstrations and even potentially mentor certain groups or individual students.

By showcasing role models in technology, breaking down stereotypes and bringing to life the exciting, creative and collaborative opportunities technology allows for, we can make tech careers much more appealing to young people.

CASE STUDY: CAMERON

As told by his mother, Claire "Cameron struggled at sixth form college, and wasn't quite sure what direction to go in. He'd thought about an engineering apprenticeship, so I was surprised when he decided to go into IT. But it's great – he'll never be out of a job, because there are lots of careers you can go into.

There's still a perception that apprenticeships are trade-based, for plasterers and the like. There isn't enough information out there – it always seems that the emphasis is on A Levels, or going on to university. There needs to be more promotion in the media, so that people can be made more aware of modern apprenticeships.



I did a Youth Training Scheme in the 80s myself, which was like an apprenticeship in that I had to work and study. It was a great start to my career, and the places I've worked for since have had apprentices, so I was familiar with the idea of learning on the job.

Completing a digital apprenticeship gave Cameron insight into where he could go, and what areas might interest him. It's so important, when choosing a career, that you're able to be passionate about it.

The great thing about the apprenticeship is that it's given Cameron independence. He has a salary and has built up valuable workplace experience, along with everything else that goes with that, such as time management skills and team working abilities. He's had excellent mentors, and really put his whole heart into it.

To other parents, I'd say that apprenticeships are a fantastic gateway into a career which I would recommend it to anyone. I'm so proud of what Cameron has achieved now that he's qualified, and am very excited about his future."



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Olivia Wolfheart is a membership engagement manager at BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT and a former GCSE computer science teacher

LEARNER PROGRESSION TO SUPPORT A DIGITAL FUTURE

L1 ROBOTICS TO L2 THINKING AS A CODER

BCS' Level 1 Robotics Award builds technology confidence, providing students with the skills to assemble, programme and control a robot in a fun and collaborative group setting. The new BCS Level 2 Thinking as a Coder qualification provides a natural progression route, in which students will learn how to:

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- Understand and use computational thinking techniques
- Analyse problems and develop solutions
- Understand key principles and terms associated with coding
- Test and debug a program

The qualification includes teacher and learner resources. It also includes a 45-minute online test with 36 questions which means no manual marking for the Centre.

bcs.org/thinkingasacoder





CLASSROOM VOICES

“The worst feedback is that which goes ignored”

Dr Andrew Atherton explains how a teacher’s use of Whole Class Feedback can and should include space for issuing comments and observations to individual students

What’s not to love about Whole Class Feedback? It promises significant reductions in teacher workload, whilst at the same time actually improving student outcomes.

And yet, it seems that as a profession, we’re only ever a couple of steps away from taking a superb idea and lethally mutating it, to use Dylan Wiliam’s turn of phrase. And Whole Class Feedback is no exception.

A CERTAIN ANTIPATHY

One potential pressure point is that we become too committed to the idea that Whole Class Feedback absolves us from offering any kind of individual or personalised feedback.

The real benefit to Whole Class Feedback is the manner in which it allows us to identify and address patterns of misconception across the class, while offering a series of actionable next steps or a task for everyone to complete. None of that will matter, however, if students aren’t receptive to the feedback they’re being offered. The worst feedback, no matter how good, is that which goes ignored.

While every class and context will be different, it’s conceivable that if we adhere too stringently to the idea that Whole Class Feedback should only ever issued to the *whole class*, then the individuals within that class may feel a certain antipathy.

Pedagogically sound though it may be, students – indeed, anyone – will want to know they’re valued not as a collective, but as individuals. The risk with using Whole Class Feedback is we forget the need for individuals to act on and attend to feedback, even when that feedback is delivered to the whole class.

We therefore need to strike a balance between retaining the pedagogic efficacy of Whole Class Feedback – thus preserving those significant workload benefits – and building in some mechanism for ensuring individuals see the feedback they’re given not as some vague homogeneity, but something that attends to them specifically.

THE RIGHT TONE

Here are two simple, yet effective ways of doing this:

Strategy 1 – Blue highlighter

When reading and marking work from my classes, I’ll always keep a blue highlighter to hand and use it to quickly flag anything I like or find especially interesting. I’ll do this for every individual student, since there’s always something to value.

When I return the students’ work, I’ll ask them to read it back and pay particular attention to the parts highlighted in blue. I’ll then ask them to imagine that every instance of blue highlighter is me sat at my desk, emitting some kind of congratulatory noise or uttering ‘*Excellent*’ or ‘*Good point*’.

This reinforces that I’ve enjoyed and paid close attention to their work – important for setting the right tone in feedback lessons – while also providing opportunities for significant

metacognitive benefit. Students can now ask themselves, ‘*Why is this highlighted blue? What am I doing well here? Are there any patterns across what’s highlighted blue?*’ It’s a great way of encouraging students to think deeply about their own work, whilst showing them a certain degree of individual attention – all at no extra cost to me.

Strategy 2 – Defining excellence

When offering comments on what went well across the class, I’ll pepper my explanations with specific student examples. To do this, I might live model under the visualiser something I noticed and jotted down when reading a piece of work, talking the class through exactly why I made a note of it.

Again, I’m demonstrating a level of attention to the individual. The process produces real moments of pride when a student’s work is chosen as an exemplar, but I’m also modelling what excellence looks like to the rest of the class, so the other students can better emulate it themselves.

Both strategies, as well as many others I could have chosen, have the same aim. We shouldn’t see Whole


Class Feedback as synonymous with offering no feedback at the level of the individual. Rather, we should find ways of attending to individual students whilst still retaining the core pedagogic innovations of Whole Class Feedback.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Andrew Atherton is a secondary school English teacher; his ‘Codexterous’ website (codexterous.home.blog) offers a range of articles and resources for English teaching and he tweets as @_codexterous



*'The best
training I've
had in a decade
of teaching'*
Course Participant

A photograph of two women from behind, looking at a document. The woman on the left has short brown hair and is wearing a green sweater. The woman on the right has long blonde hair and is wearing a red top. They are both looking at a document held by the woman on the left. The background is a light grey wall with a pink circular graphic element.

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RICHARD II

Add a little political frisson to your Shakespeare studies, with Helen Mears' notes on how to fruitfully explore Shakespeare's timeless rumination on power and retribution...

When should I teach it?

Owing to the limited selection of Shakespearean texts available to teach at GCSE and A Level, *Richard II* would need to be a KS3 choice. It could be taught as part of a unit based around the Second History Tetralogy or as an interesting standalone.

How should I teach it?

Richard II offers excellent opportunities to teach students about the intricacies of Elizabethan theatre. There is a highly symbolic scene, Act 3, Scene 3, in which King Richard enters 'on the walls'. This would necessitate the actor playing Richard to appear on the balcony, where he makes a speech contemplating his deposition.

Henry Bolingbroke, the future king, is 'in the base court', which would be at stage level. Richard is ordered to descend to the base court – a symbolic move downwards, which reflects his impending change in status. There are also links to symbolic props, such as the crown that Richard and Henry visibly grapple with in the deposition scene, and the broken mirror in which Richard surveys his shattered image.

Why should I teach it?

Simply speaking, it's a really good play, full of iconic moments and speeches – including the mournfully poetic moment in which Richard invites his followers to "Sit upon the ground / And tell sad stories of the death of kings." The poetry is balanced out with moments of humour, and the audience are invited to feel empathy for a highly flawed central character.

How does it link to the rest of the curriculum?

Aside from the obvious links to history and the Wars of the Roses, *Richard II* has strong links to current affairs and politics. John of Gaunt's famous 'This England' speech, often misinterpreted as a simple celebration of England's rich history and fertile land, is in fact a criticism of a bad ruler who has 'leased out' England and led the country to "A shameful conquest of itself." It's hard not to make links to Brexit Britain and accusations of political sleaze.

About the play

The first play in Shakespeare's Second Tetralogy of History plays, chronologically followed by the two parts of *Henry IV* and *Henry V*, *Richard II* tells the story of part of the reign of the king and his deposition by his cousin, Henry Bolingbroke. Richard is a dissolute, weak monarch who rewards his favourites at the expense of his people. When he exiles Bolingbroke and confiscates the lands and possessions of his father, John of Gaunt, after his death, Henry returns to England initially determined to regain his inheritance, but is persuaded to take his cousin's crown.

It's also possible to compare the turbulent successions of the York and Lancastrian Era with the peaceful successions of the Saxe-Coburgs and Windsors.

How can I watch it?

There are several excellent recent versions of the play, including a televised adaptation starring Ben Wishaw, which formed part of the BBC's *Hollow Crown* sequence of plays. There's also the 2013 RSC production featuring David Tennant, as well as The Globe's 2015 production, with Charles Edwards playing Richard.

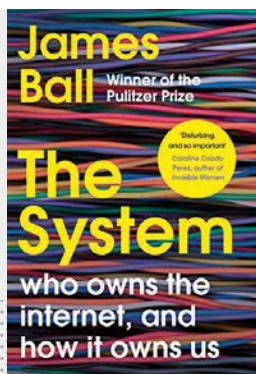
Of particular note is the groundbreaking 2019 production staged at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse by a company of women of colour, with Adjoa Andoh as an electrifying Richard.





Off the Shelves

Brilliant titles for you and your students to explore

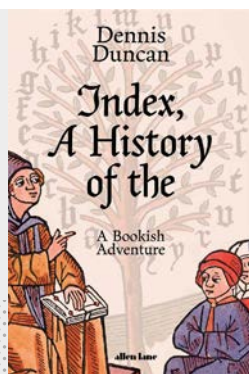


The System: Who Owns the Internet, and How It Owns Us

(James Ball, Bloomsbury, £9.99)

We know (but prefer to ignore) that the internet is based on flimsy foundations. Its underlying architecture is regularly called upon to serve ends that could scarcely be imagined back when it was first being built, with privacy and security concerns nowadays often treated as afterthoughts by some of its largest entities. In *The System*, Ball outlines in fine detail how this state of affairs came about. Crucially, he explains how the modern internet actually works, detailing the complex connections between online advertising, privacy issues and cybersecurity. It's a book that teachers will find useful to draw on when covering topics relating to computer systems, communication technologies and online safety, though in places it's perhaps a little too detailed for all but the most committed internet scholars and historians. Bar the odd irksome Gladwell-esque description (who cares that an interview took place in Starbucks?), it's a revealing read.

Reviewed by Terry Freedman



Index, A History Of The: A Bookish Adventure

(Dennis Duncan, Allen Lane, £20.00)

This book's subject may seem rather niche and of little relevance to those teaching English, but it does tick several programme of study boxes, such as developing positive attitudes towards reading and understanding of different structures. In a gently humorous way, Duncan explores how a book's index exists separately to its table of contents. Not only do they differ in how they relate to a book's text (chronological vs alphabetical), but the index may not be what it seems. Thus, we learn how indexes have been used to ridicule people or bring them into disrepute, and why scholars have bemoaned the way some readers use indexes as a substitute for reading the book itself. *Index* aptly features two indexes of its own – one computer-generated and another compiled by an indexer, allowing readers to compare them. A fascinating historical dive into the development of the index as we know it today.

Reviewed by Terry Freedman



Organise Ideas: Thinking by hand, extending the mind

(Oliver Caviglioli and David Goodwin, John Catt, £18.00)

Why should words and visuals be mutually exclusive? Just ask the many teachers fond of using graphic organisers in the form of mind maps. This book isn't necessarily an easy read, but one worth persevering with. It explains why graphic organisers – or more accurately, word diagrams – work, drawing on cognitive theory to do so (though something of a drawback for those yet to be convinced by said theories). Usefully, it explains why it's important to use the right kind of word diagram in your teaching and how. The book includes copious examples of different word diagrams, detailing the various ways in which teachers have used them, thus helping readers discover many new ways of presenting information. This is definitely a book to reach for when you're next called upon to convey some difficult concepts and the relationships between them.

Reviewed by Terry Freedman

THE WORD

Find out what our regular student reviewer, Oliver Minter-King (Y13) has been reading this month...

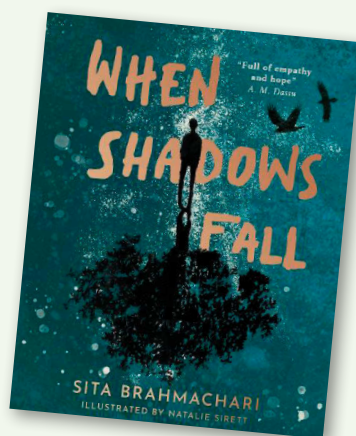
When Shadows Fall

(Sita Brahmachari, Stripes Publishing, £12.99)

Award winning author Sita Brahmachari's latest novel goes straight for the heart, in a moving and powerful story about loss, relationships and how support from your friends can pull you out of the darkness.

The narrative follows Kai, a young adult reflecting on his past after a great tragedy. Following the advice of his friends, he decides to write about his experiences in his notebook, to try and make sense of all that's happened.

Brahmachari has created a truly sympathetic character with Kai. His relationships with his family, and especially his friends are fleshed out and believable, making the book's feel-good moments even more heartwarming, and darker turns all the more gut-wrenching. Seeing how Kai looks back upon his past and reflects on how his friends helped him in his time of grief makes for an emotive and powerful read. One I would definitely recommend to YA fiction fans.



Meet the author

DE NICHOLS



Who is Art of Protest written for, and what do you hope they get from it?

It's for those who realise there are causes, struggles and injustices that they want to improve, but perhaps don't know how to just yet. I hope that the children, pre-teens and teens who read the book will embrace it with a beginner's mind and explore all the possibilities of how they can use art as protest.

What did the book's design process involve?

I have to give all credit to my awesome editor and book designer from Big Picture Press, for how they worked with me and the illustrators. Each illustrator provided mocks and iterations I'd then work on with our designer, suggesting any tweaks and additional ideas. Because of COVID, the process was largely done via email threads, but I met monthly with the team and used Zoom to talk through ideas virtually.

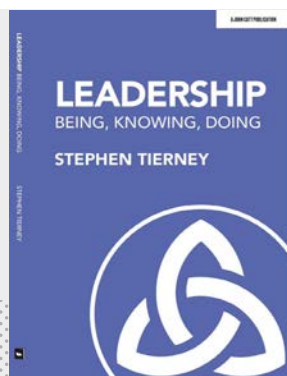
How did you select the protest movements and artworks cited in the book?

I resisted simply making an encyclopedic compilation of artworks and taking readers through a journey of different movements and associated works. I grew up in Memphis, a city key to the Civil Rights Movement, and organised artists during the uprising in Ferguson. We used my story as an anchoring narrative, as I learned about protest art as a kid, created it as an activist, and witnessed it across the world as a traveller.

From key movements such as the Civil Rights Movement, Anti-Apartheid and Occupy, I then connected and wove in works that provided a contrast of media, causes and types of artists represented. Some of this was from hyper-visual and performative works, but also works like Picasso's *Guernica*, which could provide readers with an understanding of how even fine art can also be protest art.

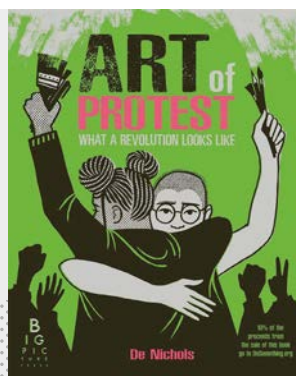
What's the feedback to the book been like?

Many readers have messaged me across social media to express how they enjoyed the illustrations and value the book's lessons on subjects like colour theory and typography. In addition, many people have shared that they consider the book itself as a work of art, because of its open-stitch binding and the boards used for its front and back covers. I really appreciate such responses, as these choices in the materiality of the book are indeed intentional and reflective of the contents inside.



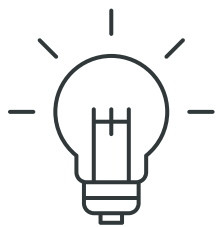
Leadership: Being, Knowing, Doing (Stephen Tierney, John Catt, £15)

The celebrated former executive head turned educational consultant channels two decades of accumulated school leadership wisdom and experience into a 'how to' guide with a difference. The title refers to an elegant structure Tierney uses to impart his guidance – eight 'Basic' leadership elements grouped under Ways of Being (covering purpose and introspection), Ways of Knowing (intellectual and experiential knowledge) or Ways of Doing (those elements that come into play when leaders act). It sounds like a lot to take in, but by devoting a tightly formatted chapter to each Basic, Tierney's practical insights are clearly explained, given ample space to breathe and made approachable via his conversational writing style and frequent flashes of humour. It's timely, too, having been written in lockdown. The COVID references might date it soon, but one suspects his advice will be informing school leaders for some time to come...



Art of Protest - What a Revolution Looks Like (De Nichols, Big Picture Press, £16.99)

Combining social commentary with an alternative take on art history, *Art of Protest* is an engaging primer for teen readers on the artists, works and causes that have driven protest and oppositional art since the early 1800s. What immediately hits the reader is the book's startling design – its bold use of typography, arresting illustrations and cited artworks positively leaping off the page, and serving as a great vehicle for conveying Nichols' simultaneously urgent, yet informative commentary. As its 42-page length might suggest, breadth over depth is the order of the day here – but given that it's a whistlestop tour of key moments in modern history, a call to arms, a rich source of creative inspiration and a beautiful piece of visual art in its own right, it's more than deserving of a place on any art teacher's bookshelf.



THE PRESSING ISSUE

SMALL THINGS MATTER

Recording and reporting low-level concerns can provide a better understanding of the safeguarding, pastoral and wellbeing concerns within your school

[THE TREND]

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

In any school establishment, a key concern is ensuring staff are working together to create a safe environment for the children and young people in their care. A good whole school safeguarding culture will further include robust management of complaints made against staff and volunteers, including low-level concerns and malicious allegations.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

A series of critical updates and changes in government guidance for schools in England have increasingly emphasised the importance of effectively managing allegations made against adults working within an education setting, including teaching staff, supply teachers, volunteers, and contractors.

It's critical that all allegations made against staff are recorded and dealt with appropriately, including the reporting of 'low level' concerns. Low-level concerns refer to those nagging doubts, however small, that a member of staff may have acted inappropriately, or in a manner inconsistent with a setting's code of conduct, but in a way not considered sufficiently serious to warrant referral to an external agency.

Examples may include being over-friendly with children, having favourites or engaging with a child one-to-one in a secluded area.

WHAT'S THE IMPACT?

Ensuring that you have, and continue to develop a positive safeguarding culture in your organisation can help prevent serious safeguarding risks. The case of William Vahey should serve as a warning to all about what can happen when so-called low-level concerns aren't reported or acted upon.

Vahey hid in plain sight, using his role as a teacher to abuse hundreds of children in not just one, but many different schools. Multiple concerning behaviours exhibited by Vahey, as described by former colleagues following his arrest, could have been classed as 'low-level' concerns, thus demonstrating the importance of recording all such doubts.



WHAT'S NEXT?

By recording low-level concerns, patterns can emerge which may subsequently help formulate a bigger picture of the events occurring within your school. It is therefore

critical that all such concerns are recorded to prevent future harm and exploitation of the students in your care. Dealing with concerns in an effective and timely fashion will also help guard against false allegations and misunderstandings.

The safeguarding culture in your school should convey the message that anyone reporting a concern, or any individual who becomes the subject of an allegation, can be assured of a professional response, and that anyone potentially subjected to false allegations or misunderstandings will be protected. This is particularly important at the moment, in light of recent news stories concerning the use of TikTok to target teachers.



THE
SAFEGUARDING
COMPANY

Contact:

0330 6600 757

thesafeguardingcompany.com

Find out more...

The Safeguarding Company helps schools take a Total Safeguarding approach, by combining the very best safeguarding practice and technology with award-winning customer support and advice. Readers can book a consultation by visiting thesafeguardingcompany.com

TAKE ACTION

At The Safeguarding Company, we recognised the need for schools to effectively manage staff allegations and low-level concerns, so we created Confide – a secure software solution for recording and case-managing allegations and concerns regarding adults working in, or with your organisation. Confide enables you to easily record concerns in a secure environment, as well as all other aspects of your investigation. Relevant documents can be uploaded and used as the basis for accurate reports and surveys of trends. Confide also lets you tailor access to the system, providing reassurance that the data stored will remain confidential and available only to users with appropriate permissions.

TECHNOLOGY + INNOVATION SPECIAL

INSIDE:

42 BETT IS BACK!

Whether you're planning to attend this month's Bett show in person or watch the event unfold from afar, be sure to check out our preview of what visitors can look forward to

50 INCREMENTAL SUCCESS

Effective technology implementation within schools needn't always involve committing to significant upfront spend – sometimes all it takes is the determination to make things better, one step at a time...

53 THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE LAW

Ethan Thomas highlights the National Crime Agency's efforts at dissuading teens from engaging in cybercrime and directing their skills at hacking towards more positive ends...

54 6 REMOTE TEACHING LESSONS

For Tom Campbell and his colleagues at Greenwood Academies Trust, edtech preparedness had always been a top priority, but there were still some key lessons to take away from their experience of contending with COVID...



Event DETAILS

Where?

ExCeL London, Royal Victoria Dock, E16 1XL

When?

The show's opening hours are as follows:

- Wednesday 19th January, 10am to 6pm
- Thursday 20th January, 10am to 8pm
- Friday 21st January, 10am to 5pm

How do I attend?

Registration for Bett is free of charge if registering in advance; for more details, visit bettshow.com



BETT SHOW 2022

The organisers of The Bett Show tell us why it's worth making the trip to ExCeL London this month for the return of what promises to be one of the biggest education events of the year...

Following our year-round offering of professional development, thought leadership from some of the biggest names in education and brand new virtual events during a time of ongoing disruption, Bett is now back to reunite the global education community in person.

With the education community now looking beyond the crisis response to the pandemic, the overarching theme of Bett 2022 is: Create the Future.

When challenged with exceptional, unprecedented problems and barriers to learning during the recent disruption, it proved vital for educators to think outside the box and solve problems creatively. Now, armed with more edtech solutions and resources than ever before, educators have the opportunity to reimagine traditional models of pedagogy, so that students can plug into a personalized, future-facing learning experience. In the process, they'll become more resilient and creative lifelong learners, able to harness their knowledge and skills in tackling the challenges of tomorrow.

This year, Bett is hosting over 225 inspiring speakers, who will be exploring themes that range from students' mental

and physical wellbeing, to education equality and the future of edtech. The keynote speakers include comic actor and writer Sally Phillips, who will be drawing on her experiences of raising a SEND child and discussing how technology has played a role in inclusive home learning. Also presenting will be Gogglebox favourite and director of Siddiqui Education, Baasit Siddiqui, who will be sharing his insights as a teacher with over 10 years' experience of improving social mobility for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Back with a bang, Bett 2022 will feature nine theatres and various content features offering more than 90 combined hours of uplifting and CPD-accredited content. From the main Arena at the heart of the show, to the new 'Esports and Ahead' feature, Bett's fantastic programme will offer a huge variety of enlightening and thought-provoking sessions.

A new feature for 2022, Bett After Hours, will see opening hours on the second day extended into the evening, so that visitors unable attend Bett during the day can still experience what the show has to offer. This will include professional

development content and sharing of best practice as part of our Twilight CPD sessions, plus the opportunity to connect with peers at our evening networking and social events.

The ever-popular student-led Kids Judge Bett feature will be back for a seventh year, once again seeing primary and secondary pupils and their parents, as well as SEND and FE students, exploring the show's stands, exhibitors and products and selecting their favourites across 10 categories for judging. We'll also be revealing the Bett 2022 Awards Winners at the show, celebrating those edtech game-changers that have excelled in offering genuinely innovative ICT provision and support for educators, with a clear focus on transforming education.

This year, we're focusing on reuniting everyone in person again – so if you've yet to register for free admission to the show, visit bettshow.com/welcome to find out how. We look forward to seeing you in January!





Q & A David Wright

The director of the UK Safer Internet Centre talks us through his presentations at the show, and the online safety concerns currently on the organisation's radar

WHAT TOPICS WILL YOU BE PRESENTING AT BETT 2022?

I'm doing two sessions on different subjects. One is focused on media literacy and children's digital skills, and the other on the sexual harassment and abuse that children can encounter online.

WHAT WILL THE MEDIA LITERACY SESSION INVOLVE?

It relates to a project we've been running for a number of years, examining how children are taught digital skills. I've worked in the space for 20 years, and within the broader education community we've spent considerable time and effort educating children about online harms, yet they still encounter harm regularly – so why is that?

Many of the efforts that have been made still tend to involve one-off assemblies, or showing videos to different year groups that depict extreme examples of online harms. But when you learn to drive a car, you don't just sit down and watch films of car crashes, on the basis that if you know what a car crash looks like, you're less likely to get involved in one. That's not how we learn.

While I'm not denying the importance of making sure children understand what online harms look like, I would suggest that it's an approach that doesn't work in isolation. What we need to do is change the culture, and just like driving, help students reach a state of 'unconscious competency' when it comes to their online behaviour and activities.

WHAT ONLINE SAFETY ISSUES HAVE YOU RECENTLY BEEN ADDRESSING AT THE UK SAFER INTERNET CENTRE?

Wellbeing is a key one. We've seen data from The Prince's Trust and Girl Guiding Association highlighting the impact lockdown has had on some children. The specific issues aren't all that different from what we've seen before – mainly pressures to be online and conform with certain online behaviours – but lockdown has amplified these issues, particularly

the amount of screen time young people are presently exposed to.

We've also seen some new developments in the commercialisation of the internet. Up to now, young people have adopted 'influencers' as role models and often aspired to become one themselves.

More recently, however, subscription-based platforms have prompted young people and even children to realise that they can generate considerable money through selling original content.

At the far end of the scale are platforms like OnlyFans, which are typically restricted to over 18s, though in some cases parents have either been unaware of their children setting up an account, or even set one up themselves, and used it as a source of family income. When children start to discover that they can sell their own intimate images and generate revenue from them in the region of £700 per week, it becomes a serious concern.

Within the past month we've also been dealing with a huge increase in TikTok and Instagram accounts created by children during the autumn 2021 half term, which carry explicit and obscene content targeting and ridiculing teachers at their school. So far we've managed to report around 2,000 such accounts and have them removed.

ARE THERE ANY UPCOMING UKSIC INITIATIVES OUR READERS MIGHT FIND ESPECIALLY USEFUL?

We're running a series of Online Safety Live events in the lead-up to Bett on 17th and 18th January, details of which are at saferinternet.org.uk/events.

SESSION DETAILS

Online sexual harassment

19th January, 3.50pm to 4.35pm, Bett Academy Live (South)

Beyond Children's Media Literacy

21st January, 3pm-3.30pm, Teaching & Learning Theatre

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

ESPORTS @ BETT

Hosted in association with the British

Esports Association, this brand new feature will showcase how schools and universities can harness the growing industry of competitive gaming in order to engage students, support teaching and learning objectives, and identify future skills.



LEADERS @ BETT THEATRE

The place to be for those seeking

inspiration in the fields of policy, digital strategy and whole school management. In sessions led by institution leaders and their teams, expect detailed discussion of digital strategies, approaches to upskilling, technology-assisted student assessments and more besides.



LEARNIT

Learnit is the global community for education

leaders driving impactful change. Learnit will be hosting intellectually honest conversations on the future of learning, and how meaningful connections can be created between those affecting positive change for their learners.



BETT AFTER HOURS

Bett's move to becoming

a three-day event will be accompanied by the introduction of Bett After Hours on 20th January – an extension of the show's opening hours to 8pm, giving visitors who can't attend during class or work hours the chance to explore the show

WHY VISIT BETT?

John Tait, director of school improvement and deputy CEO at Areté Learning Trust, shares his thoughts on why educators should make the trip to ExCeL

WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR OWN REASONS FOR ATTENDING IN THE PAST?

I've always liked attending Bett so that I can be inspired by what the education and technology sectors have to offer, and also see what's on the horizon. It's important to stay at the cutting edge of what's now possible, and Bett is a great way of doing that. I've also found the talks, presentations and professional learning opportunities there to be fantastic. I always come back from the show with a multitude of ideas inspired by my visit.

HOW HAS THE SHOW PREVIOUSLY COMPARED TO YOUR PRIOR EXPECTATIONS?

If I'm going to make time to be out of school, I'm going to have high expectations. I'll want what I experience there to be of high quality and have a measurable impact on my thinking, and in all the years I've been going, Bett has never disappointed.

HAVE ANY PREVIOUS BETT PRESENTATIONS, EXHIBITS, MEETINGS OR OTHER MEMORIES PARTICULARLY STOOD OUT FOR YOU?

I particularly like the showcase stands that Google and Microsoft have, with their live seminars and presentations happening every hour, on the hour, delivered by authentic classroom practitioners – not just salespeople who have never set foot in a classroom before.



Kelly Hannaghan

Those seeking advice on how to tackle morale and absenteeism should set aside some time for the sessions presented by this mental health and wellbeing consultant

WHAT TOPICS WILL YOU BE PRESENTING AT BETT 2022?

I'm running three CPD sessions in the Bett Academy Live theatres, and chairing a panel discussion in the Teaching and Learning Theatre on catch-up and recovery.

WHAT WILL THE PANEL DISCUSSION CONSIST OF?

It will be a half-hour conversation with Gemma Oaten, the actor and patron for SEED Eating Disorder Support Services, Matthew Crawford, CEO of the Embark Federation MAT and Jack Keeler MBE, who's a governor at Park Way Primary School.

We'll be taking a deep dive into inclusive approaches to wellbeing. We know that many young people have thrived during the extended time they've recently had at home, especially young people with SEND, but have found it challenging to transition back into the school environment.

Alongside that there's been a sharp increase in anxiety-based school avoidance, so we'll be looking at the push and pull factors between school and home, and considering how young people are currently grappling with these. I'll also be discussing with Gemma Oaten the rise in eating disorders – not just in terms of restricting food intake, as with conditions such as anorexia nervosa, but also the increase there's been in binge eating disorders, driven by young people using food to suppress how they're feeling, often accompanied by rising levels of self-harm.

CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR CPD SESSIONS?

My first session will explore strategies for supporting student wellbeing in classroom, based on an extensive amount of training I've been giving to secondary school staff. I'll be putting forward ideas for how to develop a 'nurture first' approach and build a therapeutic learning

space, where young people can be seen and heard, and their feelings validated.

Another session will look at ways to prevent loss of learning. Rather than focusing only on closing the attainment gap, I believe we also need to consider the gaps that are growing in terms of social deprivation and children's emotional development.

WHAT ARE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS INHIBITING SCHOOLS' CAPACITY TO OFFER PASTORAL SUPPORT?

One of the most obvious is lack of time. We're in the aftershock of the pandemic, seeing staff who are struggling emotionally and showing stress responses. School leaders need to be clear as to what they expect their staff to provide, and what they want their 'wellbeing menu' for young people to consist of. Only with the right professional and personal development will staff be able to recognise and respond appropriately to students' needs.

Follow Kelly on Twitter via @mindworkmatter

SESSION DETAILS

Beyond Catchup and Recovery: An inclusive approach to student wellbeing and mental health

20th January, 10.50am to 11.20am, Teaching & Learning Theatre

Closing the gap for student wellbeing

20th January, 3.50pm to 4.20pm, Bett Academy Live (North)

How to support your school community to enhance children's learning and living outcomes

21st January, 11.40am to 12.10pm, Bett Academy Live (North)

Keeping our educators well with staff wellbeing that matters!

21st January, 3pm to 3.30pm, Bett Academy Live (North)

Bett from a distance

Can't make it to Bett in person? Here's how to keep up with what's happening at the show remotely, courtesy of Bett veteran and tech expert **Terry Freedman**...

Bett is back! It's exciting to contemplate being able to network in person again, but not all of us will be able to make it, and sadly, seminars aren't going to be recorded this year. However, all is not lost. Here are some of the ways in which you can keep abreast of what's happening before, during and after the show...

Before Bett

The Bett website is now live at bettshow.com, and you can sign up to receive notifications whenever new articles are posted to the show's official blog. Go to bettshow.com/bett-articles and simply click 'subscribe'.

Next, it's still worth registering for Bett, even if you can't attend in person. You'll start to receive regular updates as the event draws nearer, and you'll be ready to go in the event your headteacher decides you can attend after all! You can keep up to date with newly added speakers and exhibitors by subscribing to the Bett mailing list.

During Bett

There are several ways of keeping informed via social media. Twitter users should follow the @bett_show account and make note of #Bett2022, which is this year's official hashtag (though #bett, #bett22 and

#CreateTheFuture are also likely to see heavy use). Search those hashtags to find out what people are talking about in relation to the show. You might see a lot of promotion ahead of the event, but following along during the event itself is more likely to connect you directly with fellow educators' genuine impressions and first-hand experiences.

There's lots going on, so why not create your own Bett-related Twitter list? Click on 'Lists' within the Twitter webpage or app and select the 'New List' option. Enter '@bett_show', and you'll see a selection of other Bett-related accounts start to appear. Adding several of these to your list will ensure you won't fall short of relevant news! LinkedIn

users can meanwhile follow Bett via [linkedin.com/company/bettshow](https://www.linkedin.com/company/bettshow).

As you might expect, there's also an official Bett YouTube channel – [youtube.com/user/bettshow](https://www.youtube.com/user/bettshow) – which may be worth a sub. Remember to also search YouTube for 'bett2022', 'Bett 2022' and related terms, through which you might uncover a wider spread of Bett news and advice, including interviews and personal impressions.

On top of all that, Bett Radio from NetSupport and Anderton Tiger will be streaming interviews and reports during each day of the show, with the option to listen live or select content on demand. Find out more at netsupportradio.beezer.com/bett-2022.

After Bett

If you spot any exhibitors whose products you'd like to

BETT IN NUMBERS



have seen, it's worth getting in touch. They may have recorded demonstrations or talks that they can share, and will certainly be able to send you more information. The full list of exhibitors at this year's show can be seen at uk.bettshow.com/bett-suppliers-list

Similarly, if there are any seminars you'd have liked to attend, it might be worth contacting the presenters and seeing if their slides might be available. Obviously, there's no guarantee of getting a positive – or indeed any – response here, but nothing ventured, nothing gained. The full speaker list can be found at uk.bettshow.com/speakers

Finally, read up on a few post-show reports – FutureSource typically publishes an especially comprehensive one soon after the event, which can usually be found at futuresource-consulting.com



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Terry Freedman is an edtech writer, and publishes the ICT & Computing in Education website and newsletter at ictineducation.org; follow him at @terryfreedman

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Best in show

Our pick of the Bett stands and exhibitors to look out for on your travels around the show floor...



1

Renaissance Stand: NE71

Providing cloud-based assessment and teaching and learning programmes, such as Accelerated Reader, to schools across the UK and Ireland, Renaissance believes in accelerating learning for all. That's why we're excited to introduce a new member to our product family – Nearpod. Nearpod provides an interactive instructional

platform that merges real-time formative assessment and dynamic media for live and self-paced learning experiences, both inside and outside the classroom. With over 15,000 ready-to-run interactive lessons, videos, and activities available, Nearpod helps to engage students and support their understanding. Visit our stand to experience a product demonstration and learn more about our current promotions!



2

The Safeguarding Company Stand: NL63

The Safeguarding Company is the maker of the Queen's Award-winning MyConcern – the easy-to-use safeguarding solution trusted by thousands of schools across the UK and around the world. The Safeguarding Company provides a suite of products that support safeguarding, safer recruitment and training, underpinned by award-winning customer support and best practice advice.

The Safeguarding Company works with schools to enhance and develop their school-wide total safeguarding approach. At Bett, visitors can learn more about the company's holistic approach to safeguarding, and see how their latest solution, CONFIDE, has been developed to help schools manage allegations and low-level concerns against adults working or volunteering with their organisation.

To book a consultation for your school, visit thesafeguardingcompany.com/bett



3

Lapsafe Stand: SB51

Visit LapSafe® at the Bett Show 2022 to meet all your storage and charging needs for multiple devices, such as laptops, Chromebooks and tablets, via solutions ranging from simple lockers to advanced self-service options. LapSafe® will be launching its new Self-Service Lockers that offer 24 x 7 device loans without staff intervention, a 'drop off and collect' service and class-set reservations. Also at the show will be its NEW Diplomat™UV-C Sanitising Station, capable of sanitising a laptop in just 15 seconds. Pop by and give it a go!

www.lapsafe.com



4

Century Tech Stand: NB30

Recent disruptions to education have made the challenge of addressing missed learning and closing attainment gaps harder than ever before. CENTURY helps you identify knowledge gaps instantly and fill those gaps with recommended learning content.

With CENTURY, you get access to thousands of micro-lessons in English, maths and science for Y7 to Y11 aligned to the National Curriculum. Students receive personalised learning pathways tailored to their needs, while teachers can save hours on marking and resource creation. They can also make better interventions through data insights and question-level analysis.

CENTURY is a cost-effective alternative to tutoring that fits within your learning schedule and gives your teachers full control. To learn more, visit century.tech/secondary stand NB30 at Bett or see century.tech/secondary



5

VEX Robotics Stand: SK50

Anyone can teach STEM subjects and physical computing with VEX. Each unique part of the VEX ecosystem works together to deliver meaningful learning experiences for students of all abilities, using both physical robots and online virtual robotics tools. VEX Classroom Bundles contain all the STEM hardware needed, while teachers get free software, training, lesson plans and support.

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assessment data where needed. The registers can also be used for more than just attendance, featuring the ability to add tags, meal options, behaviour and achievement points and even homework assignments!

3 MANAGE YOUR HOMEWORK

Set up and submit assignments via the portal's homework area, and use the notifications function to ensure students receive automatic deadline reminders. It also integrates with Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams, pulling through homework assignment details and status, enabling parents, students and staff to see them in EduLink One. Department heads can also view homework set by staff.

4 MANAGE CLUBS

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Small steps to EDTECH SUCCESS

Excellent use of technology doesn't need a big investment – just a team of staff and pupils who are willing to inch their way forward, observe **Matthew Knight** and **Kate Broadribb**

When I joined Wildern School in 2005, the release of the first iPhone was still two years away, but a crystal-clear vision for edtech was already in place. It centred on supporting staff to trial technology as part of small-scale research projects – an approach that became so successful, it achieved national recognition in 2010.

Developing edtech often involves investment, which suggests that being able to afford the right infrastructure is essential for successful change. But in my role as part of Wildern's school improvement group, I've seen how developing staff competence and confidence can yield more wide-reaching results and a greater impact on learners.

Getting staff on board

We recognised early on that there needed to be a twin

approach – top down, as well as bottom up. Through our appraisal process, for example, all staff were asked to base one of their performance management targets around an aspect of edtech pedagogy. This in turn enabled us to plan a programme of training events throughout the school year – during INSET, twilight sessions and bespoke meetings for small groups of staff – which we called 'genius workshops'.

What the staff liked was how the menu of CPD events enabled them to select the training most relevant to them, personalising the process. Over the years, these workshops evolved to support people working at different levels – from beginners and those new to the school, through to intermediate and advanced participants who went on to become digital champions. It became a self-sustaining model; our colleagues were

supporting each other, reducing the need for external training.

Our initial small-scale projects approach has been maintained by the genius workshops and the school improvement group (now called the PLG – Personal Learning Group). We've developed a library of digital resources by filming training sessions and creating screencast recordings, so staff can access these materials anytime and anywhere.

Not everything is formally scheduled. Workshops are supported by a 'genius bar' where staff and students can go during the day and access the technology they need; it's been a blessing these past two years when it comes to online and blended learning. Weekly 'WiFi Wednesday' emails share examples of using edtech successfully, ensuring staff have a platform from which to share their knowledge, and know who to approach for support.

Students take an active role too, with our Edtech Focus Group training teachers, as well as their peers, in the production of online video tutorials, and by delivering some of our whole-school twilights and genius sessions. Feedback from teachers has been overwhelmingly positive, and we've helped to set up similar groups elsewhere through our work as an edtech Demonstrator School.

We have a centrally resourced student app hub

that's easy to use and update. It's designed to encourage staff to give it a go, and enables students to retrieve resources they have been using in lessons across the curriculum.

It's also handy for remembering those apps that even the more tech-savvy among us can easily forget about during a busy half term.

“Not every member of staff has to be an expert on everything”

Online support?

Mental health and wellbeing is at the forefront of our pastoral offer for both students and staff at Wildern, and technology has a key role to play here too. The addition of a Wellbeing Hub to our school website provides quick access to external agencies, wellbeing resources, newsletters and support apps.

To make it easy for students to reach out, we've set up an #needsupport Google Form so they can ask for help without having to physically speak to anyone – something that can otherwise be a barrier. Key staff receive a notification when a student uses the form, and are able to read





the request and take action.

We also use Google Forms to help students submit their ideas for school improvement, and enable staff to nominate their 'half-term heroes' – all of whom are entered into a draw for an Amazon voucher. We even continued our regular staff quiz during lockdown via YouTube, using the chat function to catch up.

Helping other schools

As we move forward into 2022 – and with luck, away from the COVID-reactive world we've been living in since March 2020 – we can return to a more strategic approach in all areas.

We have a team of six Digital Excellence Leaders (DEL) based in different departments around the school, and people to champion a variety of skills, applications and techniques. Their expertise is being used across our Trust and to support our Primary School Partners, so that pupils arrive at secondary with well-developed digital skills.

Upon request, the DEL also provide free support for other schools via the DfE's Edtech Demonstrator programme.

One thing the pandemic achieved was to push staff, students and parents well outside of their comfort zones and to try new things. As a Trust, we need to explore whether this is going to be a sustained change; behaviour that will persist beyond the still-fresh memories of lockdown and working from home.

Online parents' evenings are fast becoming standard at many schools, but what about the software that kept us all functioning and connected? Are we still using Mote, Google Meets, Quizlets, Seneca? And how many of those Chromebooks and WiFi dongles are still being used? Do they get used for more than 50% of student contact time a week? 25%? 5%?

Did we succeed?

Small steps, both virtual and physical, are what's needed. It doesn't need to start with wholesale change or big investment in edtech, and it

doesn't matter what platform a school uses. If every department champions a different piece of software, app or website, students can have excellent access to tools that support learning and a more blended approach.

Our geography department, for example, has supported students in their revision success with digital mind mapping and flash cards, whilst our English department has championed the use of Kami to embed videos and instructions that scaffold learning.

Remember that not every member of staff has to be an expert on everything. Not every minute of every lesson needs to be online, but there are questions we should ask.

How much of our working week is spent using new technology? How did our own education support this? How can we make sure our students have what they need for the workplace – the basics of email skills, knowledge of cloud storage management, the ability to balance life and work in a world where we're always

able to connect?

Finding the answers to these questions supports the small steps needed on a continuing journey of edtech improvement.

TECH SUPPORT

If you're interested in what we do at Wildern and how we might support you with the successful implementation of edtech, contact us at edtech@wildern.org or sign up through the Edtech Demonstrator School programme via edtechdemo.ucst.uk



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Kate Broadribb is a senior leader of learning, and Matthew Knight an assistant headteacher at Wildern School in Southampton; for more information, visit wildern.org or follow [@wildernschool](https://twitter.com/wildernschool)

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Do the right thing

Ethan Thomas highlights what the National Crime Agency is doing to ensure that teenage tech enthusiasts are channelling their skills towards safe and positive ends...

The National Crime Agency (NCA) estimates that the cost of Cyber Crime to the UK economy amounts to billions of pounds per year – and is growing. The Agency's national Cyber Choices initiative seeks to raise awareness of the Computer Misuse Act 1990 and the potential consequences of breaking the law, while signposting to resources where cyber skills and interests can be practised and developed positively and legally.

Natural curiosity

Many young people are naturally curious, and keen to explore how all the technology now so prevalent in our daily lives actually works – how different devices and online platforms interact with each other, and what vulnerabilities those different devices and online spaces might have.

This curiosity can sometimes lead younger users into wanting to learn how to code, experimenting with various online tools and applications, and exploring the social interactions to be had on video streaming sites and discussion forums – all of which can lead to the development of useful skills.

However, some young people will make poor choices and opt to use their skills illegally –

often while unaware of the law, or the consequences their actions may have.

Letter of the law

Below are some key provisions within the Computer Misuse Act 1990, along with some examples of real-world activities and actions that would be prohibited under the law.

Section 1 – 'Unauthorised access to computer material'

You watch your friend enter their social media username and password. You memorise their login details and without their permission, then later use them to access your friend's account and read their messages.

Section 2 – 'Unauthorised access with intent to commit or facilitate commission of further offences'

Your friend leaves their tablet on the sofa. Without their knowledge, you access their gaming account and purchase game credits using the registered credit card.

Section 3 – 'Unauthorised acts with intent to impair, or with recklessness as to impairing, operation of computer, etc.'

You're playing an online game with a friend who scores higher than you. You use a 'Booster' tool knowing it will knock them offline, so that you can win the game.

Section 3ZA – 'Unauthorised acts caused, or creating risk of, serious damage'

You hack a phone company in a way that prevents some people from getting through to the police in

an emergency. You didn't mean for that to happen, but you were reckless.

Section 3A – 'Making, supplying or obtaining articles for use in offence under section 1, 2 or 3ZA'
You download some software that enables you to bypass login credentials, in the hope that you can hack into your friend's laptop – though you've not had a chance to use it yet.

Consequences of breaking the Computer Misuse Act 1990 may include receiving a visit and warning from the police or NCA officers. In more severe cases, an individual's actions may result in them being arrested, having their devices seized and getting a criminal record. They may also face being banned or limited in their future internet use and possible permanent exclusion from school. Longer term, those prosecuted under the act may be unable to secure jobs in their preferred career, and face

international travel restrictions.

Lessons in cyber

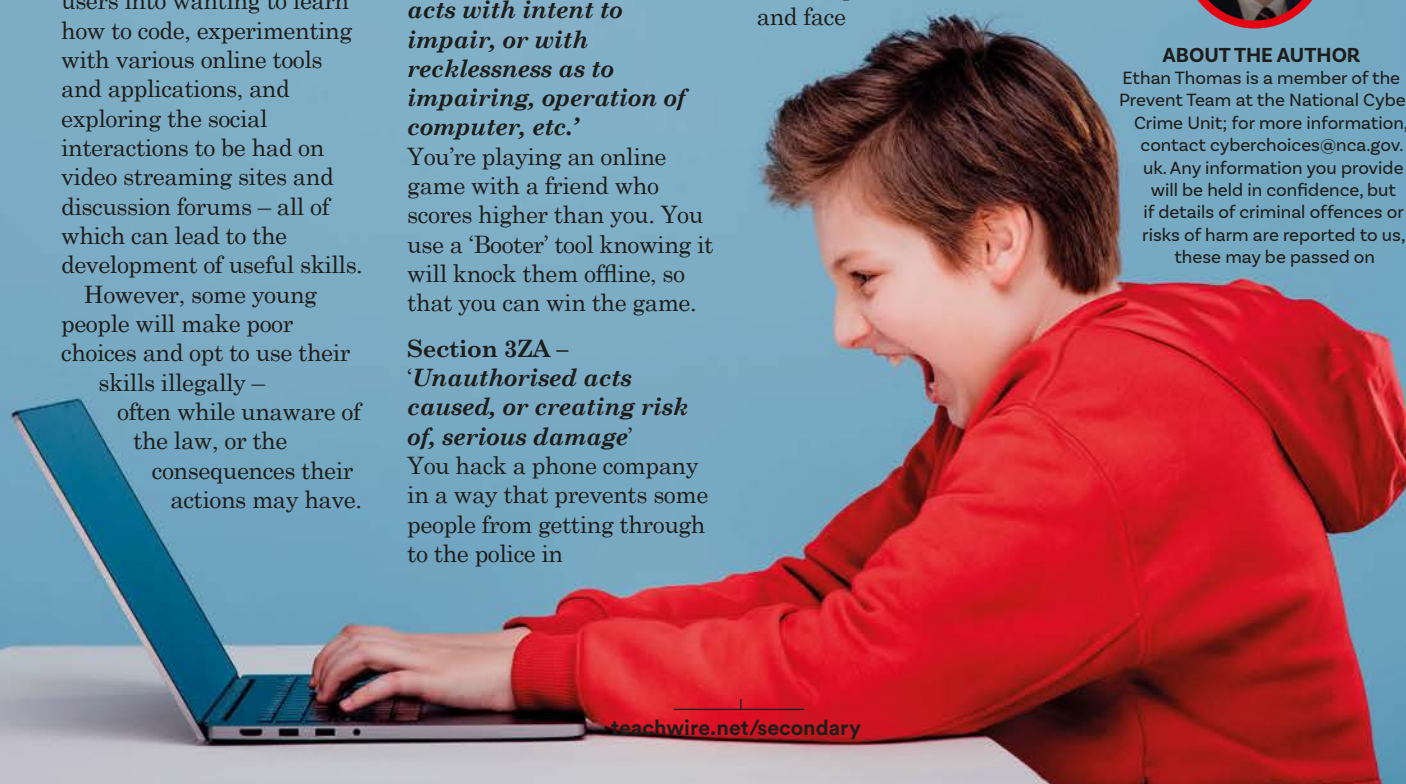
At cyberchoices.uk, schools can find out more about current cybercrime trends, and how they can help young people with a talent for tech use their skills in positive ways. We've previously worked with the PSHE Association to develop a series of KS3 cyber lesson plans, which deliver information on cyber laws, online/offline crime comparisons and victim awareness – these can be downloaded via bit.ly/ti8-nca1.

We've also partnered with Cyber Security Challenge UK to deliver a series of gamified educational resources for tech enthusiasts, all of which are currently free to use. Further details of these can be found at cybergamesuk.com.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ethan Thomas is a member of the Prevent Team at the National Cyber Crime Unit; for more information, contact cyberchoices@nca.gov.uk. Any information you provide will be held in confidence, but if details of criminal offences or risks of harm are reported to us, these may be passed on



6 THINGS REMOTE TEACHING TAUGHT US

When the pandemic hit, Greenwood Academies Trust was already ahead of the digital education game – but there were still important lessons to be learnt, as **Tom Campbell** explains...

Back in the summer of 2019, Greenwood Academies Trust completed the 12-month rollout of what had been a five-year digital transformation strategy across our 37 academies, all in areas of high deprivation across the Midlands and East of England. The timing was fortuitous – we certainly never imagined that we were preparing to deliver education during a pandemic.

However, that, of course, was exactly what we ended up doing, and through continuous analysis of our remote learning provision across a range of contexts, we have learnt a lot about this new frontier in teaching. We've had successes, and with the benefit of hindsight, have also been able to think about things we might have done differently. Ultimately, this has enabled us to make decisions about what we want to retain from delivering education remotely, in order to continue to improve our teaching and learning back in the live classroom.

At the time of writing, as we approach an uncertain winter with a quarter of schools already surpassing the DfE's thresholds for stricter contingency measures, many are thinking about how they can continue to best adapt remote and hybrid learning for any further challenges

ahead. Here, then, are six key lessons we have learnt from our experiences that might be helpful for others to consider.

1 Live lessons aren't the gold standard

In lockdown one, there was a clamour for live lessons. We could deliver these from the outset, because our digital strategy was in place. For many schools, this wasn't the case, and neither did all pupils have the digital access needed to make it work.

Looking back, this rush to offer live lessons so early on wasn't necessarily the best approach. The thinking was that they would simply replace in-school lessons, without giving consideration to the change in circumstance involved. It was almost a 'keep calm and carry on' approach to teaching, without realising that in fact, everything had changed for learning.

This exacerbated challenges for children sharing devices with siblings or parents (particularly parents who were working from

home), or who could not access it at all due to internet connectivity limitations.

For us, a more impactful approach proved to be a combination of technology for live welfare check-ins, and recorded teaching

activity which could be accessed on demand around any limitations regarding device-sharing. This meant parking the original timetable in place of something more appropriate in response to context.

Since the summer term, to prepare for any future closures, we have been prioritising review and self-review, reflection, evaluation and diagnostic assessment, so we can set work which is then targeted at learning gaps.

2 *There's a digital divide for teachers, too*

The focus on addressing the digital divide for pupils in the last year and a half was important. In GAT, we sourced more than 8,000 laptops for our pupils, thanks to the DfE scheme, as well as corporate partnerships with organisations such as Deloitte, Capital One and Experian.

Logistically, many teachers were homeschooling their own children, had no home office and were teaching classes of 30 pupils from a 14-inch laptop screen. Admittedly, we were late thinking about teachers' digital setup and helping them get second screens, headsets and visualisers. Before that, our staff were sometimes frustrated with insufficient kit. Many of them would also have welcomed the opportunity to teach from an empty classroom if available, rather than their limited space at home, which is something we will keep in mind for any future closures.

3 *Find what really works – and keep it*

Think about how tools which have proved useful during periods of necessity can be utilised to great effect during periods of normalcy. Teachers have been on a fast track when it comes to digitising their curriculum and developing the IT skills required to teach both in the classroom and remotely. Many are now reaping the rewards; seeing savings on workload, and using tech to capture learning and progress. Tools such as One Note are now well established in our classrooms to capture learning and revision notes, whilst Flipgrid and Forms have transformed how we communicate with parents.

We are continuing to look at our blended approach for the future – retaining elements of teaching and learning that worked well remotely (for homework, for example), and keeping face-to-face everything that doesn't translate so effectively. Content and knowledge acquisition work well digitally; feedback and evaluation really require direct human interaction.

4 *Remote inclusion matters*

Virtual education has huge, long-term potential, for reasons that go well beyond COVID-19. Our full remote learning structure will remain live. This means that pupils who are absent for any reason, if well enough, will be able to continue their learning without the disruption that used to occur. Students can remain included in the life of the classroom, even at home or in hospital.

parents to deliver the curriculum, particularly when speech and language therapy (SALT) and other external therapies were not available. Without that full toolbox, children were finding it hard to access learning, and parents and carers found it difficult to sustain homeschooling.

Addressing the social, emotional, physical and mental health needs of these pupils continues to be a priority. As soon as it

“Content and knowledge acquisition work well digitally, but feedback and evaluation really require direct human interaction.”

5 *Use tech for collaboration*

We are a large Trust and previously, geography could sometimes be a barrier to collaboration, limiting opportunities for working with colleagues in different academies across the country. The Teams platform has transformed this, bringing the Trust village truly together as the GAT family. Teachers are connected into subject communities, we have online training and webinars, and staff can access a whole range of collaborative opportunities 24/7. Keep leveraging tech for learning, development, networking and collaboration.

was feasible again, we prioritised Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings with all relevant health professionals and therapists who had not necessarily been able to be involved in these remotely. We are also sourcing additional funding to direct towards occupational therapy and speech and language therapy.

In all of this, we continue to focus on reconnection for our pupils, re-socialising them into a busy school environment and reconnecting them with each other, the adults in their academy, their communities and their learning.

Indeed, the single greatest lesson to be learnt from teaching remotely may be just that: the importance of connection.

6 *Virtual SEND provision is a tough ask*

The hardest provision to deliver remotely was for SEND pupils, particularly those with EHCPs. Many were able to continue accessing provision within their academy, but for those who could not, it was challenging to work with



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tom Campbell is chief education officer at Greenwood Academies Trust

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Why be a teacher?

We might dream that our teaching talents will propel students to fame and fortune, but there's joy to be found in the everyday wins, says **Stephen Walker**

I'm a career changer, coming to teaching after 20 years in the design industry. My motivation was (and still is) opening up the world of opportunity that design offers – the challenge and creative joy.

My own teachers inspired me, and now it's literally my job to inspire a new generation. It doesn't get much better than that.

I'm now in my second year of teaching, however, so you may be wondering whether my idealistic view of the job has changed...

Contextual leaps

I chose to move into teaching via Essex School Direct and TES Institute, following some great advice from the DfE's 'Get in to teaching' team. One of the hardest things to adjust to has been the awful software from decades past, which we have no choice but to use on equally outdated hardware.

I appreciate this a *very* privileged gripe, but whilst working in design I'd become accustomed to having fit-for-purpose tools that allowed people to do their work efficiently. I would imagine that not every school's tech is as antiquated, but that's certainly the case at my London fringe state school.

This could have ended up being a constant source of irritation, but with the support and advice of colleagues, I found ways to take advantage of the situation. I've been encouraged to go back to basics, creating by hand rather than

taking digital shortcuts, and learning to walk before I can run. The advantage of this is that the work is made more inclusive for students; I can ensure that they all have access to sharp pencils, instead of fully charged digital devices.

“One of the hardest things to adjust to has been the awful software from decades past”

Another challenge of the new job has been the constant switching between different contexts. My days of working on something

consistently for three hours or more are over. I now have to jump into different worlds for an hour at a time, on four or five occasions each day. Just when something is starting to take shape or get somewhere exciting, it has to be packed up and saved for next time.

That's not to say there aren't any upsides to this; it can create anticipation for the next lesson, or potentially save me from having to drag out something that's not going so well...

Creative outlet

One huge upside to teaching, however, and one which has been consistent in my experience so far, is the supportive nature of other teachers. We really do care about each other, a lot. Any

time I've ever had a problem, or wondered how I might do something, a colleague has been on hand to help or at least point me in the direction of someone who can.

There's an even bigger benefit hidden away in all this; I've often find myself helping other people in turn, and from a mental health and wellbeing point of view, there are few things better than that.

When I first moved into teaching, my ambitions centred on inspiring a new generation of designers – the idea that one of my pupils might go on to become an award-winning household name. But now I'm in the job, I've found I enjoy the process of using design as a creative outlet.

For some students, the academic world can feel arduous. If my lessons can be an oasis of creativity on their timetables, where their ideas make sense and the journey is enjoyable, then so much the better.

As for my own journey, I'm becoming a more confident teacher by the day – in large part down to the guidance of the tutors during my training, and the support of my school colleagues.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stephen Walker is a design teacher at Davenant Foundation School in Essex; he previously spent 20 years as a designer before training to become a teacher through a Schools Direct training programme with Tes Institute



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“The Minister for Children belongs in the Cabinet”

Helen Clark makes the case for why Ministers overseeing responsibility for the country’s children and young people ought to have a place at the top table

The pandemic burst upon an unsuspecting world just under two years ago, and as Europe braces itself for the inevitable ‘phase four’, its end seems as remote as ever.

Yet we’ve been here before, when the ‘Spanish Flu’ killed an estimated 228,000 in the UK, making 1918 the first year on record in which deaths exceeded births. In 1919, the Ministry of Health Act was set up in direct response to the pandemic. Its role was to, “Take all such steps as may be desirable to secure the preparation, effective carrying out and co-ordination of measures conducive to the health of the people.”

That new ministry later evolved into today’s Department of Health and Social Care, which is currently tackling the challenge of how to best move on from COVID-19. And I would maintain that appointing a Cabinet Minister for children and young people is how today’s adults can help the COVID generation achieve that same goal themselves.

A lowly position

There’s a growing consensus that the government’s ‘build back better’ objectives ought to include a parallel aim of ‘levelling up’ British society, and that the wellbeing of children

should be integral to post-pandemic life.

The former Department for Children, Schools and Families may no longer exist, but successive governments have previously appointed a Minister for Children and Families at a sub-Cabinet level. The post presently sits within the DfE and the current holder is Will Quince. His responsibilities include, but aren’t limited to, child protection (including protection from sexual exploitation

and safeguarding); children’s social care within LAs; family law; the government’s childcare policy; early years policy (including inspection, regulation, literacy and numeracy); and funding and policy regarding free school meals and SEND.

Yet the post itself remains a junior one, and its lowly nature is such that previous holders have never had a slot at national COVID-19 press conferences, taken oral questions in the Commons chamber or forged strong links with relevant agencies. By contrast, a Children’s Minister with Cabinet status would have the authority to oversee and audit policy for its impact on children across all departments, rather than being corralled in one.

A greater good

A Cabinet Minister for Children and Young People with the power of departmental audit would be able to take an integrated overview of the ‘whole child’. A properly holistic strategy would prioritise a fit and healthy childhood, in order to achieve a greater good for the greatest amount of people.

On his appointment as Education Secretary,

Nadhim Zahawi said, “I know what a beacon of opportunity this country can be, and I want all children, young people and adults to have access to a brilliant education, the right qualifications and opportunities to secure good jobs. That’s both vital for them and also our economy, and is more important now than ever before.”

A Cabinet Minister for Children and Young People, working with departments across the entire field of government policy, would vastly enhance and augment the creation of innovative policy on child health and welfare, and help generate far greater understanding of children’s needs throughout the UK.

The Education Secretary has previously acknowledged that “Education is a crucial part of our levelling up agenda.” A new Cabinet Minister would enable every child to make the most of their education, improve their life, and in turn, the new world that they will inherit.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Helen Clark is a policy consultant specialising in children, families and young people and Lead Author for the Children’s Alliance; she is also a former MP and previously a teacher of English in the maintained, independent and FE sectors. For more information, visit childrensalliance.org.uk or follow @ChildrensAllia



FINDING THE FACTS

Anthony David considers the knock-on effects of COVID on Ofsted's workload, and the resulting implications for subject leads...

At the risk of stating the obvious, the last two academic years have been extraordinary.

During this period, Ofsted wisely suspended most of its inspections so that schools could focus on managing their education provision amid unique circumstances. Secondary schools in particular felt the full force of the pandemic and continue to do so now, with one in 10 students testing positive for COVID at the time of writing.

However, there was always going to come a point when inspection had to resume. Whilst there's an argument to be made that restarting inspections during the 2021/22 academic year feels too early, there are pressures on Ofsted to get back into schools – not least the rapid decline in the number of settings inspected by the regulator over the last four academic years:

- 2017/18 – 6,890
- 2018/19 – 5,560
- 2019/20 – 3,250
- 2020/21 – 1,345

Coinciding with this has been a marked increase in Ofsted's workload, most notably in December 2020 with the announcement that Ofsted would resume its inspections of Outstanding schools. That commitment alone has increased its inspection load by around 20%.

Ramping up

Ofsted has, however, attached a couple of caveats. It's pledged to inspect those Outstanding schools by 2026, giving them five years to complete the task, and has been clear that the current round of inspections isn't a 'return to normal', but will gradually ramp up over time.

is the rationale behind the decisions you made, what specific adjustments you made and the impact these subsequently had on learning.

Beyond that, you can expect to be asked how you resourced your subject and how you've been making use of any available 'keep up'

have been delegated to your department. The approach the government has taken is to incrementally increase support, rather than presenting one sole flagship proposal (as was previously suggested by former recovery tsar, Sir Kevan Collins).

Three recovery packages were announced in June 2020, February 2021 and June 2021. These were variously called the 'Catch up

“Expect to be asked how you resourced your subject and how you've been making use of any available 'keep up' funding”

The risk from Ofsted's perspective, though, is that a slow restart will only grow that inspection backlog even further. Given that there are currently 24,360 state schools in England and 2,345 private schools, plus all those colleges, pre-school nurseries, LAs and childcare settings, it's easy to see why Ofsted might be keen to get its inspectors back on the road.

As a department leader, then, what do you and your team need to be preparing yourselves for in terms of inspection?

COVID adjustments

The opening question from any inspection team is likely to be, 'How did you adjust learning during the lockdown periods, and what impact has that had on standards?' What the inspector will want to know

funding (the term 'catch up' now no longer being used by the government).

Another key area of inspection will be remote learning. If your school, or a bubble within your school, has forced a return to remote learning, don't think that there will be no inspection. Paragraph 16 of the updated inspection handbook makes it clear that not only will an inspection continue, but that inspectors may even join remote lessons.

It's also worth being aware of the type of grant your school will have received, and what will



premium' (£650 million), 'Recovery premium' (£302 million) and 'Summer schools funding' (£200 million), and 'Tutoring programme' (split into three amounts of £218 million, £215 million and £579 million), plus 'CPD' (£184 million to support early career teachers and national professional qualifications such as the NPQML).

It's a complicated mix of funding, adding up to a total of £2.3 billion. This might seem like a significant amount, but less than half of it was directed at schools, and overall it falls well short of the £15 billion originally put forward as the minimal funding required to support

a full recovery in education. Regardless of these big numbers, what you'll be asked about is how you've used your percentage and what impact you intend to see from it.

How to prepare

At the very start of the two-day inspection, your leadership team will agree with the Ofsted team the lines of enquiry. You can be certain that the English, maths and science departments will all be inspected, but beyond that, there's no guarantee that all other subject areas will be subject to inspection.

Should you be called upon to meet with the inspectors, carefully consider what material you take with you, and be advised that the meeting will be short.

There won't be the time for the inspectors to wade through folders of information, so what they'll be looking to for is a confident and clear awareness of your subject that you can quickly back up with evidence from learning.

There are plenty of articles out there with advice on evidencing the three I's

WHAT OFSTED WON'T DO

How Ofsted judges learning is based on a triangulation of evidence – books, pupils and teaching – with the result that they won't provide feedback on any one specific teacher or lesson.

This might prove to be frustrating for you personally, but it's been Ofsted practice for several years now. The rationale behind it is that Ofsted seeks to report on quality of learning as a whole, of which teaching is just a part.

Equally, there's now no expectation from Ofsted as

to what planning ought to look like, or how you should assess internally. On the plus side, this relieves some of the personal pressure on you, so stay focused on your evidence and that potential meeting.

It's unfortunate that for many, Ofsted inspections remain a cause for high anxiety. However, if you're sufficiently well prepared, they can present an opportunity for you to really fly, and celebrate the successes of your students – particularly when the last two academic years are taken into account.

– namely 'intent', 'implementation' and 'impact'. However, the first two are arguably desk exercises, which can essentially be summed up as '*What do I intend to cover, and what will it look like?*' It's impact that will be the main priority at the meeting, so this is where you'll need to focus your evidence.

Triangulation of evidence

That said, there will be a second opportunity to meet the inspection team if you're called in to conduct a work scrutiny with the leadership team. Typically, a school's departmental heads and leadership team will be invited to join at least the lead inspector to look at children's recorded learning.

Depending on how large your setting is, this will usually involve scrutinising learning across a faculty or department. It won't examine a random selection of books, but rather form a deeper review across a wider range, with inspectors looking

for progress and appropriate differentiation.

Above all, inspectors will want to see evidence of children knowing more than they did at the start of a particular unit or topic and a clear sequence to their learning. This is part of the triangulation of evidence, where they're looking to see that what you intend to be taught is being delivered sequentially across your department. Pupil voice has, rightly, grown in significance in recent years. How you collect student opinions and thoughts will therefore now form part of your discussion. The bottom line here is that if you appropriately seek your students' views, they will value that process. It should be a genuinely useful process, not a token one, with the feedback you receive leading to actions that students should be able to quantify. One simple way of doing this can be to display in your department a 'You said, we did' board.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Anthony David is an executive headteacher

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Principal,
Havelock Academy

FOCUS ON: THE ARTS

Arts subjects can help students make sense of the wider world, while giving them a valuable way of expressing themselves and building confidence – but the process of teaching said subjects is arguably harder than it used to be...

What should arts education consist of, and how much time should schools devote to it?

THE AGENDA:

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Old masters, NEW CHIEFS

What past masters and notable contemporary artists would all students benefit from being introduced to? Six art teachers share their suggestions with **Hannah Day**...

In art lessons, it can be difficult balancing studies of established artistic traditions and past masters with explorations of modern works and movements. Especially since the first recorded artwork dates all the way back to around 70,000 BC...

So with that in mind, what are the most essential historic and contemporary references that art teachers should be using to inspire their students? That's the question I put to a number of fellow subject specialists across the country, and these were the responses I received...



MARTYN JONES

Head of arts and technology at Astley Community High

School, Northumberland

Historical

Leonardo da Vinci's 'Studies of the Foetus in the Womb' is really useful for exploring hidden narrative. The backstory involves a woman who was heavily pregnant and whose body wasn't claimed for burial, making her corpse available



for vivisection, thus opening up the work to moral conversations beyond its initial scientific use. On top of that, it can also help students develop an understanding of ways in which art can be beautiful, as well as macabre.

Contemporary

I saw Magdalena Abakanowicz's 'Backs' for the first time in the After Auschwitz exhibition at the Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art, and was floored by it – it shows how humanity can be conveyed without any indication of identity.



CLAIRE VILDAY

Head of creative arts and technology at Steyning Grammar

School, West Sussex

Historical

Artemesia Gentileschi stands out as a key artist, and not just because she was a successful woman painter in a period where the art world was dominated by men. She's among the most accomplished of all 17th Century artists.

Contemporary

Grayson Perry is a British art hero! His range of approaches, commentary on society and Grayson's Art Club make him accessible to most of my classes. The passionate way in which he promotes and speaks about art and its importance is key to engaging students.



NICOLA JARVIS

St Clement Danes School at

Chorleywood, Hertfordshire

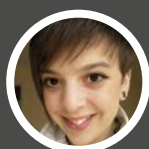
Historical

In his early paintings, Turner had the ability to paint and depict the sheer power and magnificence of nature, which is a key theme of the Sublime. He was a forward-thinking artist working at the beginning of the industrial revolution, and it's Turner's later paintings that particularly make my heart sing. Described by Victorian art critics as 'unfinished' and 'repulsive', they were colour studies of light – translucent, shimmering and ethereal landscapes that became the inspiration for Impressionism.



Contemporary

Anselm Kiefer was born during the closing months of WWII, and has created work that reflects upon Germany's post-war identity and history. Fusing art and literature with painting and sculpture, Kiefer engages with both complex historical events and ancestral epics of life and death. He's fearless with scale, and possesses the ability to manipulate materials so that they resemble semi-sculptural paintings, resulting in work that can help inspire learners to be more adventurous with their own uses of texture and materials.



LINDSEY WILLIAMS

Head of art and photography at Cromwell Community College, Cambridgeshire

Historical

For me, the Baroque era (16C Italy) is a dramatic and expressive reaction to the mannerism created in the Renaissance. Caravaggio in particular has a talent for pictorial narrative, emotional drama and naturalism. Studying directly from life and nature set him

apart, coupled with his dramatic use of lighting. 'Judith Beheading Holofernes' (1602) explores the physicality and sensuality of death – Caravaggio's use of line and placement of objects draws your eyes around the shallow space. The light highlights the complex emotions of the subject, while also creating a sense of the divine, making it a useful work with which to teach students about the importance of composition and narrative.



Contemporary

Abstract expressionism, and the artist CY Twombly in particular, is important for discussions around marks and their value. I love Twombly's work for its sheer dynamism and movement, and the symbolism it encourages viewers to place onto marks, symbols, shapes and colours. Consider 'Leda and the Swan' (1962). At first glance, pupils will often dismiss it as just a bunch of scribbles, but when you bring in the context, they start to pick out elements that help them see the narrative.



EDWARD BARRETT

Teacher of art and photography at City Academy, Bristol

Historical

Signac's work reminds me that bold innovation isn't a recent phenomenon. Just look at his 1890 work, 'Portrait of Félix Fénéon', for a perfect example. Through his use of bold, brash colour, and the exquisite twists and swirls of the meticulously dotted background, Signac's work ushered in a wave of vibrant pointillism and acted as conduit for his own musings on colour theory. Students are always surprised to hear that 'Portrait...' is 130 years old, so it works well as a gateway into studying various pre-20th century art movements.

Contemporary

I wouldn't be an artist without Hannah Höch. One of the pioneers of photomontage, her eye for the absurd paved the way for a new generation of cut and paste artists, and her influence can clearly be seen in works spanning many different media – from painting to mixed media, through photography and film. It's a great introduction for students into the absurd, and a good way of signposting them towards work that touches on politics, gender and identity.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hannah Day is head of visual arts, media and film at Herefordshire and Ludlow Sixth Form College, where she has responsibility for overseeing the department's teaching and strategic development

LUCY BETHEL



Deputy director of expressive arts at Crickhowell High School, Powys

Historical

Post-impressionism had a significant impact on not just painting, but the art world as a whole, and is fundamental in understanding how artists developed more symbolic and

conceptual ways of looking at the world. Bridging the turn of the 20th century, its influence is still seen in many artworks today.

Contemporary

Bedwyr Williams' humour and engaging artworks allow learners to explore identity, equality and community. Through his immersive pieces, such as 'Tyrrau Mawr', we start to fear for the future of our planet's longevity; in 'Walk a Mile in My Shoes' we experience empathy, tolerance and individual difference.

WONDERING HOW TO COVER THE BREADTH OF ART HISTORY WITHIN YOUR LESSONS? HERE ARE SOME IDEAS...

Weekly treasure hunt

Each week, give your students a keyword – maybe a specific style, colour, media, theme or object. For homework, they then have to find a single artwork that matches it. By recording their weekly discoveries in a Word doc, noting the artist, title, date and image, they can start to build their own art timeline. Print them off at the end of term or year, and you'll have amassed a sizeable collection of alternative art histories.

Quickfire round

Begin a lesson by presenting students with an artwork, providing key details such as the artist, its title, date of creation, media and brief notes on its background. Then pose students a question or two for them to discuss and provide feedback on. You can get quieter students involved by encouraging everyone to write their responses on whiteboards and display them all simultaneously.

Dictionary corner

Highlight a key subject term, or collection of related terms to the whole class. In small groups, students are then tasked with writing reflective comments about an artwork assigned to their group that makes use of this key term. Each group should be provided with a different artwork, so that they can see how the same term can be used to critique different media at various points throughout history.



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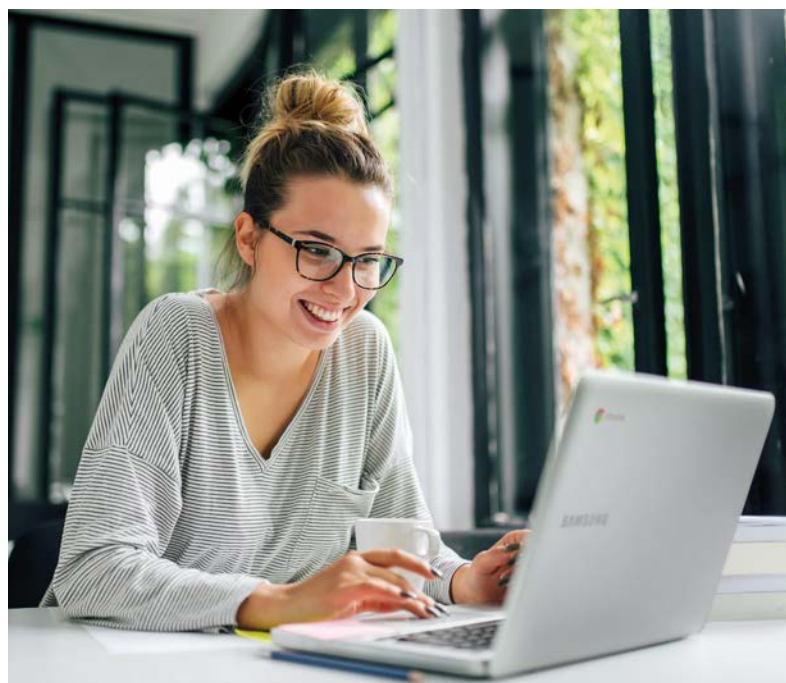
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WILL THE SHOW GO ON?

Alex Weller reveals the valuable lessons she's learnt from putting on school shows during the pandemic

We've all heard the clichés of *'It'll be alright on the night'* and *'The show must go on.'* After the endless disruptions of these past two years rocked by COVID, and with the Omicron variant emerging as I write these words, I've found myself asking – in the middle of rehearsals for three different plays for three different year groups – *'Will it?'* and even, *'Must it?'*

School shows are part and parcel of being a drama teacher, but opting to stage three plays for three different year groups to be performed in the same month may have been a somewhat questionable decision...

As one of the largest schools in our county, we entered this academic year cautiously, still wearing masks in corridors and maintaining year group 'bubbles', which meant no mixed year group shows. My current Y10s and Y12s have missed multiple opportunities to perform in front of a live audience, so I wanted them to experience this early on in their GCSE and A Level courses.

I was also keen to promote my subject to KS3 drama students, and prove to a cohort of Y9s

(who haven't seen a full academic year since Y6!) that drama is a fantastic option to choose at GCSE.

The process, not the product

After two years of not always being able to teach in a studio, deliver practical drama or organise theatre trips, I was desperate to put on a school show. This term, however, I've had to adjust my expectations in order to do so.

Pre-COVID, my expectations for the school show were always incredibly high. All students had to be off-script, as I wouldn't allow a prompt. All tickets had to have been sold, and students were required to attend weekly rehearsals.

Fast forward to now, and

I'm looking at reduced ticket availability, a very socially distanced audience and students who have had to miss a significant number of rehearsals, resulting in under-rehearsed pieces and leaving me feeling like these performances were a mistake.

Then I walk down the corridor, hearing different cohorts of children practising, playing, directing each other and laughing whilst doing so, and it clicks for me that the *outcome isn't important*. If a child forgets their line, or if the lights change on the wrong cue – does it really matter? And who will really care?

Just one night

Even in a normal year, students would have spent one night performing

this show, preceded by countless hours spent rehearsing with peers, learning lines at home and being part of the process. And that's what they're going to remember.

As news reports of the Omicron variant continue to unfold, I'm once again plagued with the overarching fear that something will

prevent these shows from going ahead, but even if they do, I'm going to practice what I preach; remembering that drama is about more than acting, and that school shows are about more than just that one night on stage.

Drama develops invaluable, transferable life skills. Even if our students don't get to experience the buzz of standing backstage before the lights go up, they'll still have beheld the buzz of rehearsals. They might not realise it yet, but their involvement in the production will have helped build their confidence and ability to communicate with others after so long apart. It will also have been an opportunity to experience something sorely missing from their past two years at school – the chance to be part of something fun with their peers.

If any fellow drama teachers reading this can relate to having been in mid-rehearsal for a show that may well have 'gone wrong', just remember that it doesn't matter if it does. We're not here to put on professional quality shows; we're here to provide a space for children to be a part of something bigger than academic learning, express themselves and have fun.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Alex Weller is head of drama at Plume Academy in Maldon, Essex, and tweets as @ITeachDrama2



Turning a CORNER

Caroline Aldous-Goodge weighs up whether creative subjects might be making a comeback after years of neglect...

As an art teacher, I've witnessed first-hand the impact that government changes have had on creative subjects.

When I first trained as an art teacher in 2004, I easily found 25 different art teacher job vacancies I could have applied for. I thought carefully about the school I wanted to start teaching in, and was excited to apply to work at a Good art specialist school. I loved teaching art, and was able to work and learn my trade from other equally enthusiastic art practitioners.

That school is now part of an academy chain. It no longer boasts of its creative arts in the way it once did when I joined. Instead, as noted on its website, it looks to 'academically stretch' students.

What was it that ushered in this new educational landscape? What role have government reforms played in marginalising not just art, but other subjects such as PE, D&T, RE and drama? And could the latest Ofsted framework potentially succeed in repairing some of the damage?

Lost value

If you've scanned the education jobs listings in recent years – and believe me, I have – you'll have noticed how much the demand for posts varies according to subject. If you

teach maths, you could get a job at virtually any state secondary school in the country. On the other hand, if you teach PE, art, drama or music, your options seem to be getting narrower and narrower. And if you ever want to move up the ladder to head of department, good luck! Departments have gradually become faculties that incorporate multiple disciplines, to the point that there are now a number of schools that barely teach art, drama and music at all.

"I've watched departments stripped to the bone, teachers leaving and not being replaced, and teaching hours for arts subjects minimised"

I'd argue that the government decisions most responsible for this state of affairs were the introduction of the English Baccalaureate in 2010 and Progress 8 accountability measures in 2016. It was following these years of decline that we saw the publication of a new Ofsted framework in May 2019, and the emergence of hope

that Amanda Spielman was going to restore some of the value lost from arts subjects.

Reading through the document now (see bit.ly/ts-eif), some of the optimism it prompted at the time seems to be justified. Schools were told they needed to offer a 'balanced curriculum' – surely that meant a broader range of subjects, and less emphasis on maths and English?

Cultural capital

More encouragingly, it set out Ofsted's intention to group together the framework's key quality of education criteria under the three 'Ts': 'Intent', 'Implementation' and 'Impact'. It also asks school leaders to look at the curriculum as a whole, and at how it was being delivered in schools.

The framework's seeming intent is that leaders take on, or construct a curriculum that's ambitious and designed to give all learners – particularly those who are disadvantaged and have SEND or high needs – the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

This notion of 'cultural capital' is one that's been tied to social mobility, and seen as something that can be acquired through participation in arts-based subjects such as art, drama, dance, D&T and music. Could this have

given school leaders the incentive they needed to run arts courses and provide a broader curriculum, with less intensive focus on EBacc subjects?

Perhaps, though the fact remains that the introduction and subsequent prioritising of the EBacc has already refashioned the education landscape as we know it, into one that's brought about the marginalisation of not just art, but also PE, D&T, RE and drama.

It seems safe to say at this stage that between them, the EBacc and Progress 8 measures have had a hugely adverse impact on the very subjects that could help with giving students that important 'cultural capital' that Ofsted's looking for. It's almost as if these measures intended to improve pupil outcomes are directly contradicting each other...

It's worth revisiting a 2015 report produced by the Warwick Commission, the purpose of which was to create a national plan for enabling culture and creativity to further enrich Britain.

It found that British fashion, architecture, publishing, craft and design, film and TV, software and games development, museums, theatre, dance, popular and classical music and visual arts between them contributed almost £77bn in added value to the UK

economy. It also found that cultural and creative activities were overwhelmingly accessed by wealthiest in society.

Mental freedom

Statistically speaking, the introduction of the EBacc and the government's focus on core subjects via the progress 8 measures has clearly had a huge impact.

Multiple studies and the DfE's own statistics point to a dramatic decline in teaching hours across a range of subjects, with the biggest drop being seen

in D&T. In a significant number of schools it's a subject that now effectively doesn't exist, which isn't exactly good news for the designers of the future.

As a teacher, I've watched departments being stripped down to the bone, teachers leaving and not being replaced and teaching hours for arts subjects minimised as far as possible. I remember once speaking to an art teacher at a school where students had only one year in KS3 in which they got to take part in any art lessons at all.

Changes like these work to remove creativity and mental freedom from state schools. Secondary students need to use all areas of their brain as far as they can, and should get to experience a rich variety of learning throughout their time at school.

I've seen students glow with pride after producing an artwork that they're proud of, and seen kids' confidence levels grow in leaps and bounds from singing in the school choir or performing in a play. These great opportunities for development and building important character traits are

being whittled down, leaving schools with just the bare minimum in terms of creative outlets.

When Ofsted's latest framework was initially released, I, like many other creative teachers, was initially hopeful. Perhaps at last, those frequently expressed concerns from teachers, students and parents over arts education were going to be heard – but sorry to say, I ended up being somewhat disappointed.

We have a regulator that now calls for a 'well-constructed, well-taught curriculum', in which there 'need be no conflict between teaching a broad, rich curriculum and achieving success in examinations and tests'.

Should we take this to mean that arts subjects have meaning again? That tests and results mean nothing? That children's experience of school and education should be a more positive and enriching one? Only time will tell...



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Caroline Aldous-Goodge is an art and design teacher, head of year and education researcher

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This time, it's personal

Héloïse Ardley considers the extent to which students' needs are increasingly best met by personalised learning

The way we learn is changing. Whilst there are still inequalities in relation to access, technology is otherwise steadily paving the way for a far more democratised education system, in which students from different backgrounds can make use of educational content in new, ever more creative ways.

For all the many challenges presented by COVID-19, the pandemic has helped kickstart a movement away from traditional education systems and opened up opportunities for some much-needed change. The question the education sector is therefore grappling with is, post-pandemic, should we try to resume 'business as usual' or seize the chance to introduce a more personalised approach to meeting modern learners' requirements?

Why, when and how

For many of today's students, a standardised model of teaching seems no longer fit for purpose. Young people are increasingly redefining why, when and how they want to learn. At the same time, schools now have the ability to teach students remotely, without requiring them to be sat at a classroom desk.

TikTok may have recently generated some negative headlines where school staff are concerned, but it remains a great global platform for people seeking out so-called 'microlearning' content. During the pandemic, TikTok launched a \$50 million 'Creative Learning Fund,' which offered grants to



'educators, professional experts, and nonprofits who have the power to offer us creative learning.'

Personalised learning involves giving students what they need, in a style that can deliver the outcomes they want. In the years to come, this may entail moving away from mandated curriculums and standardised measurements towards a much more student-focused approach.

Under this scenario, we may one day see a computer programme delivering a customised learning experience that's precisely tailored to an individual student's strengths, needs, skills and interests.

A careful blend

The experience of lockdown paved the way for such disruption, but there are steps to overcome first. Schools were given considerable impetus to

overhaul their approach to learning technology in the wake of COVID, but were also left having to resolve a number of challenges.

Personalised learning is predicated on prioritising individuals, taking into account the attitudes, habits, abilities and overall aims of specific students. After almost two years marked by regular disruptions and on-again, off-again physical classes, are students actually able to confidently articulate their own learning preferences and desires?

It's important to remember, too, that a personalised learning model entails a carefully crafted blend of digital and teacher-led education. The digital-only lessons we saw during the pandemic are far from the end goal, and have proved challenging for students' mental wellbeing, amid frequent reports of loneliness and a lack of inspiration.

Personalised learning isn't synonymous with learning alone.

Systems thinking

For those colleges and ready to take their first steps towards personalisation, the starting point must be to look at systems thinking and systemic design. Just as every student is different, so too is every school.

What models are already in place at a given school, and to what extent do these need to evolve? What pre-existing contexts and constraints have to be accommodated?

Finally, we need to account for measurement. Are your students being equipped with problem solving skills and the ability to adapt to change? These are vital qualities, but difficult to quantify via technological means.

At LovedBy, we can facilitate transitioning to a personalised learning model within your school or organisation. We look to introduce an external perspective, helping educators design and introduce personalised models that are feasible, sustainable and which deliver genuine benefit. We want to support the implementation of technology in a meaningful way that ultimately augments the student experience for the better.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Héloïse Ardley is change strategy lead at LovedBy Design; for more information, visit lovedby.com or follow @LovedBy_Design

Listening is slow, **READING IS FAST**

Colin Foster argues that Macfarlane's law may hold the key to crafting school communication systems that work better and save everyone time...

When in school, do you prefer to engage in a face-to-face chat or fire off an email? Do you happily attend oral 'briefings', or simply wish that the persons concerned would just write down whatever it is they want to say and send it to you, so you can skim through it much more quickly at a more convenient time?

Teachers and other busy school professionals often seem to be very dissatisfied with the modes of communication used within their schools. They tend to be fast-paced environments, what with all the bells ringing and people rushing around, so it's essential that we're as smart as we can be about how we manage our internal communications.

"People speak around 150 words per minute, but read at over 200 words per minute"

Tensions and frustrations

It turns out that many of the tensions and frustrations we experience with communication systems make a lot more sense when viewed from the perspective of Macfarlane's law. Like many grand-sounding laws,

Macfarlane's law seems obvious once you've heard it. It not only holds the key to understanding the issues that prevent communities from communicating, but can also provide a useful way of thinking about truly effective communication structures – how to design them, and how they can be made to work for distinct groups of people, such as the very busy professionals found in schools.

Macfarlane's law sounds simple when stated. As the journalist and man himself, David Macfarlane, put it: *"You can talk faster than you can type, but you can read faster than you can listen."* (see 'Macfarlane's law visualised')

Now, we're not holding this to be an absolute truth for every person who's ever lived, of course – people with dyslexia, for instance,

will take a very different view – but it generally holds true for most of us, most of the time. And it can produce tension in situations where people need to communicate across power differentials, such as happens all the time in schools.

When communicating a message to someone, it will save the sender time if

spoken, but save the recipient time if written. This may be one reason why, for example, a headteacher might prefer to convene a briefing where they can turn up relatively unprepared and speak their thoughts to the rest of the staff, who have no choice but to be there. Should any staff wish to respond to the points made, however, there's a good chance that they may be expected to send an email.

Writing versus talking

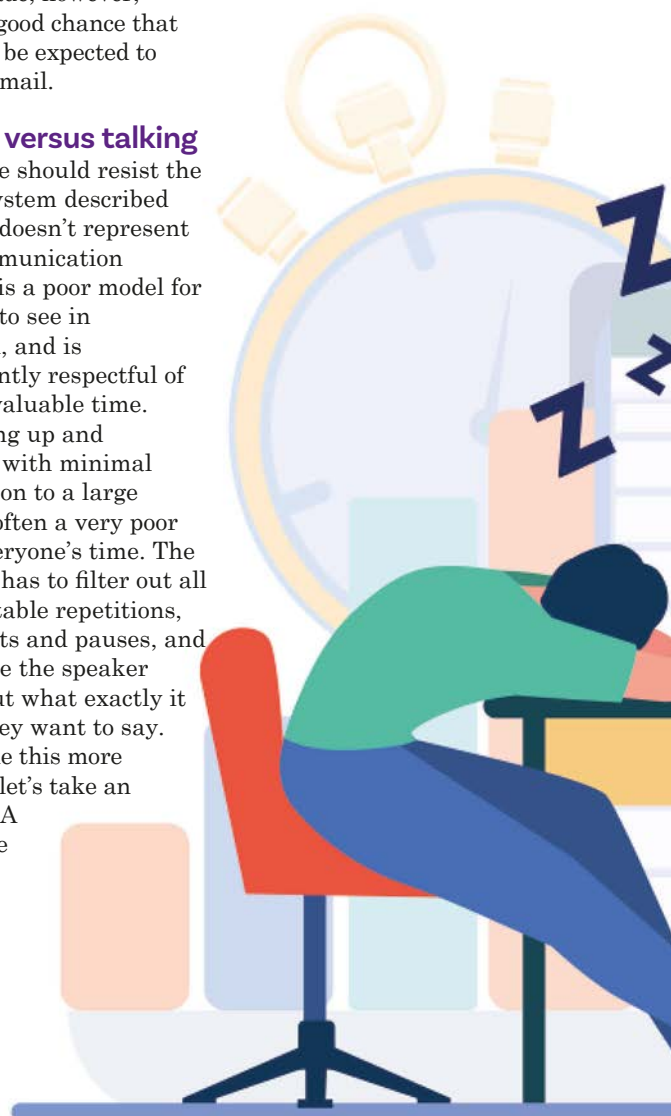
I think we should resist the kind of system described above. It doesn't represent good communication practice, is a poor model for students to see in operation, and is insufficiently respectful of people's valuable time.

Standing up and speaking with minimal preparation to a large group is often a very poor use of everyone's time. The audience has to filter out all the inevitable repetitions, false starts and pauses, and wait while the speaker figures out what exactly it is that they want to say.

To make this more concrete, let's take an example. A 20-minute briefing may contain content which

could, with perhaps 30 minutes of preparation, be summarised succinctly in an email that staff recipients can each read and digest inside of five minutes.

This would allow people to hone in on the parts most relevant to them, while also providing a helpful reference source for those who unavoidably missed



the briefing, or might wish to revisit the details.

The calculus is instructive here. The trade-off amounts to an extra 10 minutes (30 minutes minus 20 minutes) of the high-status person's time, versus a saving of 15 minutes of everyone else's time (i.e. 15 minutes multiplied by the number of people present). Even with a relatively modest staff of, say, 50, the traditional briefing model only makes sense if you perceive the headteacher's time as being 26 times more valuable than the average staff member's time.

Fit for purpose?

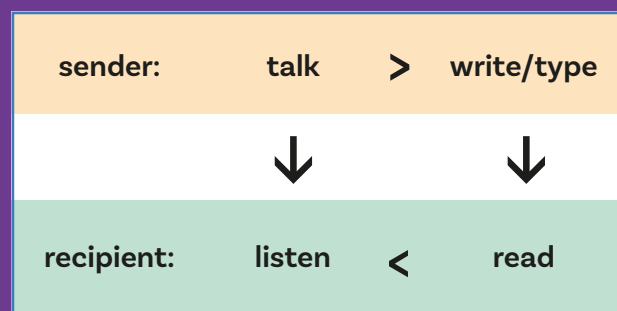
Of course, as everyone knows, the problem with relying on email is that people don't always read it. Yet this is often for a good reason – because the emails in question aren't worth reading! Before you've even finished reading yesterday's email, there may well be a

new one in your inbox today that corrects and updates it.

Another reason is that email messages can sometimes be hastily thrown together, complete with missing attachments, partial details or even gross errors. And then there's the obvious fact that email recipients often won't read emails because they simply don't have the time – time which they otherwise *would* have, if they weren't constantly having to rush from briefing to briefing.

This isn't just an issue when it comes to whole-staff briefings. Similar considerations may come into play with respect to departmental meetings, tutor teams, and so on. If oral briefings are still your school's default mode of message delivery, it's worth asking why that is and how fit for purpose they are when viewed from the perspective of Macfarlane's law.

MACFARLANE'S LAW VISUALISED



The place for meetings

I'm not talking here about genuine meetings – occasions where people share ideas, ask questions and discuss things face to face. Depending on the topic, meetings such as these can be essential. After all, no one wants to work in an organisation where everyone relentlessly pings emails to each other, even when personal and social encounters would be far preferable. Where we need to discuss sensitive issues or bounce ideas around,

face-to-face encounters can't be bettered.

But where one-way oral briefings are concerned, I think it often makes sense to replace them with carefully constructed emails, in a way that better respects

everyone's time.

Macfarlane's law embodies an important truth about communication in the modern age. The facts are stark. People may speak around 150 words per minute, but read at over 200 words per minute. The fact that reading speed generally exceeds speaking speed is obvious whenever you watch a subtitled film. If the text is well-constructed, important information can be communicated far faster and with less ambiguity through text.

Teachers are probably among the most literate people in society, with well-honed skills at obtaining information efficiently from text, so why not make the most of that? Teachers talk for a living, and communication is at the heart of what we do. So let's do it better, and save each other valuable time that can be better spent doing other things – or even on just taking a well-earned breather.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Colin Foster (@colinfoster77) is a Reader in Mathematics Education at the Mathematics Education Centre at Loughborough University. He has written many books and articles for mathematics teachers. foster77.co.uk



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WHEN PERFECTIONISM BECOMES A PROBLEM

Rob Lightfoot explains how a 'perfectionism literacy' intervention can benefit everyone...

Do you have a student who struggles to call a piece of work 'finished'? Who would rather hand in nothing at all than something they're not 100% happy with?

I'm sure every secondary teacher knows many students like this. Some may have even once been that student themselves. Most of us can relate to these traits in at least one sphere of our lives, whether it's the feeling that we're letting our team down when we don't perform to our perceived best, or the sleepless nights when we consider ourselves to have fallen off the Parent-of-the-Year pedestal we've set our sights on.

Yet while most of us will have admit to being 'a bit of a perfectionist' at some point, perfectionistic traits are in fact widely misunderstood – and an area of growing concern for our young people.

Over the past few years, the National Association for Able Children in Education has partnered with a team of researchers headed by Professor Andrew P. Hill at York St John University, focusing on perfectionistic characteristics in highly able learners. This has developed our understanding of the potentially harmful impact of high levels of perfectionistic characteristics, their increasing prevalence, and the capacity of schools to make effective interventions.

What's the impact?

When students are perfectionistic, they place unrealistic expectations on themselves and others, or report experiencing pressure

from others to be perfect (Hewitt & Flett, 1991). These expectations might pertain to academic achievement, appearance, sporting achievements, or indeed any area of life they consider important.

Being perfectionistic is common among students, and research suggests that it's increasing, with young people more perfectionistic than ever before (Curran & Hill, 2019). The onset of the pandemic will certainly have done nothing to lessen these increasing levels of perfectionistic characteristics in our adolescents.

The consequences of perfectionism on performance are complex. On one hand, there's evidence to show that students who are perfectionistic can outperform their peers academically. On the other hand, there's also evidence demonstrating that students who are perfectionistic may find setbacks particularly difficult to deal with, causing their motivation and performance to suffer in the longer term.

The consequences of perfectionism for mental health and wellbeing are

much clearer. Students who are perfectionistic are generally likely to be more worried and anxious, and more vulnerable to a range of mental health and wellbeing difficulties.

'Perfectionism literacy'

One way of supporting these students is to increase their 'perfectionism literacy' – that is, the ability to recognise the features and origins of perfectionism, and the differences between perfectionism and trying one's best. Tied in with this is giving students knowledge of the help available, and encouraging their willingness to seek it out.

Our aforementioned collaboration with York St John University sought to evaluate the effectiveness of a single classroom-based lesson specifically designed to teach these skills.

Following the lesson, the students reported having more knowledge of perfectionism and could recognise the importance of seeking support if needed. The lesson was found to provide an easily

implemented, preventive intervention for schools to help reduce the negative effects of perfectionism, from which we would made the following recommendations:

1. A perfectionism literacy lesson can be a valuable addition to activities based around safeguarding, mental health and wellbeing.
2. Teachers should consider the degree to which current classroom practice might be inadvertently encouraging perfectionistic thinking in their students. Unrealistic expectations, frequent or excessive criticism, anxiousness over mistakes, and public use of rewards and sanctions can all reinforce perfectionism.
3. Schools ought to ensure that teachers can recognise the development of difficulties associated with perfectionism. Increasing perfectionism literacy among teachers may therefore be a useful way of supporting student wellbeing.

The resources developed for the perfectionism literacy intervention are freely available to all schools, along with guidance on how to use them and lesson materials for staff and students. For more details, visit nace.co.uk/perfectionism



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rob Lightfoot is CEO of NACE; for more information, visit nace.co.uk or follow @naceuk

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5 REASONS TO TRY... A winter residential

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1 BUILD RESILIENCE

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and events, since we're all about learning outcomes. Young people leave Conway Centres having learnt something new, so by visiting during the winter months, you'll be reaping the benefits for the remainder of the academic year.

2 BACK TO SCHOOL, BACK TO LEARNING

After a long, six-week summer holiday, young people typically return to school with a rejuvenated enthusiasm, ready to learn. A winter residential presents an opportunity for your school to refocus young people's minds on their targets, to ensure that they're aiming high and know what to expect over the coming year. Conway Centres can support this by creating bespoke courses to suit the secondary curriculum and your specific goals, helping students return to their classrooms feeling motivated, and with an increased appetite for learning.

3 REAP THE BENEFITS FOR LONGER

Schools tend to fight for summer dates, but Conway Centres' winter residencies offer numerous benefits for young people. Many schools will plan residential trips for the end of the year as a reward for their learners, but when young people visit Conway Centres, they take away more than just fantastic memories. Education lies at the heart of all our activities, programmes

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4 RECONNECT RELATIONSHIPS

Taking young people on a winter residential at the start of the academic year will help them build and re-establish their relationships after the summer break. In tougher weather conditions, they'll have to work hard as a team in activities such as raft building and 'Mega Stand-Up Paddleboard'. The relationships young people build at a winter residential will enable them to bond with peers and establish friendships they can then take back with them to school. Better to do this at the start of the academic year than at the end, by which point it may be too late...

5 LOWER COSTS, MORE BENEFITS

In winter months, low prices = more benefits! If you're looking for a cost-effective school residential which will test and challenge your students, a Conway Centres visit is ideal. You'll pay less, but your young people will have the opportunity to take away so much more!

KEY POINTS

We only employ the highest calibre of qualified staff, with a deep understanding of education and commitment to improving outcomes for young people

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From real-life outdoor adventure to immersive cultural experiences, our ready-made programmes pack loads into each day, guaranteeing a residential young people won't forget

Our unique exam support courses can improve grades, develop independent thinking and boost confidence, whilst reducing stress and supporting mental wellbeing

What's New?

Our pick of the latest solutions and innovations for secondary education

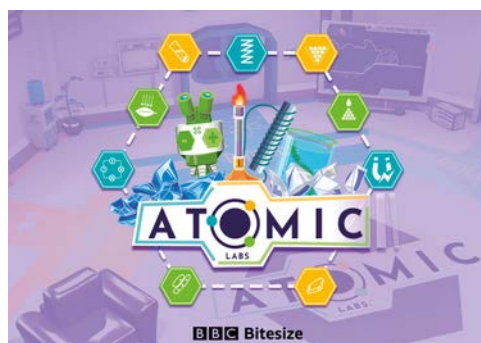
1

A bigger bite

KS3 teachers – we've got you! BBC Bitesize continues to support teachers and students with new and updated KS3 guides in English, maths, biology, chemistry, physics, history and geography.

All-new courses include video, quizzes and infographics for greater interactivity and engagement, supporting progress from Y7 through to Y9 with step-by-step and structured content. The content is perfect for homework and classroom tests, not just end of year revision.

Also recently launched are two new interactive games for history (History Detectives) and science (Atomic Labs, pictured), with new games for geography and maths coming soon. For more information, bbc.co.uk/bitesize and click on the 'Secondary' button.



2

Help when it's needed

The InDependent Diabetes Trust offers support and information to people with diabetes, their families and health professionals on the issues that are important to them. Our helpline can provide a friendly and understanding ear when the going gets tough.

IDDT supplies Information Packs to parents and teachers, helping them understand the needs of children with diabetes in school, and provides much-needed aid to children with diabetes in developing countries. Diabetes can cause serious long-term complications, and with a cure still elusive, IDDT also funds essential research. As a registered charity IDDT relies entirely on voluntary donations.

For more information or to join IDDT, contact martin@iddtinternational.org or visit iddtinternational.org

Be prepared

Are you a maths lead thinking of how best to prepare your team for the term ahead? Do you need cost-effective training that's easy to digest and transfer into the classroom? Then White Rose Maths Secondary Webinars are the perfect package for you!

The Webinars provide key learning points from each block within our schemes, along with top tips for using representations and supporting all students to secure real progress. Led by a WRM Specialist, you will receive ideas that you can take immediately into the classroom. You will also be sent the PowerPoint slides after each session, so that you can share your learnings with the rest of your department.

For more information, head to whiterosemaths.com/professional-development/training-events

5



3

Hardware hygiene

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The Diplomat™ UV-C Station can be used as a standalone solution or be fitted to LapSafe®'s Self-Service Device Loan Lockers. See it in action at the Bett Show 2022 on stand SB51 and try it for yourself. See lapsafe.com for more details.



4

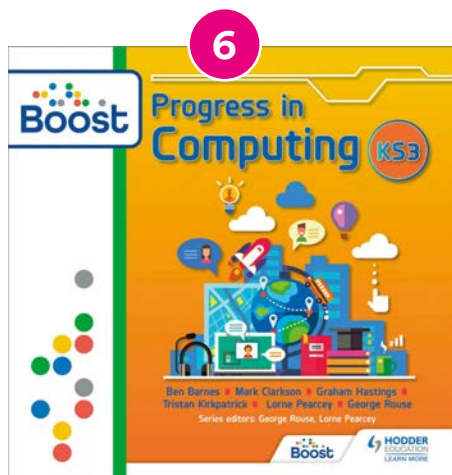
Learning in the wild

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Digital know-how

Hodder Education has listened to how you teach computing at KS3, and designed a fantastic new toolkit of digital and printed resources around you that contains everything you'll need to confidently deliver the National Curriculum in computing and develop your students' ICT and digital media skills.

Progress in Computing: Key Stage 3 combines ready-to-use lesson plans, presentations, videos and animations, multimedia assets, interactive resources, quizzes and assessments with an expert-written Student Book.

Want to find out why it won the 'Technology and STEM' category in this year's Teach Secondary Awards? Visit hoddereducation.co.uk/PiC to register for a free trial of Progress in Computing: Key Stage 3: Boost and request an inspection copy of the Student Book. For more details, contact computing@hoddereducation.co.uk

Money matters

Bring money matters to life in your classroom by taking part in these fantastic FREE programmes from Young Money! Kickstart 2022 with the Young Money Challenge, running from 31st January to 1st April. This fun and creative challenge will help your students discover the connection between money and inclusion. You can then continue this valuable learning by delivering an exciting and inspirational My Money Week for your whole school from 13th to 17th June!

Both programmes include quality marked, ready-to-teach resources for KS3 to KS5, and are designed to help make learning about money meaningful and memorable! Find out more by visiting young-enterprise.org.uk



Language-rich communities

Bedrock Vocabulary is a comprehensive online vocabulary programme for KS2 to KS4 students. Through a knowledge-rich curriculum of fiction and non-fiction texts, children are immersed in aspirational Tier 2 vocabulary in a way that engages and closes the word gap.

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Teachers receive question-level analysis, enabling them to make targeted interventions and plan future lessons.

CENTURY saves hours of time on marking and resource creation, allowing teachers to spend more time working with students one-to-one, making every minute of learning count.

Learn more at century.tech/secondary



Reaching out

Why should schools network and what benefits can they gain from it? Leaders in education can network in the way businesses often do, to develop best practice or save costs. The ability to engage with peers not within your local community is an added advantage of being part of a nationally recognised network. The process can also contribute to a school's CPD activities.

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BEAT THE JANUARY BLUES

With a little planning and organisation, it's possible to lift colleagues' spirits and keep morale high during the January gloom, says **Nicola Brooks...**

If you're feeling low at this time of year, then you're not alone. Many people experience such feelings immediately after Christmas, and to probably no one's surprise, January is the month that sees the most sick days.

So what we do to change that? Read on for four ways of making 2022 a brilliant year for your school, right from the start...

1 Extend the goodwill

Teachers like to help, and Christmas make us feel good, as we dish out presents and mince pies while making sure everyone has a great time. Why not extend the season of

goodwill by selecting a school charity for 2022 and setting a fundraising target for staff to work towards? Add in some key fundraising days and events throughout the year – a non-uniform day here, a bake sale there – and you'll instantly have some things to look forward to.

Charity begins at home, though, so consider introducing a 'Random acts of kindness' week, during which everyone performs some impromptu act aimed at helping others, such as carrying someone's heavy bag. You could also start a 'You've Been Mugged' kindness ripple, where colleagues discover a mug

full of goodies on their desk and a note asking them to pass it forward.

2 Give the gift of time

Teachers often feel that there aren't enough hours in the day. One thing that could help would be going 'meeting-free' for a week, or turning what would otherwise be an indoor meeting into an outside walk close to, or just within the school grounds.

You could similarly try holding a 'No email Friday', where only essential emails (e.g. those relating to safeguarding and other urgent issues) are allowed to be sent. This will ease workloads by reducing the volume of emails sent before the weekend and encourage colleagues to visit each other when passing on messages.

Alternatively, set aside time for professional development by holding 'Walkabout Wednesdays', where individuals are covered for a learning walk ahead of a teachmeet or speedmeet (like speed dating, but with the exchange of teaching strategies) at the end of the month to share best practice.

3 Work (out) together

A third of all New Year's resolutions are related to weight loss and fitness, but these can be hard to stick to in staffrooms awash with cakes. How about making a collaborative pledge to keep only fresh fruit and water to hand in the staffroom and introducing dedicated wellbeing days, where colleagues are encouraged to

get active after school? You could take this further by challenging a nearby school to a five-a-side football or netball match, or even signing up for a half-marathon and following the training plan together as a group.

4 Stay social

Talking to others about our feelings is often an essential strategy for keeping well, but if someone's previously experienced poor mental health, it may be hard for them to open up. It's easy for teachers to become isolated, spending break times with the photocopier or at their desks.

Monthly social events can give colleagues something to look forward to – maybe a team-building activity, quiz night or treasure hunt. You could even try hosting a 'swap shop' event, where attendees are invited to exchange unwanted Christmas presents for something else.

Whether it's reducing email demands or improving staff relations, attending to the wellbeing needs of teaching staff benefits everyone in a school – and could even make those New Year's Resolutions easier to stick to...



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nicola Brooks is a professional development co-ordinator for Reach South Academy Trust, and a founding fellow and network lead for the Chartered College of Teaching

TALKING POINT

What feelgood strategies do you use to navigate the grim days of January? Let us know by tweeting us at **@teachsecondary** (DMs open)



Ready for a mental health RECOVERY?

Recent events have taken their toll on adults and children in education alike – but there are steps that can be taken to get things back on track, insists **Amy Sayer**...

On 10 May 2021, the Department for Education announced £9.5m in funding so that between September 2021 and March 2022, around a third of schools and colleges in England would be able to access a grant to pay for senior mental health lead training. These courses, organised by various national providers, are designed to help develop the knowledge and skills needed to implement an effective whole school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing – commitment that's very much needed after the psychological impact of the pandemic, which continues to affect schools in various ways.

A whole school approach is important, since tokenistic 'wellbeing' activities in isolation are never going to support genuine and sustainable staff mental health provision at an institutional level. Considering the relentless nature of in-school changes, safety concerns and the juggling of various caring responsibilities, it's little wonder that Education Support's 2021 Teacher Wellbeing Index found that 57% of secondary school teachers have considered leaving the profession within the past two years, as a direct result of pressures on their mental health.

A continuing crisis

The turbulence in education caused by the pandemic –

which is yet to abate nearly 20 months on – has been draining and challenging for teachers. Safety rules have been relaxed in other areas of society, with things expected to be 'business as usual' at a point where school staff still haven't had time to properly process the traumatic nature of what they experienced during the early stages of the crisis. New initiatives, and the looming prospect of Ofsted inspections, demand the headspace teachers had pre-pandemic, but many staff simply don't have the mental capacity to cope, when they're still investing so much emotional energy in trying to keep their classrooms and students as safe as possible.

The mental health impact of the pandemic on students is similarly becoming much more apparent. Many who seemed to be coping at the time are now experiencing anxiety due to the traumatic nature of what they've been through. Resources

remain stretched, with schools often the first port of call for parents seeking mental health advice for their child.

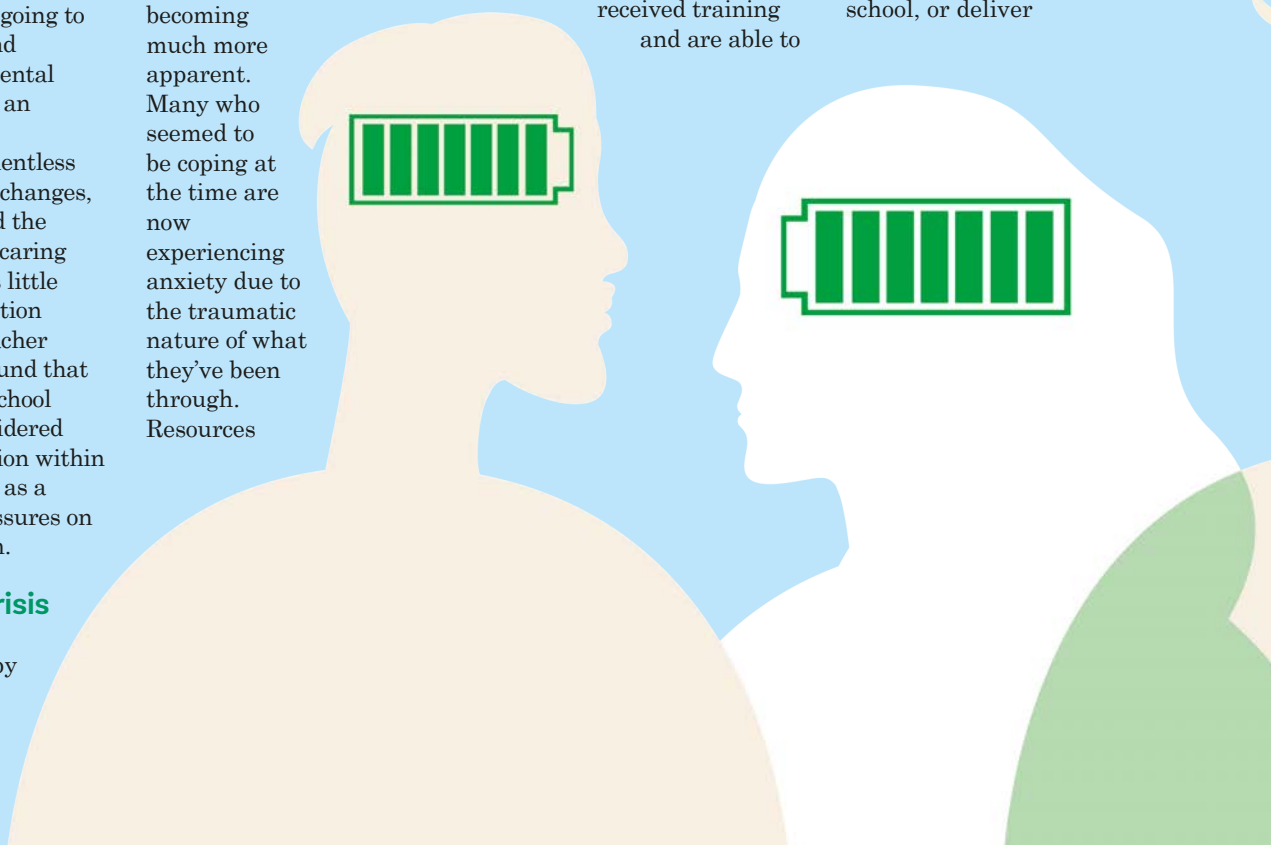
So how can schools seek to address these emerging mental health needs in an effective, sustainable and appropriate way?

Students first

Students need to have a clear curriculum which teaches them the facts about supporting their own mental health; where they can go for support if they're struggling or worried about a friend who may be struggling; and an understanding of how to talk about mental health in a way free from stigma. This needs to be developed within a school's wider curriculum model, and taught by teachers who have received training and are able to

safeguard themselves, given that they may be addressing potentially distressing or triggering topics, such as self-harm. This curriculum offer should draw on research and resources from children's mental health organisations, such as Young Minds or the Anna Freud National Centre, and be supported by schools' wider pastoral systems. Form tutors could deliver sessions or assemblies focused on creating a wider awareness of mental health within school communities.

Students themselves may wish to become part of a mental health ambassador scheme in their school, and receive additional training in how to support their peers and signpost them to resources when needed. They could make display boards for use around the school, or deliver



assemblies that provide guidance on mental health and normalise talking about it.

Staff support

Training staff to understand how they can look after their own mental health is essential for schools at the moment. Many teachers who haven't previously struggled with their mental health or needed any support are now suffering from anxiety and depression for the first time as a result of the pandemic. They need to know that it's okay to ask for help.

There must be a clear understanding in schools of how to carry out conversations around mental health so that staff can talk about it with line managers if needed. The Teacher Wellbeing Index indicates that a staggering 57% of education staff aren't confident in disclosing unmanageable stress or mental health issues to their employer. This has changed if we want teachers to stay in the profession following a period of mental ill health.

There also needs to be an understanding of what

“57% of education staff aren't confident in disclosing unmanageable stress or mental health issues to their employer”

'reasonable adjustments' are, and how these can support colleagues with their recovery during times when they're struggling with mental health. The Equality Act 2010 requires workplaces to put support in place for staff with mental health difficulties, just as they would in the case of staff with conditions that affect them physically. Properly informing staff that they're entitled to receive help can go some way to reducing feelings of shame around asking for it.

Staff could also be entitled to take a 'wellbeing week,' where they opt in to having a 'wellbeing buddy' to look after for five days. This might entail expressing small gestures of kindness, such as delivering them cups of tea whilst they're on duty, or making or buying a small gift to make them smile. There should be no after-school meetings during this week, and a real effort should be made in helping staff avoid emailing each other in favour of holding

in-person conversations instead. There could be a range of wellbeing activities held after school that staff could choose to run or attend, such as art therapy sessions or sporting events.

Arranging regular opportunities for staff to be recognised for their efforts can really support wellbeing. Nominating a member of staff to collate weekly 'shout-outs' that are sent out anonymously can make for a lovely end to the week. Sending 'thank you' cards to staff with sincere messages can help them to feel seen and appreciated amongst the busyness of school life.

Involve the parents

It could be useful to host an information evening, where parents can come into school and find out more about in-school and external support services they could use to support their child's mental health. It will be reassuring for

them to meet the members of staff in school who are responsible for supporting their child if they are struggling, and to talk through their concerns so that they feel less alone and more supported.

Setting aside a clear and informative area for this information on the school website will help familiarise parents with where to go and what support they can access if and when they need it. This space could also include links to national and local specialist support services.

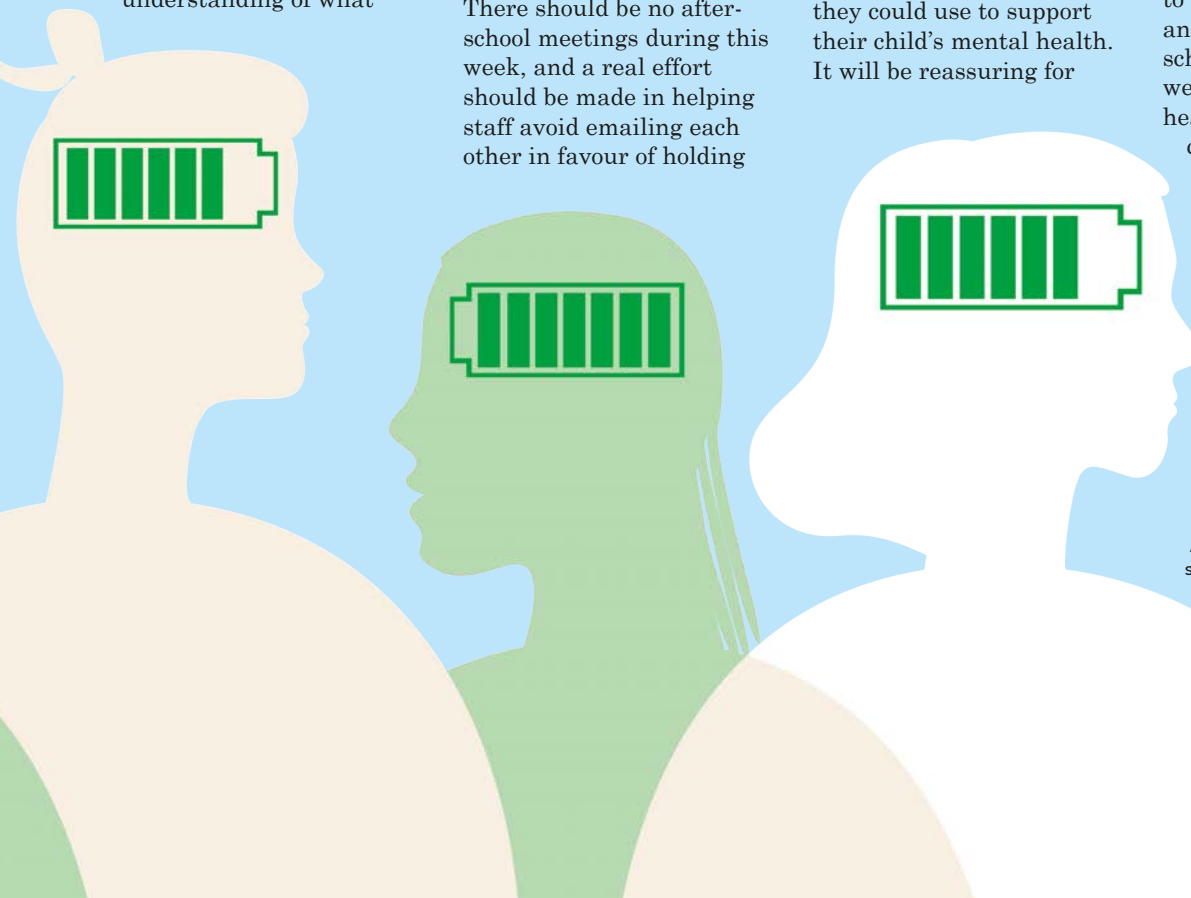
Your school's pastoral support team should include members of staff who have received specific training on mental health and their details should be made available to parents, so that they can ensure their child knows where they can go whenever they need support in school.

As the psychological impact of the pandemic in schools becomes ever more prominent, the mental health training being funded by the government will be critical in ensuring schools make mental health a key priority in their future planning. This needs to be sustainable, authentic and involve the whole school community, so that we can destigmatise mental health conversations, help colleagues start to process the events of the pandemic and assist everyone in accessing the right support.



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Amy Sayer is a head of religious studies, mental health first aider and writer



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Short on supplies?

Ollie Parsons considers the options schools have for finding the staff they'll need to stay fully operational during what's sure to be a long, cold winter...

While the end of lockdown has signalled a return to normal life for most, the spectre of COVID-19 has continued to haunt school halls and hamper attempts to get education back on track. A high infection rate among children has caused continuous disruptions to staffing, with teachers frequently having to self-isolate, leaving schools understaffed and senior leadership overstretched.

This problem has been further exacerbated by high rates of teacher burnout and pressure from Ofsted, with many speculating (at the time of writing) that the Christmas holiday period will be followed by a surge in infections among children upon their return to school in January. The challenge for schools to stay open and fully operational will be an ongoing battle for months to come. So what solutions are available to schools, and how have they been managing so far?

"Scotland's authority-led system has been much more successful in dealing with sudden supply needs"

Contingent staffing

The problem of contingent staffing is nothing new. Over the last three decades, schools in England and Wales have relied more and more upon agencies to plug the gaps, but the advent of the pandemic has shaken up the sector in ways no one expected. Flaws in the system have been highlighted, and there are growing pressures to find an alternative.

The last academic year saw significant increases on agency spend as schools and MATs sought to plug the gaps in their staff, but at the same time there seems to have been a shift in the education labour market, with more and more teachers applying for, and securing permanent contracts, leaving a severely depleted supply pool for the current academic year.

With competition as fierce as ever, and agencies all effectively drawing from the same supply pool, schools are now struggling to

stay fully staffed and within budget.

In contrast, schools in Scotland have reported a different state of affairs. Our data indicates that around 20% of all reported absences since the start of their term in August have been COVID-related. However, their LA-led system has been much more robust and successful in dealing with sudden supply needs than its agency counterpart.

Agencies don't exist in Scotland. Instead, each LA has its own dedicated list of pre-approved supply staff, each administered by an online booking platform. Rather than using third parties to engage with teachers, each school has access to a digital system that matches their supply jobs against the supply staff in the pool, and puts them in direct contact with these teachers.

No margins

Using this platform has enabled schools to more readily respond to sudden staffing shortages. One of the largest secondary schools in Glasgow was able to face 81 days of COVID-related staff absence out of a total of 267 days of absence since the start of term, without having to pay a single agency fee!

A mix of dedicated supply

pools and technology has given schools in Scotland the ability to circumvent altogether the need for agencies – and with that, time that would otherwise have been spent negotiating rates or worrying about compliance. Teachers are paid in line with their experience, with no agency margin added on top.

Scotland's system gives schools complete oversight of their expenditure, while allowing them to manage their budgets accordingly and ensure that they're always on top of both staffing and price. Across the education sector, more and more schools and LAs in England are enquiring about technology-based recruitment platforms. As things stand, the Scottish system is a working, viable alternative.

The switch to digital classrooms prompted by the pandemic showed that schools can adapt to new systems and ways of working. This has now led to a greater demand for tech-based solutions in other areas, including recruitment and contingent staffing. The agency model is long overdue a review; now is the time to embrace change and technology.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ollie Parsons is an education recruitment specialist at Teacher Booker (teacherbooker.com), which offers a range of services to help schools and teachers, providing impartial, confidential advice and practical solutions

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Collective action

We hear from **Forestry England** how a discussion of trees can be the springboard for some powerful lessons on climate change

Amid the headlines generated by COP26, we here at Forestry England began hearing from a number of teachers that their classes were feeling anxious regarding their future.

The challenge is to enable students to understand and appreciate the urgency of the climate emergency, and then channel that interest and energy into practical explorations and curriculum-linked activities.

Your first step should be to cut through the noise and put into perspective the global dimension of climate in relation to its local impact. Tackling climate conversations from a personal perspective can make ideas and concepts much easier to grasp.

Begin by exploring what we actually mean by 'climate change'. Discuss those headlines your students will have seen regarding rising sea levels, deforestation and melting ice caps. Next, talk about changes that are happening much closer to home. Perhaps an incident of flooding, concerns over air quality, reported declines in biodiversity – choose whichever topic is most relevant to your local area.

Why trees?

Trees play a vital role in tackling the climate emergency, by absorbing carbon dioxide and storing it as carbon in the form of wood. They can also play an important role in reducing flooding and keeping our air clean.

You can introduce your students to the role well-

managed forests play in tackling the climate emergency by watching our video, 'We are for the climate' (see bit.ly/ts111-climate1).

Whether your school is located near a forest or not, trees can still be used to spark useful discussion.

The following cross-curricular activities, for example, can be completed sequentially over a number of weeks. Remember that it's important to reassure your students that actions they take now can have an important positive impact in future.

1 Take the students outside and ask them to hug a tree in the school grounds or your local area – it's a fun way to introduce the topic. Discuss the tree's natural and seasonal processes. How does it function? Where does it store carbon? What role does it play in absorbing CO₂ and releasing O₂?

2 Lead a discussion on how planting more trees can help ease local issues. Topics that could be covered here include sustainable timber, wildlife habitats and the wellbeing benefits of spending time in green spaces.

3 Ask the students to calculate how much carbon a specific tree can

store, using our carbon capture activity sheet (see bit.ly/ts111-climate2). Then ask students to research how much carbon they use themselves each day or week – our carbon footprint analysis table can provide a good starting point (see bit.ly/ts111-climate3). How many trees would you need to plant to offset this carbon, both individually and for the whole class?

4 Discuss whether there's enough land to keep planting more trees to sequester our carbon needs. What else does your class think we could do collectively to help reduce CO₂ emissions? Split students into smaller groups and ask them to walk around the school, carrying out an audit (available via bit.ly/ts111-climate4) of small changes that can be made to help reduce carbon emissions. Focus on areas such as energy, water, food, sustainable materials, waste, transport and biodiversity.

5 Review the groups' audits during an open discussion, encouraging students to consider which suggestions are most cost effective versus those that will have the biggest impact. Don't forget to consider negative outcomes and mitigation tactics.

6 Use the information your students have gathered to draft a class pledge to tackle your school's carbon footprint. Make sure it's achievable and measurable, so that your class can see what difference they're able to make.

Reassure your students that as individuals, we can have valuable impact – but that collectively, we can achieve so much more.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Forestry England's climate change resource hub contains a range of free, curriculum-linked KS3 resources, including videos, case studies and student investigations; find out more at forestryengland.uk or follow @ForestryEngland




A hub website hosting FREE learning resources from arts, cultural and heritage organisations


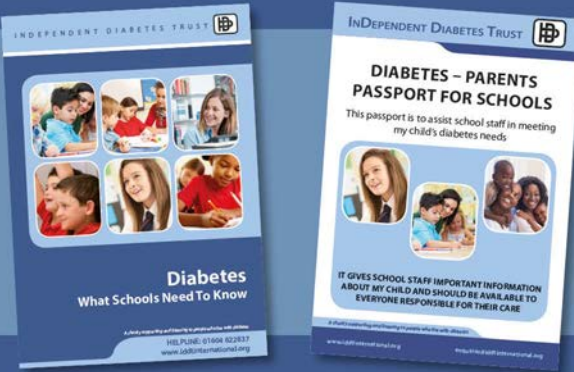
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CLASSROOM VOICES

“Learning Japanese helps our students stand out”

Dafydd Francis describes how learning Japanese can help drive student engagement with modern languages – and why getting started isn’t as hard as you might think...

Reading the government’s curriculum research review series on languages this past summer, I was saddened to see Japanese among those languages that have declined at GCSE. I am, however, delighted to report that here at Ninestiles, An Academy (part of the Summit Learning Trust), we’re bucking the trend.

We initially offered Japanese as an extracurricular activity a number of years ago, on behalf of one student with SEND who was particularly interested in the Japanese language and culture. At Ninestiles we’re committed to encouraging students to pursue their passions, so were happy to facilitate a Japanese Club in order to allow him to develop this interest.

We soon saw other students asking to join, some of whom it turned out had already been learning Japanese in their own time – their love of Manga and anime motivating and spurring them on to understand the language.

CULTURAL INSIGHTS

In 2019 the school applied for a grant from the Japan Foundation to help to set up a Beginners’ Japanese Club, which we proceeded to run weekly during term time throughout the academic year. The sessions were led by a specialist Japanese tutor, and saw students begin learning the basics of the Japanese language.

Those attending were also given insights into wider Japanese culture, geography and history, so that in addition to practising writing hiragana and calligraphy, they were able to, for example, make rice balls in our food tech rooms.

After a small cohort expressed wanting to continue their studies at GCSE level we were again kindly

given financial support from the Japan Foundation, and now have eight students in Y10 who are due to sit their Japanese exams at the end of this academic year – most of whom are also studying GCSE French or Spanish.

Due to the overwhelmingly positive feedback from students since introducing Japanese at Ninestiles, we now run the club for Y8 – and it’s so oversubscribed that there’s currently a waiting list for places!

CAREER ASSET

I’d strongly recommend that other MFL teachers investigate the work of the Japan Foundation for themselves, since they’ve been such a help to us. Its primary function is to promote international cultural exchange between Japan and the rest of the world, and provide financial support for a range of international cultural exchange programmes.

The Foundation runs school taster sessions via its Japanese Taster for Schools (JTS) Programme, allowing teachers and students to discover first-hand what it’s like to learn the language

in practice, at which volunteers will introduce the fundamentals of Japanese language, such as counting and greetings, in a fun and interactive manner.

I believe that learning Japanese helps our students stand out, since it’s still somewhat unusual for young people in the UK to study non-European languages. Learning Japanese could also be a great career asset, given that Japan remains one of the world’s largest economies, and is home to numerous highly successful companies, such as Toyota, Honda, Sony, Toshiba and Panasonic.

IKIMASHO!

Japanese may be predominantly spoken in Japan, but is increasingly being heard across the globe, with nearly 36 million people learning it worldwide. That so many people are choosing to learn Japanese should help to allay the fears of those who might like to try it themselves, but assume doing so will be too difficult.

It can certainly seem very different at first to other European languages one might have previously studied, but in some ways it can actually be simpler. There are no genders for nouns, for instance, and word order within the language can be flexible.

I hope our success in encouraging students to get excited about learning Japanese will inspire other schools to look into setting up similar clubs of their own – and that the next curriculum research review series on languages will see the number of students taking Japanese at GCSE on the up...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dafydd Francis is the head of MFL at Ninestiles, An Academy in Birmingham, and a modern languages tutor at the University of Birmingham; follow him at @dfrancismfl



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LEARNING LAB

IN THIS ISSUE

- + How outdoor learning can rejuvenate your students
- + The 'Count down from 3' technique
- + Do you want to make a game?
- + A brief guide to praising students
- + Training opportunities from the National Tutoring Programme
- + A STEM contest that's literally out of this world
- + Tips for creating video lessons
- + Better student retrieval in 5 steps

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What we know about

THE TEENAGE BRAIN

The ancient Greeks knew a thing or two about teenagers – back then, some considered adulthood to begin at the age of 30.

We now know that the human brain doesn't become fully developed until we're in our mid to late 20s, but in the UK, the picture continues to be complicated by the law largely deeming our 18-year-olds to be adults.

Our pre-frontal cortex – responsible for focusing our attention, assessing risk and outcomes, making decisions and regulating behaviour – takes a long time to build up and produce the sophisticated 'team leader' behaviours that it's capable of.

New discoveries are being made all the time about the extraordinarily dramatic changes that take place during our teenage years, often accompanied by a greater understanding of how we can best support learning in this crucial period. We're aware of how past experiences can have a huge impact on the brain's development, but in adolescence, the

brain has more plasticity than at any other stage of development outside of our first three years of life.

This opens up rich opportunities for forms of mental repair and rewiring to take place, which is where the adults working with our young people can potentially step up. Our understanding to date of what's happening in teenagers' brains, combined with what their teachers know about them as individuals, allows us to help teenagers navigate the challenges of self-regulation and risk-taking they can expect to face, thus enabling them to build resilience.

This understanding of adolescent brain development can further support effective work with both teenagers and their parents/carers, and potentially prompt us to consider what it is a 'trainee adult' really needs in order to develop a healthy brain structure. All the evidence so far points to this as being a vital contributor to today's teens being able to thrive in later life.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mary Taylor is head of programmes at Family Links and a former teacher, working closely with schools to develop emotionally healthy learning communities. If you'd like to know more, including information about Family Links' 'Understanding Teenagers' course, visit familylinks.org.uk/at-school; readers can sample the Family Links approach via a free online learning module – Mental and Emotional Health in Schools: Effective Strategies and Support – that's suitable for all school staff. See familylinks.org.uk/online-course-schools for more details

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING



Battling listlessness and lack of engagement in class? A dose of outdoor education might be just the thing, suggests Pat Milston...

Young people have been through a lot these past couple of years. We all have. The morale, confidence and social skills of many students have taken a serious knock, following months of spasmodic isolation. Whilst classrooms have come to provide a safe learning space for many, for others, these same environments can also become areas of confinement, eliciting feelings of fear and disengagement.

I've always been an advocate for outdoor learning. As a facilitator of experiential learning and promoter of inclusion, equality and enrichment, I believe the simultaneous simplicity and magnitude of the great outdoors can provide an endlessly engaging learning environment for everyone.

From woodland areas to coasts and mountainous terrain, the outdoors can open up a range of

opportunities for children of all backgrounds to experience new challenges. With expert outdoor facilitators on hand, bespoke activities centred on the natural environment can help individuals develop skills and aspects of their character they might never otherwise discover in a traditional classroom setting.

Inside the classroom, certain personalities will have dominated for years, with children often rising or falling according to roles they've attained or had thrust upon them. For some, COVID's disruption to school routines may have actually given them a little breathing space, away from the peer pressure and restraints of their lives at school.

Having typically had few chances to develop their social or emotional life skills in the time since, however, it might be even harder now for those children to deal with such adversity at school.

Facilitating a positive experiential learning for all involves spotting the reticent, the shy and the

exhibitionists early, then swiftly tweaking the activity accordingly.

When you change the environment, add fresh air and present carefully crafted mental and physical challenges that encourage self-expression, creativity and problem solving, it's astonishing how quickly you see positive changes.

I'd like to see improvements in how the quality and impact of outdoor provision is measured and reported, yet we mustn't fall into the trap of measuring everything we can while disregarding the value of personal interactions.

These enriching, 'levelling up' experiences can make a world of difference to groups and individuals and should be available to all. With raised aspirations, improved mental and physical health and steadily developing social, emotional and physical life skills, children stand a much better chance of achieving whichever level they desire – while making a positive contribution to the world in the process.

TRY THIS

COUNT DOWN FROM 3

EXERCISE BETTER CLASS CONTROL WITH THESE TIPS FROM ROBIN LAUNDER...

The 'count down from 3' technique is a good way of getting a class' attention following paired or group activities.

Count down from 3 slowly, clearly and with some 'oomph'. Don't draw out the vowel sounds (so not 'threeee' but 'thre/') – this clipped approach makes the numbers stand out and communicates to the students that they need to quickly finish whatever it is they're doing. Leave one or two seconds between numbers to let them do just that. When you get to 1, the whole class should be giving you their silent attention.

If you get to 1 and a student is still talking, look at the student with a neutral expression until the talking stops. Hold that look for a further moment or two, then crisply begin the next part of the lesson.

If the student talks over you again, initiate a private intervention by talking to them beyond the earshot of their peers. Be clear about your expectation for silence – 'We are silent when the teacher is talking.' If the student talks over you again, impose a consequence.

The count down technique is respectful, efficient and when done right, highly effective. It allows for crisp transitions between activities, so that your time isn't wasted and the lesson's momentum isn't lost.

Robin Launder is a behaviour management consultant and speaker; find more tips in his weekly Better Behaviour online course – see behaviourbuddy.co.uk for more details

PAT MILSTON IS THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF ACTIVE LEARNING CENTRES; FOLLOW HIM AT @MILSTON

19,595

The number of university applicants achieving A Level grades equivalent to three A*s in 2021; a near quadrupling of the 5,655 who could say the same in 2019

Source:UCAS

Any budding game developers among your cohort may be interested to know that entries are currently open for BAFTA's 12th annual Young Game Designers competition. 10- to 18-year-olds are invited to submit original game ideas for the competition's YGD Game Concept Award, and in-progress game projects to a YGD Game Making Award, with entries for both split into 10-14 and 15-18 age categories.

The competition will also include a Mentor Award, recognising the efforts of a leader or teacher to engage students with the practice of game development.

Entries close on **Monday 14th March 2022**, with a shortlist of 40 finalists due to be announced the following June. Finalists will receive a bundle of game-related prizes from partnering companies, an exclusive games design masterclasses, a digital mentorship (for ages 13 and up), careers advice from industry experts and the opportunity to showcase their game to industry representatives at BAFTA's new London Picadilly base. The overall winners will also receive bespoke advice and support in developing their game ideas.

Schools can download a series of free accompanying YGD resources, including an app-based Idea Generator, worksheets and videos.

For more details, visit
ygd.bafta.org

YOUR GUIDE TO ...

PRAISE

Positivity is a vital component for any happy, healthy classroom. Implementing approaches specifically relating to positivity can be complicated, though. If not handled well, our classroom environment and lesson flow may be adversely affected. It might seem counter-intuitive, but less praise can often lead to more positivity.

Precision

Real positivity comes from precise praise. Why? Simply, students need to know what they're doing well so that they (and others) can do it again. By being precise with the praise we give, we can encourage learners to effectively implement the positive factors they have exhibited again. A short phrase highlighting what is 'good' may be all that's needed to add serious weight to your praise.

Private

Public praise has its place, but private individual praise remains an underutilised classroom tool. One-to-one time with students plays an important role, because much like private

individual correction, quieter comments can be better. Decentralising your praise can be incredibly powerful, lending a more personable feeling to students' learning.

Routines

Knowing when praise is coming makes learning more effective. We encourage learners into routines for various other behaviours, and praise should be no different. Learners respond well to the familiarity of praise, and it can be used as a tool to build significant positivity in the classroom.

Personal

The personalisation of praise can further contribute to building that positivity. Has a student improved since the last lesson? What were they struggling with last week? How have they progressed? Showing students that you know them is a hugely valuable tool. A positive classroom is a happy classroom. Students thrive when the environment is right, so have a think about how you're using praise and try to mix it up.



ADAM RICHES IS A SENIOR LEADER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING;
FOLLOW HIM AT @TEACHMRRICHES

96%

of school leaders report that the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted their plans to address pupils' learning gaps over the 2021/22 autumn term

Source: Survey by The Key of 1,135 SLT members across England

Need to know

Non-QTS staff employed by schools are now able to receive tuition training as part of the National Tutoring Programme. The course will equip said staff with School-Led Tutoring skills, be delivered online through the Education Development Trust and must be completed within one month of registering.

Under the School-Led Tutoring model, schools can opt to use their own staff members or a local tutoring provider of their choice to deliver additional tutoring sessions aimed at improving pupils' academic outcomes.

According to the NTP's programme director, Karen Guthrie, "Evidence shows that high-quality tutoring has boosted attainment by up to five months, making it absolutely vital for education recovery. Schools are already telling us how much their pupils are benefiting from face-to-face tutoring, and we are very keen that more schools come on board to utilise this opportunity."

Yalinie Vigneswaran, programme director at the Education Development Trust, added, "We have designed an evidence-based, virtual, flexible training programme with prospective School-Led Tutors and their pupils at its heart. Tutors will receive recognition by the Chartered College of Teaching and gain access to further resources, as they continue to navigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their pupils' outcomes."

Find out more by visiting nationaleducationaltutoring.org.uk



WHAT WE'VE DONE MISSION SPACE LAB

An international science challenge for schools, in which teams of young people design and program a scientific experiment to run on a custom 'Astro Pi' Raspberry Pi 4 computer kit located aboard the International Space Station.

I first heard about Mission Space Lab when two of my pupils told me about it at the end of a lesson. After finding the details online, they asked me to be their supervisor.

They went on to learn so much in a short amount of time. Our winning team analysed whether night and day would affect the Earth's magnetic field using the Astro Pi's magnetometer, GPS data and photos of Earth. They also developed their own way of mapping the field using Google Maps to support their analysis, while making their findings more accessible.

The project requires an investment of time, but the payoff is really worthwhile. It's a challenge that can be tackled in different ways – to focus on individual skills, such as programming or data analysis, you would want to take a guided approach that could be completed in lessons, or even used as engaging exam skills practice, since they'll be working with real ISS data.

I wanted to challenge the pupils, as I knew that they were capable of being stretched, so I supported them in finding their own way through the

open-ended project. I knew that getting the research question right was key, so that they'd have meaningful data to analyse at the end. I also predicted the stumbling blocks for each pupil and assigned them tasks they could complete within the challenge framework.

It's a real process and journey for them. They have to overcome challenges, motivate themselves and make decisions together. There was much fun and joy, and many shared experiences – they were coming to me before, during and after lunch to show me what they'd discovered. They also learned time management skills, using Google Calendar to co-ordinate their planning meetings so that they could make progress even through lockdown. They completely rose to the challenge.

Mission Space Lab will reopen for entries in September 2022. Mission Zero, for early coders, is live until 18 March 2022. Students can conduct a simple sensor experiment onboard the ISS, and send a message and digital illustration to the astronauts on board. It's a free online activity, takes between 20 to 60 minutes, and every eligible entry is guaranteed to run in space. To find out how to incorporate it into your lesson plans and take part, visit astro-pi.org



ALEXANDRA ANNETT IS A PHYSICS TEACHER AND HEAD OF ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT AT THE LEYS SCHOOL, CAMBRIDGE



Video resource banks

During last year's winter lockdown, online video content was everywhere. 12 months on, and video lessons are now routinely used to support teaching at school, set homework and help learners revise. Having produced video lessons myself since 2011, here are a few shortcuts I've picked up...

Format for video

It's tempting to create exciting, fast-moving videos festooned with pictures and graphics, but these distract from the learning. Instead, replicate what you do in class. 'Writing along' in your video is a great way

of adopting a pace similar to classroom teaching and helps students keep up. Think about what you want students to have written in their books by the end, and share your own notes at the start of the lesson so they understand what you're expecting from them.

Keep it short

Concise videos are best. If your lesson is 20 minutes long, break it up into four five-minute chunks. This is more flexible and makes editing easier if you've made a mistake. And if elements of the curriculum should happen to change, you only need

to remove the chunk that's no longer relevant.

Don't mention ages

Avoid using on-screen graphics and titles with age or Key Stage details; just describe the topic the lesson covers. Keep the age labelling to file tags that students won't see.

Creating video lessons is helpful for students, but also valuable CPD. You may cringe seeing yourself on-screen, but watching yourself teach can provide useful insights into your current practice.

COLIN HEGARTY IS DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AT SPARX LEARNING (SPARX.CO.UK)

TRENDING

Our pick of the recent resources and launches teachers might find useful...

DIGGING DEEP

The Council for British Archaeology has introduced a school-centred version of its long-running Young Archaeologists' Club. Open to students at KS1 to KS4, 'YAC After-School' will see participants learn about archaeology and human history through various hands-on activities and craft projects. yac-uk.org/after-school-yac

MONEY TALKS

The Money and Pensions Service has published financial education guidance documents for primary and secondary schools. The documents set out the importance of financial education and how schools can implement it, alongside advice on how to evaluate their provision and links to supporting resources. bit.ly/ts111-LL1

TEACHER WALKTHROUGH

A 5-STEP GUIDE TO RETRIEVAL

ADVICE FOR TEACHERS, BY TEACHERS, AS VISUALISED BY ZEPH BENNETT...

1



Demonstrate the practical task – in this case a 'lay up shot' – **elaborating** on the key teaching points

2



Unpack and present the **key words** students will need to understand and carry out the practical task

3



Students attempt the practical task following **visual** and **verbal guidance** from the teacher (steps 1 and 2)

4



During the practice, the teacher **reinforces** the **key words** linked to **practical technique** through Q&A

5



In the following lesson, students are asked to **retrieve** key words whilst performing the task

ZEPH BENNETT IS A PE TEACHER AND SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT LEADER WITH 25 YEARS' TEACHING EXPERIENCE; YOU CAN FIND MORE OF HIS EDUCATIONAL ILLUSTRATIONS BY FOLLOWING @PEGEEKSCORNER

Got a great learning idea? Email editor@teachsecondary.com or tweet us at [@teachsecondary](https://twitter.com/teachsecondary)

PSHE

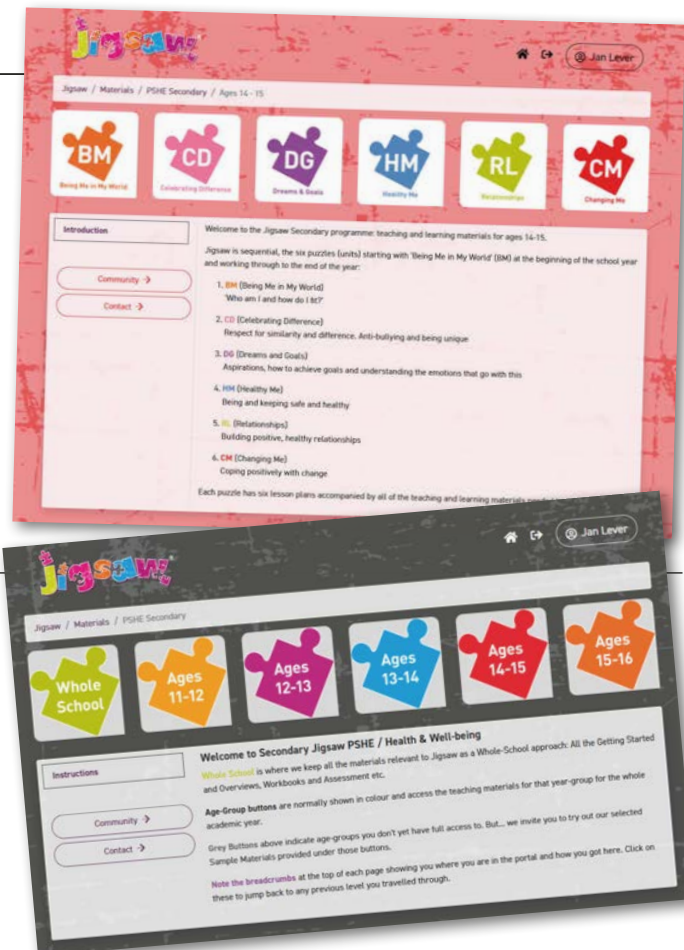
Jigsaw 11-16

A comprehensive package of teaching resources and other materials aimed at strengthening schools' PSHE and RSE provision

AT A GLANCE

- An impressive whole-school approach to PSHE
- Uses mindfulness to empower students' learning
- Includes lesson plans with accompanying presentations and teaching/learning activities
- The Jigsaw REST (Resilience and Engagement Scale and Toolkit) is a bonus and is included with the Jigsaw PSHE

REVIEW BY JOHN DABELL



Now more than ever, children need great PSHE and their teachers need great resources – not least because of the RSE content schools are now required to teach.

Quality PSHE provision requires a whole school approach, however; one that involves all areas of the school working together and committing to a unified vision, and it's here that Jigsaw's KS3/4 scheme of learning can help.

Accessed via an online portal, Jigsaw combines materials for teaching PSHE, emotional literacy, social and employability skills and RSE. Its approach is underpinned by mindfulness practice, whereby students are shown how to observe their own thoughts and feelings, regulate them more effectively and become more conscious of their learning, behaviour and lives beyond school.

The Jigsaw portal itself is brilliantly designed, beginning with a simple homepage that points you in one of two directions – 'Materials' and 'Community'. The Materials section contains a plethora of whole school resources, including an introductory overview, summative assessment workbooks and slides, leaflets for parents, journal templates for evidencing learning and a resilience toolkit.

Each age group is assigned its own colour-coded section, which contains all the materials needed across the whole academic year. These comprise six sequential units, which will see year groups working on the same theme or puzzle at the same time,

taught via lessons that employ mindfulness practice scripts and audio files. The materials in question are well written and provide considerable insight, depth and clarity.

The portal's Community Area, on the other hand, offers comprehensive support for teachers wanting to get the most out of Jigsaw, including documentation for keeping up with the latest developments in PSHE, together with various articles, mapping documents, audit tools and policy templates. There's also a distinct resources section, where teachers can easily review the

mindfulness scripts and audio files used in the lesson, plus a COVID-19 Recovery Package with lesson plans specifically designed to support children in the

aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as associated training videos.

Jigsaw PSHE has the potential to save teachers many hours of planning time that can instead be productively spent on honing their delivery and addressing students' needs.

PSHE skills need to be developed in a structured way across all year groups, and this is what Jigsaw succeeds in doing. It sets out clearly how students learn best, and how to teach them the skills they'll need to develop better social, emotional and mental health.

With Jigsaw in place and being used effectively, a school can make sure that its teachers are themselves fully prepared and ably supported in planning and teaching a subject that's only going to become more important with each passing year.

“Jigsaw PSHE will save teachers hours of planning time”

**teach
SECONDARY**

VERDICT

- ✓ Open-ended and flexible resources to support young people's mental health
- ✓ Helps foster a more healthy and happy environment for pupils and staff alike
- ✓ Develops personal awareness and promotes pupil voice
- ✓ Empowers students to better understand and respect themselves, and develop self-efficacy and agency
- ✓ Equips students with the skills needed to build character and become responsible citizens

PICK UP IF...

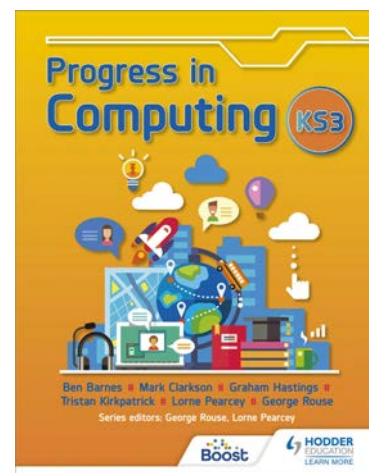
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AT A GLANCE

- A solid base course for KS3 learners
- Designed by industry experts and teachers
- Holistic, clear coverage of KS3 National Curriculum
- Packed full of exemplars and models
- Integratable with Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams

REVIEW BY ADAM RICHES



With computing becoming increasingly popular at KS4, Hodder Education's *Progress in Computing* is the perfect course to set learners up to excel at GCSE, Cambridge Nationals, BTECs and beyond.

What's striking from the outset is the level of detail Hodder Education has paid to the design of the course. Using teachers and industry experts, *Progress in Computing* ensures that students are inspired and supported through their learning.

At its core, *Progress in Computing* focuses on building confidence and computer literacy. Through delivery of content on the underlying principles of computing, digital media and IT, learners are quickly exposed to the intricacies of technology they engage with every day. Understanding is built around linking real life experiences to technology, further embedding the importance of computing in our modern digital era.

From a planning perspective, *Progress in Computing* has it all. The link between the textbook and Hodder Education's brand new Boost platform means that teachers (and learners) are able to access the resources digitally. The lessons are comprehensive, and the resources fully editable. The *Progress in Computing* textbook is designed to work in sync with the online resources, to form a holistic learning experience.

Pedagogically, the lessons are well contained and clearly presented. Learners are encouraged to build self-efficacy and

the regular revision opportunities through KS3 mean that retention is well catered for. 'Knowledge check-ins' allow teachers to effectively track understanding, while the visually appealing summaries and key term lists mean that learners can quickly overcome any misconceptions they may have.

One of the best things about *Progress in Computing* is that elements of the course can be taught 'unplugged'. This means that from a timetabling perspective, the curriculum can be taught using machines only part of the time. In schools where computers are in short supply, the result is that learners can still have access to the knowledge and understanding required to succeed.

Computing can be a difficult subject to get one's head around, but Hodder Education has struck a good balance in terms of this resource's design. Consideration of interleaving and interweaving content is evident with the clear Progress Pathway (which also helpfully covers the KS3 National Curriculum.) Also, the Hodder pedigree is evident throughout, in that the resources contain no gimmicks – just clear, classy examples with sustained formatting that aids memory.

The online Boost platform meanwhile allows teachers to give their learning experiences more of interactive flavour if that's their preference, and if their context allows for it. The platform can also be used by teachers to gain access to a plethora of additional learning functions.

teach SECONDARY

VERDICT

- ✓ Inspiring and interesting content
- ✓ Well-formatted and carefully designed with learners in mind
- ✓ Key terms and summaries make for brilliant recap resources
- ✓ Sophisticated and detailed, offering an appropriate level of challenge for all learners

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Lawson is a former secondary teacher, now serving as a foundation governor and running a tutoring service, and author of the book *The Successful (Less Stressful) Student* (Outskirts Press, £11.95); for more information, visit prep4successnow.wordpress.com or follow @johninpompano



THE LAST WORD

Schools have a moral purpose



Discussion of how morality should be taught in schools will inevitably prove contentious to some, but it's a conversation we need to have, asserts John Lawson...

Katherine Birbalsingh, often referred to as the UK's 'strictest headteacher' and recently appointed social mobility chief, recently angered parents by talking of 'Original Sin' and the need "For all children to be taught right from wrong."

Extract the religious overtones from her statement – which I suspect partly fuelled a subsequent media backlash against her – and it remains true that moral perfection, however we define it, seems humanly impossible to achieve. William Golding says as much in *The Lord of the Flies*, a novel still revered in many schools. Perfection is for gods, prophets and messiahs.

Nonetheless, it's becoming increasingly difficult to criticise anything or anyone nowadays without risking the slings and arrows of (social) misfortune. After millions of viewers watched a brilliant dance routine by Diversity on *Britain's Got Talent*, which highlighted the merciless killing of George Floyd, ITV received over 20,000 complaints, many of which apparently expressed a dislike of being lectured to.

We've also seen Marcus Rashford receive an MBE and an honorary doctorate for taking up the cause of vulnerable children who might otherwise have gone hungry during the school holidays. Yet when he takes the knee at Old Trafford, he continues to upset a certain grouping of Manchester United supporters and some of his fans. 'To speak or not to speak' is the conundrum that continues to perplex contemporary Hamlets of all ages, gender and background.

Rolling that boulder

In schools, moral education is often primarily addressed in RE lessons. Schools are obliged to offer an RE curriculum which, as the DfE puts it, "Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, and physical development of pupils ... and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of later life."

I left the UK for America in 2000 to escape the predominantly scriptural, traditional and doctrinal RE then being taught in Catholic schools. With so few teenagers identifying as churchgoers, it wasn't scratching their itches. I felt akin to Sisyphus from *Dante's Inferno*, forever rolling an immense boulder uphill.

I later found that my American students unanimously (152 to 0) opted to study 'ethics' over 'sacraments'. Teens enjoy engaging with topics they need to understand – crime and punishment, sexuality, racism, environmentalism, prejudice and discrimination, animal rights, drugs and alcohol,

social/cultural freedoms and so forth.

Ethics doesn't just involve an exchange of opinions. It often uncovers uncomfortable truths and facts, and presents challenges to unacceptable behaviour. Racism is indefensible because it draws moral conclusions from biological premises. The colour of our skin cannot determine our moral worth. Likewise, nobody chooses their sexuality. Therefore, an individual's sexual orientation cannot, in itself, be sinful.

Towards the humane

We aren't obliged to believe in God – though if we aren't created, what gives us any more significance than the beetle-man Gregor Samsa that Kafka portrays in *Metamorphosis*? Surely the best way of enhancing the dignity of human life is to refuse to brutalise even the cruellest offenders.

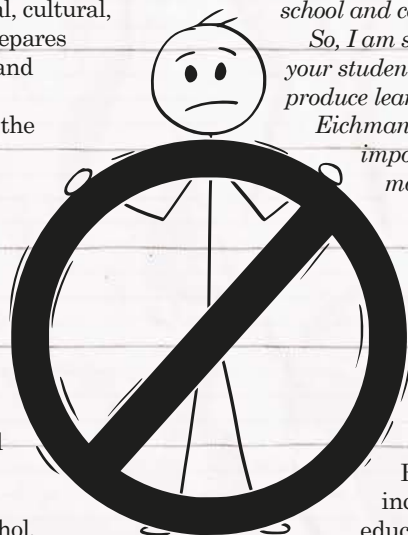
Most teenagers are cultural relativists until they're asked to distinguish between the morality of Pol Pot and the person they most respect. If freedom means doing whatever we like, then how can any of us be protected? Are good and evil equally valid lifestyle choices? We all need to address such issues.

Allow me to share here the poignant message that first inspired me to teach RE. It was written by a former principal at an extremely challenging Boston high school with a large annual turnover of faculty:

Dear Teacher,

I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no man should witness. Gas chambers built by learned engineers; children poisoned by educated physicians; infants killed by trained nurses; women and babies shot and burned by high school and college graduates.

So, I am suspicious of education. My request is: help your students become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more humane.



My long career in Catholic schools would have ended abruptly had I ever called students 'sinners'. However, I survived and thrived because I knew that even the most likeable children lie, if telling the truth would get them into trouble.

I therefore pray, dear reader, that you won't be offended if I pray in turn that Ms. Birbalsingh will create an agreeable and inclusive action plan to address moral education in schools...

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