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teach SECONDARY

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**SIR MICHAEL
WILSHAW**



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heads are intense"*

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FROM THE EDITOR

"Welcome..."



As a general rule, when a significant number of workers within your transport, medical and, yes, education sectors all organise multiple strikes within the same span of months, something somewhere has gone very, very wrong.

So far as teachers are concerned, at least, this round of strike action has been a long time in coming. It's perhaps an endpoint of sorts for a road the profession first began travelling down a little over a decade ago. As concisely summarised by Melissa Benn on page 17, this road took in far-reaching curriculum changes, dramatic overhauls to assessment and accountability systems and the magnitude of a global pandemic, leaving school teachers and leaders buckling under the demands placed upon them while taking home salaries that are lower in real terms when compared to years gone by.

Opposition of the sort we're seeing now is what happens when people's perceptions of their daily working lives – filled with exhausting days, small wins, moments of disappointment and myriad compromises – suddenly snap to widescreen, accompanied by the recognition of larger forces and commonalities that have caused many others to share the same thought: *'This isn't right, and things don't have to be this way.'*

I'll leave it to wiser minds to pick apart the minutiae of how the current situation is likely to be resolved, and predict who's at risk of losing face and how. All I can do is continue to marvel at how, despite everything, the profession has consistently gifted *Teach Secondary* with rays of light and remarkable examples of what educators are capable of.

I think back on the eloquent, inspiring and reassuring words that have filled these pages, courtesy of professionals with wisdom (and writing capacity) to spare. I remember the sometimes trenchant, often witty and always engaging opinion pieces from voices that demanded to be heard.

But above all, I call to mind the countless examples of empathy, generosity and sheer *grift* I've seen from teachers when putting each issue together, leading me to conclude that this is a profession that those in charge neglect and antagonise at their peril.

Enjoy the issue,

Callum Fauser
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On board this issue:



Jenny Hampton is an English teacher and literacy lead



Matt MacGuire is an assistant headteacher



Elaine McNally is an English head of department



Adam Riches is a senior leader for teaching and learning



Professor Becky Francis CBE is CEO of the Education Endowment Foundation



Daniel Harvey is a science teacher and pastoral lead

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Sign up for the weekly TS newsletter at teachwire.net/newsletter

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It takes a certain set of skills and habits to get the most out of school sports teams, writes Tom Corker

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The urge to succeed can give PE lessons dynamism and boost students' confidence – but only when managed sensitively, advises Adam Douglas

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SCAN ME!

The newsletter

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

The UNINFORMED teacher's guide to...

PRIME

It seems odd that YouTubers are still seen as plucky media upstarts, contrasted against the dull, staid broadcasting establishment. Especially when you consider that two of YouTube's most high profile personalities, KSI and Logan Paul, have been plying their trades (filmed pranks, music videos, lengthy monologues) since 2009 and 2013 respectively. So much for the fast-moving dynamism of youth culture.

Aaaanyway, 2022 saw these two media titans team up and unleash PRIME – a highly sweetened soft drink concoction made up of coconut water, B vitamins, antioxidants and electrolytes. Given its brand ambassadors' forays into professional wrestling and boxing, it seems fair to assume that it'll be quietly propping up the shelves of your nearest fitness shop, right?

Nope. As detailed in breathless reporting by the *Daily Mail* and others, bottles of the stuff are apparently changing hands in school playgrounds for absurdly inflated prices, parents are loitering outside corner shops so they can pounce on fresh deliveries, and supermarkets are limiting how many bottles can be sold to individual customers. Why? Beats us. REMEMBER TO LIKE AND SUBSCRIBE.



DO SAY

"Fourteen
quid to you,
bruv"



DON'T SAY

"Ah, Quatro.
Now there was
a drink..."

BEAT THE BUDGET



Who is it for?

KS1 to KS3

What's on offer?

The International Women's Day website is currently hosting a series of school resources intended to help classes commemorate the event by engaging in a range of related activities

What are we talking about?

International Women's Day school resources



How might teachers use the resource?

Secondary teachers may be interested in a set of downloadable classroom activity cards that feature numerous discussion prompts and ideas for short lesson activities, plus a video which explores what might happen if men and women switched places for a day.

Where is it available?

internationalwomensday.com/School-Resources

Think of a number...

DON'T QUOTE ME...

"Led by Bolshevik Boustead and Commie Courtney with their Labour mates"

How striking teachers were described by Conservative MP (and former teacher) Jonathan Gullis, speaking in the House of Commons

33%

of teachers have helped their pupils resolve a family conflict

Source: Representative survey of 1,000 teachers by Public First for the Commission on Teacher Retention

2 years

Prison sentence for tech firm managers breaching their duty of care to children under the online safety bill

Source: UK Parliament

64%

of state secondaries are understaffed in at least one key science

Source: Survey by the Royal Society of Chemistry

ONE FOR THE WALL

"Your imagination is the preview to life's coming attractions"

Albert Einstein



Counting the cost

A new report has revealed that academies are contending with shrinking cash reserves and energy costs that in some cases are up by as much 45% compared with 2021.

Each year, the Kreston Global accountancy network surveys the views and opinions of those working within academy trusts and compiles the findings in its annual Kreston Academies Benchmark Report. This year's edition is based on financial insights gleaned from 320 academy trusts, representing some 2,400 schools across the country.

There are some grim statistics relating to primary schools in single academy trusts (SATs), which are shown to be facing spikes in food costs of around 20%, and a steep 76% rise in supply costs prompted by staff shortages and sickness. Secondary SATs meanwhile saw their energy bills rise to the tune of £16 per pupil.

According to the report's co-author, Rachel Barret (pictured above) of the accounting advisor Duncan & Toplis, "With trust leaders expressing serious concern over their future financial positions, this report should act as an early warning sign of an education sector at financial breaking point.

"The modest surpluses returned by most academies may not stretch very far when considering that fixed rate energy bills have, or will shortly come to an end. Academy trusts must now plan for the worst case financial scenario, and have a plan in place if this worst case becomes the reality."

▼ **SAVE THE DATE** ▼

SPEECHES AND CORRESPONDENCE

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



THE SPEECH:

Education Secretary speaks at Church of England National Education Conference

WHO? Gillian Keegan, Secretary of State for Education

WHAT? Address to the Church of England National Education Conference

WHEN? 27th January 2023

"Faith is something I think that everyone here can understand – and I want you to know how much I value the role the Church of England plays in educating our children.

Its reputation for excellence in schools speaks for itself, and you are one of my Department's most valued partners. You provide over a fifth of state-funded schools, a quarter of primary schools, and are the largest provider of academy trusts.

You should be proud of the work you do, and on behalf of the children you teach, I am eternally grateful. Put simply, without the Church of England, pupils across the country would be learning less and doing worse.

To support you we will protect your schools, so that when they become academies they retain the statutory freedoms and protections that apply to Church schools. It means working in each area to shape the right plan at the right pace that builds the quality that pupils need.

In the past 10 years we have made huge strides to give every child the chance in life they deserve. And all of you are central to that success."



THE ANNOUNCEMENT:

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak sets out his priorities for the coming year

WHO? Prime Minister Rishi Sunak

WHEN? 4th January 2023

"I am now making numeracy a central objective of the education system. That doesn't have to mean compulsory A Levels in maths for everyone – but we will work with the sector to move towards all children studying some form of maths to 18.

Just imagine what greater numeracy will unlock for people. The skills to feel confident with your finances, to find the best mortgage deal or savings rate. The ability to do your job better and get paid more, and greater self-confidence to navigate a changing world.

Improving education is the closest thing to a silver bullet there is. It is the best economic policy, the best social policy, the best moral policy. And that's why it's this government's policy."

28 MARCH 2023 The National Apprenticeship & Education Event | 29-31 MARCH 2023 Bett | 16 JUNE 2023 The National Education Show – Llandudno

28 MARCH 2023

The National Apprenticeship & Education Event
Millennium Point Birmingham
nationalapprenticeshipevents.co.uk

Aimed at teachers, careers advisors, students and families based in the Midlands, this free event will see employers, training providers and universities share an array of useful information concerning not just apprenticeship opportunities, but also potential avenues to explore for employment opportunities, traineeships, T-levels and retraining.

29-31 MARCH 2023

Bett
ExCeL London
bettshow.com

The organisers of the venerable edtech showcase are shaking things up a bit for 2023. It still promises the usual lineup of speakers, product/service exhibitors and seminars, but the big innovation is Connect @ Bett – an online meetings system enabling attendees and exhibitors to mutually schedule 15-minute onsite meetings ahead of time or during the show according to their availability.

16 JUNE 2023

The National Education Show – Llandudno
Venue Cymru, Llandudno
nationaleducationshow.com

The first of three National Education Shows scheduled for this year, the Llandudno leg will be hosting some 40+ CPD seminars and facilitating countless networking opportunities for visiting teachers. Running alongside those will be an exhibition space where visiting educators can get hands-on with the very latest products and services developed with the education sector's needs in mind.

LIVE LESSON 14 MARCH 10.30 - 11.30AM

REGISTER FREE ONLINE

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THE TEMPEST

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Director Elizabeth Freestone with actors Alex Kingston, Heledd Gwynn, and Tommy Sim'aan, will explore key scenes from the play, looking at language and staging choices.

Suitable for Key Stage 2 – 4



TikTok

£10 TICKETS
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The Tempest is supported by Season Supporter Charles Holloway

The work of the RSC Learning and National Partnerships department is generously supported by Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, The Clore Duffield Foundation, The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust, GRow @ Annenberg, The Polonsky Foundation, Stratford Town Trust, LSEG Foundation, The Goldsmiths' Company Charity, Teale Charitable Trust, The Grimmitt Trust and The Oakley Charitable Trust

The work of the RSC is supported by the Culture Recovery Fund

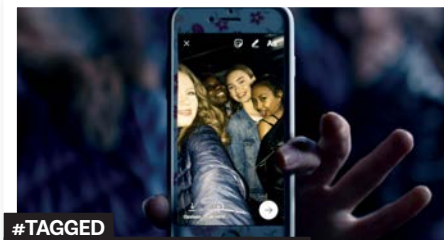


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TEACHER TALES

True stories from the education chalkface

Get Into Film



#TAGGED
(2017, UNCLASSIFIED, 12 MINS)

CURRICULUM LINKS:

PSHE, IT, psychology

Elsie is a 14-year-old girl who spends a large amount of time on her mobile phone. We watch from the unique perspective of her phone screen over a 24-hour period, as her life on social media spins out of control and her phone changes from being her best friend to her worst enemy.

#tagged is an anti-bullying short film that contextualises the pressures and pitfalls of modern technology and empathises with those affected by them.

Discussion questions:

- What could Elsie and her friends do, going forward, to make sure those responsible are held accountable for their actions?
- How can we be respectful of other people's digital media and online presence?
- Why is consent important when sharing information about other people online?
- How might Elsie's trust in her friendship groups be undermined after this experience?

Head online to intofilm.org to stream the film for free, and download our fantastic 'Expectations vs Reality' resource containing Teacher Notes on these discussion questions and much more. While there, you can access our Online Safety page with information and resources themed around staying safe online.



Retweets

Who's been saying what on Twitter this month?

Mrs O FCCT @kateowbridge

Today, one of my staff came to find me to see if I was ok. I'm not really at the moment. I'm fed up & grumpy. I can't tell if I'm more grumpy at school or if school is making me grumpy. Anyway, Penny came to check on me this morning & it meant a lot. #SLTArePeopleToo

lucy manning @lucymanning

Struck by the words of friend & colleague of Emma Pattison, the head shot by her husband. "Emma's loss reminds us it doesn't matter how successful or accomplished or brilliant you are as a woman. You are only as safe as your male partner allows you to be." CEO of @GDST

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

"Did you pack your own bags?"

On alternate years, our school used to host groups of Russian students from Moscow. At the end of one of these visits, I once offered to transport the group to Heathrow for their early morning return flight.

I was already in possession of the minibus keys, having transported a group of athletes and their equipment to a district sports event the previous day. We'd got back very late, meaning that certain items had been left in the minibus overnight, rather than returned to the PE store.

There was a lengthy wait until all 12 Russian students and their two teachers finally arrived at school, ready for departure. Conscious of the risk that they might miss their flight, upon arriving at Terminal 2 I rapidly offloaded my passengers and their assorted luggage.

Back at school, however. I was told that in my haste to ensure the group made their flight, I'd accidentally given one of the students not just their own luggage, but also a holdall containing three starter pistols which were subsequently spotted by airport security. I was thus duly summoned to Heathrow Police Station and asked to explain why I'd transported firearms onto the site...

F-aux pas

When organising 5-a-side football matches for a class of Y8 boys, my instructions to the six teams could have been more explicit. I told the group, "Team A will play B on pitch 1. Team C will play D on pitch 2. E will warm up on pitch 3. F off." I was rightly taken to task by the students for my instructions to Team F!

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

Decide which of the objects below you think is the odd one out.

Say why.

There are no right or wrong answers, but you need thoughtful reasons based on what you can see in the pictures.

A FEW MINUTES OF DESIGN

#26 ODD ONE OUT



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The Vocab Clinic

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

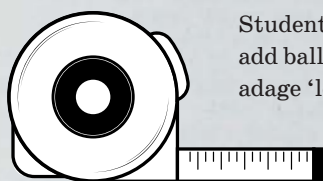
TRY THIS TODAY: 'SENTENCE EXPANDING'

More advanced writing is typically characterised by more complex vocabulary and sophisticated sentence structures. You can help all students advance their sentences through 'Sentence expanding' – adding further ideas and information.

For instance, you could support students in adding an adjective to a simple sentence – e.g. 'He was a [gentle / miniature] monster.' The sentence can then be expanded further by scaffolding the adding of a clause – e.g. 'He was a gentle monster, peering out of his cave.' Very quickly, students can learn how to engineer their own sentence expansions and write more complex sentences across a range of curriculum subjects.



Cracking the academic code



Students often believe that using lots of words will add ballast to their arguments – and yet, the old adage 'less is more' may prove more effective for some academic writing. One form of enhanced academic vocabulary that reduces word counts is 'Precise verbs'.

This more deliberate and concise writing style substitutes two-word phrases with more powerful single words. 'Set up' therefore becomes 'arrange'. 'Look up to' becomes 'respect'. 'Talk about' turns into 'discuss' and 'carry out' becomes 'perform'. This concise style is particularly apt for scientific writing and essay writing across most subject disciplines.

DO THEY KNOW?

Only two English words in current use end in '-gry' – 'angry' and 'hungry'

ONE FOR: BIOLOGY STUDENTS

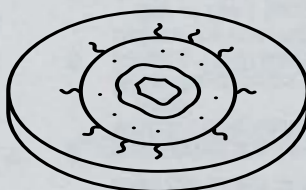
PHAGOCYTE

Derives from: Greek 'phago', meaning 'to eat', and 'cyte', meaning 'cell'

Means: 'Cell eater', in that it consumes other debris, such as dead cells

Related terms: Phagology, esophagus, sarcophagus, cytoplasm

Note: The three main groups of phagocytes share the same word root, making them easy to remember



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

CAPITAL

In geography

A city or town that functions as the seat of government of a country or region

In economics

Wealth in the form of money or assets owned by a person or organisation

One word at a time



The word 'inflation' can appear in economics, history or geography, as it represents a common social economic reality. Inflation is certainly a topical term right now, so what are its roots? It derives from the Latin 'inflationem', representing 'a puffing up, a blowing into; flatulence'. The original word represented the very physical blowing up that we associate with 'inflating'.

The common use of inflation as an economic term was first recorded in the 19th century, and now refers to a specific process that measures how much more expensive a set of goods and services has become over a certain period – though arguments about inflation may still generate a lot of hot air!



Alex Quigley is a former teacher and the author of a number of books, most recently *Closing the Writing Gap*; he also works for the Education Endowment Foundation as National Content Manager

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[MATHS PROBLEM]

AREA AND VOLUME SCALE FACTORS

When comparing similar shapes, students are often confused about linear, area and volume scale factors

In this lesson, students explore what happens to the area of a disc when the disc is enlarged.

THE DIFFICULTY

Imagine that you ring up and order a 20-inch pizza to be delivered. When they arrive, they say they are sorry, they don't have any 20-inch pizzas, but they have brought you two 10-inch

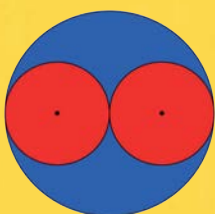
pizzas instead. Is that OK?

Students may worry about things like the amount of crust, the shape of the slices, or how the pizzas would be shared out, but not realise that in fact two 10-inch pizzas contain only **half as much** pizza as one 20-inch pizza!



THE SOLUTION

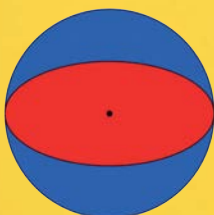
Rather than explaining the point, just display the image below, without any words, and ask: What does this have to do with the pizza question?



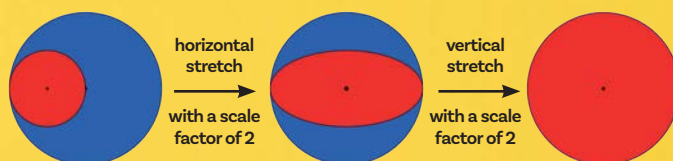
If the diameter of the blue disc is 20 inches, then the diameters of the red discs will be 10 inches. The total area of the two red discs is clearly much less than the area of the blue disc.

Since the area of a disc is πr^2 , where r is the radius, $\text{Area} \propto r^2$, or, since radius \propto diameter, d , $\text{Area} \propto d^2$. This means that **twice as big** a diameter gives a disc with **four times** as much area. The two red discs in total cover only **half** of the area of the blue disc!

Another way to think about it is to imagine **stretching** one of the red discs until it is twice as wide, but without changing its height.



It now becomes an ellipse, with **twice** the area of the original red disc. This means that the area of the ellipse is equal to the sum of the areas of the two red discs. This red area is half of the area of the blue disc, because the red ellipse would have to be stretched **vertically** by another scale factor of 2 for it to become congruent to the blue disc. This would take **another** doubling of its area to match the area of the blue disc:



Students may think this is just a weird thing about circles, but it is actually completely general. Whenever **any** 2D shape is enlarged, for the enlarged version to remain similar to the original shape, it must be stretched by the same factor k both horizontally and vertically. Each of these stretches increases the area by a factor of k , so overall the area will increase by a factor of k^2 .

Checking for understanding

To assess students' understanding, ask them to imagine scaling up a sphere in 3D. What would happen to the volume?

Multiplying the radius (or diameter) of a sphere by a factor of k will require **three** stretches this time, in order for the new shape to be spherical (i.e., similar to the original sphere). The three stretches, each with scale factor k , in all three perpendicular directions, will scale up the volume by a factor of k^3 .



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



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3 things we've learnt about...

THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS AND TEACHERS

How are teachers contending with the skyrocketing food, energy and housing bills currently causing misery across the country?

1 What's been the impact on wallets?

Unsurprisingly, many teachers are feeling the pinch. 65% of teachers recently told us that their bank balance was either the same or worse than a year ago. By comparison, that figure stood at 40% at the end of 2020. Teachers in their 40s and 50s, as well as those with children living at home, are among those saying they've been hit the hardest, with more than half of this group stating that they're now in a worse financial position compared to a year ago.

On the other hand, many younger teachers say they've actually fared better – though the context here is that a significant number of younger teachers and NQTs may have since paid back certain types of debts, having secured their first salaried role.

2 How has the workforce been affected?

Does the cost of living crisis have the potential to make the already tough teacher retention problem even worse? 38% of teachers who see themselves as being in a worse financial situation compared to the start of 2022 say they're seriously considering leaving the profession, while 28% of those who consider themselves to be in better financial circumstances feel the same.

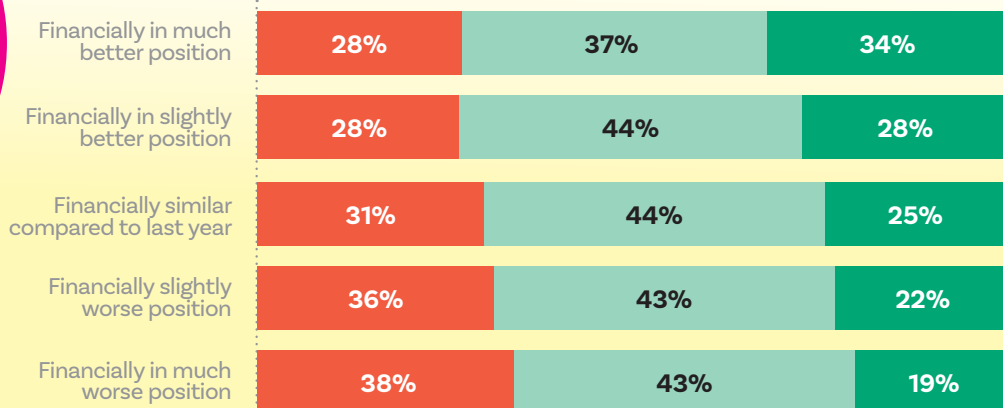
There are also other factors at play. Job searches were once usually restricted to applicants' local area, but these days the availability of remote work is greater than ever. One in three teachers say that the increased availability of working-from-home roles makes it more likely that they'll leave the profession – a sentiment felt across all subjects, but especially among younger teachers who are more likely to consider working in remote positions.

3 Has morale suffered?

While morale has actually improved in the last couple of years (albeit in comparison to a period involving a global pandemic), it's undeniable that financial circumstances play a large part in how happy teachers are feeling. Those reporting that they were in a worse financial position last December were much more likely to say that they'd had 'an abysmal year' (13%) than those who felt financially better off (4%) – adding to the sense that financial worries correlate with how people feel about their work.

Yet despite all the gloom, it's worth remembering that things can and do change. Two thirds of teachers who reported having had an abysmal 2021 didn't repeat it in 2022, often echoed by similar improvements to their finances. After a long and challenging 2022, there may well be some pockets of light to come in 2023...

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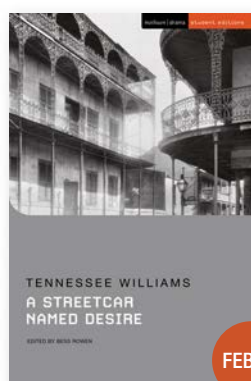
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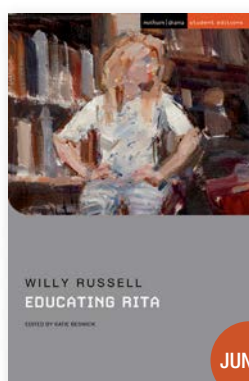
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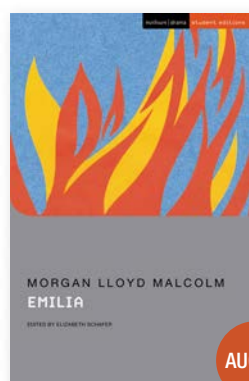
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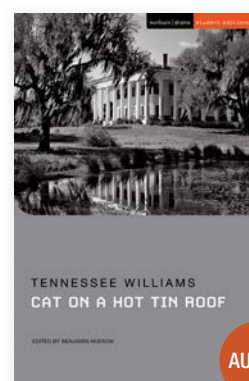
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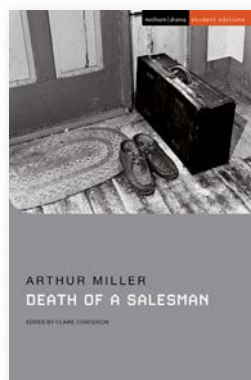
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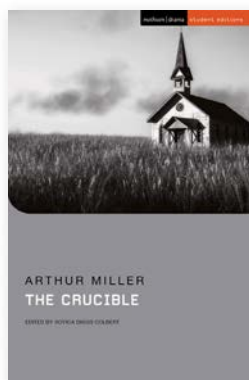
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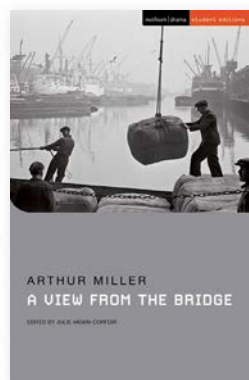
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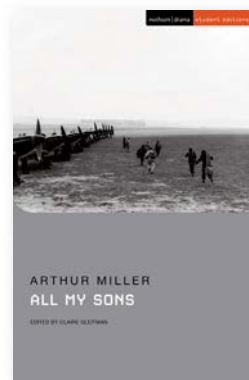
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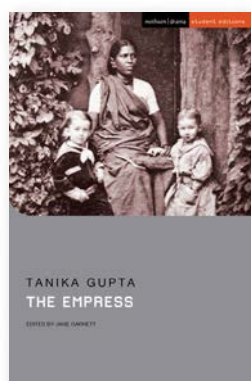


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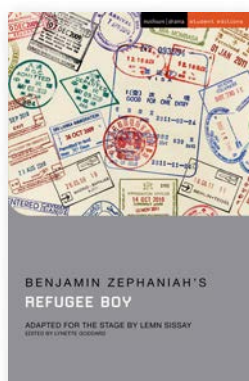


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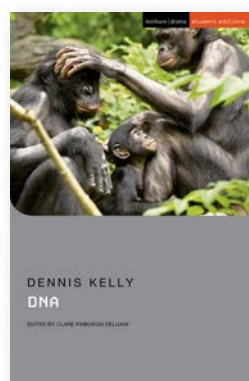
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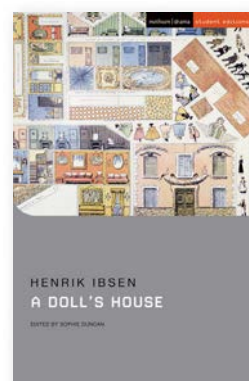
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A radical shake-up in the name of social mobility is what we were promised; a deeply dysfunctional education system staffed by underpaid teachers resorting to strike action is what we got...

Melissa Benn



The ongoing crisis in recruitment and retention. Reforms to initial teacher education. Teachers' pay. The impacts of industrial action.

These are the urgent themes of early 2023. Recently, however, I've been thinking about the bigger picture. What kind of citizen does our school system seek to create? Who, or what, is judged a 'success' at the end of it? And are these official markers the right ones?

What's become clear is that the current education system promotes one particular model of success – impressive academic attainment, followed by entry to a highly selective university.

I remember a fellow parent once telling me about their visit to a potential local primary school. The film shown at their welcome meeting began and ended with a picture of the dreaming spires at an ancient university, almost certainly Oxford or Cambridge. *'This,'* these parents to a group of diverse 3- and 4-year-olds were told, *'is what it's all about, what it's all for.'*

Really? Seen in this way, our system operates like a funnel, or the kind of piping bag you'd use to ice a cake. Millions of children are deposited at the beginning of their school years, and slowly narrowed down to those few thousands who reach the hallowed halls of a few select institutions.

'Soft bigotry'

Back in 2010, Michael Gove lambasted the outgoing New Labour government for the tiny number of children receiving free school meals who had gained entry to Oxford and Cambridge during its time in office – on average, 45 a year.

For Gove, this was clearly *the* major marker of educational inequality. In many ways, the draconian reforms that followed

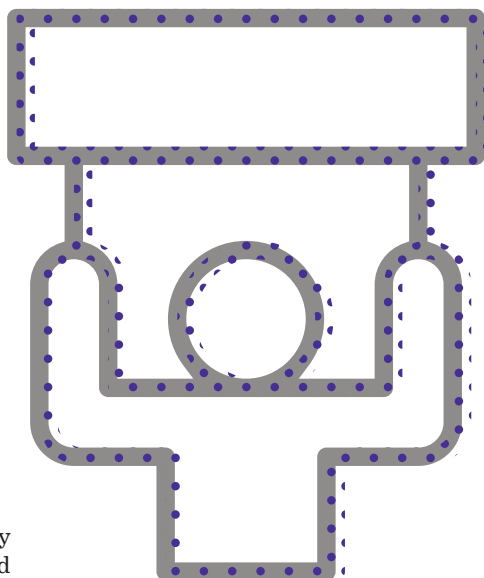
– everything from school structures to the curriculum, Ofsted and increasingly harder exams – was designed to raise this number.

Said reforms were largely modelled on the values and priorities of private or selective schools (not surprising, given the educational background of many leading Conservatives) but without their favoured intakes and superior resources.

At the same time, the Coalition and subsequent Tory governments demonstrated little understanding of the vital place that so many schools have within their local communities, nor indeed the complex relationship between poverty and educational achievement. Any suggestion that poverty might have something to do with educational failure was often dismissed by government representatives and supporters as 'the soft bigotry of low expectations'.

Collateral damage

The entire system was overhauled, but for what? From 2019 to 2022, 123 got into Cambridge and 124 into Oxford.



Over the same period, Eton and Westminster (schools which both charge fees of nearly £45,000 per year) sent 187 and 227 respectively.

This has always been too narrow a metric for success, in any case. Katherine Birbalsingh – until recently, chair of the Social Mobility Commission – seems to agree, having argued that this concentration on success at top universities has failed to celebrate "Those taking small steps up, like those whose parents were unemployed (but) who now have a job."

The collateral damage of the last decade has been huge, particularly with regards to what the Association of School and College Leaders describes as the 'forgotten third' – those millions of children who don't reach expected minimum standards at 16 and are designated failures.

Top-down system

We've also seen arts subjects progressively cut, and the curriculum too often reduced to 'bite-sized' lessons fed to exhausted teachers – now cogs in a top-down system that shows little respect for the autonomy of either teachers or learners.

School leaders are therefore increasingly calling for a halt to the 'exam factory' mentality, and rightly arguing that more attention needs to be paid to children's wellbeing and the development of their characters in the round. I'd also add that there's a pressing need to cement links between schools and local communities, each of which can offer the other vital resources and support.

It's time for us to celebrate and support what's unique about state education, rather than force it into imitating the often defective values and practices of institutions that have only ever served a tiny minority.

Good intentions

As proponents of 'Warm-Strict' and 'Trauma-Informed' behavioural approaches lock horns, both sides continue to miss the real problem – teachers' lack of authority...

Patrick Roche, leader of the NASUWT, claims that schools have failed to address a post-pandemic rise in behaviour problems. He talks of a general sense among the union's members that rudeness, verbal abuse and disruptive behaviour from pupils has increased.

Teachers, he says, feel disempowered by the failure of senior leaders to ensure that behaviour policies are supporting teachers in maintaining high standards of discipline. While many educators echo such concerns, they'll often disagree about the reasons why children misbehave, or what the solutions might be.

Putting some of the complexity and nuance involved to one side for a moment, I see two competing ideas dominating the debate over how to fix the problem. Let's consider them briefly, before I try to convince you that neither provides a magic bullet.

Warm-Strict

The 'Warm-Strict' strategy is an evolution of the Zero Tolerance approach to misbehaviour, intended to convey the idea that strictness comes from having the child's best interests and welfare in mind.

The Warm-Strict approach is preferred by many free schools and academies, as well as the current Conservative government. Think detentions, silent corridors, isolation rooms and exclusions. Uniform dress codes and haircut styles are strictly enforced. High expectations, no excuses

and an insistence on complete focus in the classroom are the norm.

These schools, like the famous Michaela Community School in Wembley, make no apology for their Zero Tolerance approaches to misbehaviour, maintaining that they're a necessary precondition for learning.

The American educationalist Doug Lemov is a key influence among Warm-Strict proponents, with his book, *Teach Like a Champion* informing much of the strategy. It outlines techniques observed at US schools in deprived urban neighbourhoods which, against all odds, achieved good exam results. One such

what they see as its uncaring, almost military nature. One common criticism (albeit often cited without evidence) is that Zero Tolerance schools tend to avoid accepting their fair share of kids with autism, ADHD and other forms of SEND.

Trauma-Informed schools

The most ardent Zero Tolerance critics instead tend to advocate for 'Trauma-Informed schools' as a more effective way of tackling misbehaviour. This approach originally emerged from the Trauma-Sensitive Schools movement in the US, which argues that recognising the prevalence

of adverse childhood experience (ACE), and subsequent risks of inadvertent re-traumatisation in harsh school environments, is key to managing student behaviour.

Under this model, the behaviour of persistently disruptive pupils is seen as being largely driven by scarring personal experiences, such as neglect, a parent with addiction problems or childhood trauma. Proponents argue that the solution to tackling such misbehaviour lies in understanding the underlying trauma and baggage many disruptive kids carry with them, and addressing these so that the

**“Teaching isn’t a science.
It’s a moral endeavour”**

technique is SLANT – Sit up, Listen, Ask questions (when appropriate), Nod your head, and Track the teacher with your eyes.

These kinds of highly structured, disciplined approaches are hailed by supporters as effective ways of reducing misbehaviour and improving academic performance. Indeed, the aforementioned Michaela School has achieved astonishingly good exam results. A growing number of schools and parents are thus buying into various iterations of the Zero Tolerance approach, and Conservative politicians in particular have publicly praised the model.

Yet for all the plaudits, a number of critics dislike



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situation might be improved. The thinking goes that it's better to forgo punishment in favour of building warm and secure relationships, as a means of encouraging good behaviour and learning.

Just like Warm-Strict advocates, Trauma-Informed teachers can cite a sizeable body of evidence to back up their ideas. More than a thousand data research studies have drawn on neuroscience, medicine and psychology in efforts to reduce the impact of ACE, curb disruptive behaviour and boost outcomes.

Mission creep

Yet for all this work, there remains a lack of consensus over how Trauma-Informed practice should be defined, what its key principles are, and how

best to implement them in school behaviour policies.

Some early estimates calculated that around 1 in 15 kids in the US had suffered ACE, though more recent studies suggest it may actually be 1 in 3. Some practitioners of Trauma-Informed practice consider that racism, poverty, social inequality and parental separation may all qualify as forms of ACE – though as the definition of 'ACE' and 'trauma' gets expanded ever wider to include experiences many consider to be typical parts of growing up, there's a danger of mission creep. Would living in a working class community count? Is 'damaged' becoming the default model of how we view young people?

However well-intentioned they may be, it's worth

querying whether Trauma-Informed approaches are pushing teaching towards the type of field work more akin to therapy, social work or psychology. If 'trauma' and 'ACE' continue to be so loosely defined, is there not a danger of seeing all disadvantaged subgroups as victims, and thus lapsing into a bigotry of low expectations?

Authority figures

In my view, Warm-Strict and Trauma-Informed approaches both misdiagnose the key problem. I suspect the real issue is less the behaviour of children, and more the difficulty many teachers have in exercising authority.

One change in recent years has been the growing absence of unambiguous affirmation when it comes to the exercise of classroom authority. Consequently, many teachers feel insecure about knowing when and how to hold the line.

Paradoxically, attempts at resolving motivational or behavioural issues via behaviour management techniques often diminish teachers' authority, rather than boost it. However robust Trauma-Informed and Zero-Tolerance approaches might be, I worry that demands for teachers to share their responsibilities with external experts and professionals can't help but weaken educators' agency and fundamental authority.

Supporters of both approaches will dutifully wheel out research evidence and studies to support their case, but we should remember that teaching isn't a science. It's a moral endeavour. It requires the exercise of adult authority and respect for teachers' professional judgement – which is why attempts at imposing one-size-fits-all behaviour management techniques on classrooms won't work.

IN BRIEF

What's the issue?

Opposing 'Warm-Strict' and 'Trauma-Informed' approaches to tackling school behaviour are growing in popularity

What's being said?

Evidence suggests that both approaches work, and can even improve outcomes

What's really happening?

The imposition of such approaches serves to diminish teachers' agency and authority

The takeaway

Teachers have become less confident in exercising authority over time. Specific approaches and strategies can address issues in the short term, but it's only through restoring teachers' authority that we can properly address problem behaviour in a long-term, sustainable way.

Serious educators should want to take responsibility for every dimension of a child's education. By acting on insights gained through their relationship with their class, teachers themselves are usually best placed to make judgements on how to respond to problems.

Rather than expecting teachers to take sides in battles over behaviour policies, we should instead do more to support their authority in the classroom, and allow them the professional autonomy and space to develop their judgement regarding the best way of dealing with problem behaviour.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kevin Rooney is a teacher, author, and convenor of the Academy of Ideas Education Forum

CLASSROOM LIFE

“It’s support, not a sanction”

As their local alternative provision became increasingly less viable, headteacher **Jake Capper** and his colleagues took the step of providing some AP of their own...



Given how many of our children come from challenging backgrounds, it can sometimes feel like we’re not a comprehensive school, even though we are. As things currently stand, however, we have a Good Ofsted rating and are heavily oversubscribed, with ever more Y6 preferences year on year.

I was appointed head on 1st May 2020, which was quite a baptism of fire. I arrived having previously served as deputy head at an Outstanding school in York,

only to find that things worked differently here in almost every way.

Process of referral

Myself and my colleagues quickly came to realise how strained alternative provision was within the city. There were many children at Marvell who had what we call ‘commissioned AP places’ – whereby the school pays for them to attend AP so that specific needs can be met, or to potentially avoid permanent exclusion.

This prompted us to look

at how we could keep more of our children within Marvell and part of our school community, so we set up some provision of our own that we call the ARC, based on our school values of ‘Ambition’, ‘Respect’ and ‘Courage’.

The purpose of this provision is to look after our most vulnerable children, with an overarching philosophy of ‘support not sanction’. We didn’t want it to be a place children would simply pass through en route to more ‘traditional’ AP, and we were careful to make sure that those children accessing the ARC weren’t just those with behavioural issues. Some are, but others have anxiety, some have mental health issues and others have some gaps in their schooling.

Students can only access the ARC following a referral process overseen by our pastoral leaders; teachers can’t just send them there.

All-round support

The ARC itself is essentially a massive classroom containing various therapy



The Marvell Academy is a secondary academy located in the east of Hull with 1,250 students on roll. Approximately 70% come from households falling within the 10% most deprived households in the local area.

aids, computers and a designated learning area with an IWB, alongside a reflection room for students who are struggling with their behaviour.

We have a full-time mental health officer based at the ARC, and two dedicated intervention classrooms that are used by some of our KS4 AP students to receive on-site schooling in some subjects, before heading off-site several days per week for courses in motor vehicle



maintenance, construction and hairdressing, among other activities.

Some of our vulnerable children may go the ARC for extended periods, while others may just require a one-to-one with our mental health officer before returning to school or home, depending on their bespoke programme.

Rapid reintegration

The process whereby someone is referred to the ARC varies. If a pupil hasn't been attending school, our educational welfare officer will meet with their family to talk about how we might try and include them into school. For individuals who could be described as 'anxious attenders', the likelihood is that they'll spend some time in the ARC building up their confidence. When the ARC team feel that they're ready, they'll then gradually move to attending mainstream lessons.

In cases involving behaviour or an incident at home – bereavement, say – referrals tend to come via the pastoral team. At that point we'll contact parents and carers, invite them in and talk them through the process of how the ARC operates.

When a student enters the ARC, their initial time there is very much tailored to them. For example, a pupil attending full-time for two weeks may complete a Boxall Profile and work with the team, talking about where they feel confident, what lessons they're happy to attend, what lessons might be triggers for additional anxiety, or where they

might struggle with behaviour. After that, they'll be given a bespoke timetable.

If it's agreed that a pupil should attend one or two lessons a day, the ARC team might accompany them to support either the pupil or the teacher. This is monitored carefully, and always with a view to increasing this lesson time once they're ready. The idea of the ARC is ultimately to reintegrate pupils back into the curriculum as quickly as possible.

Balancing the mix

We do, however, have to be very careful in terms of the ARC's capacity. We essentially see it as an A&E triage process, but we can't deal with all of the issues we get. There are occasions when our need for the ARC unfortunately outstrips its capacity.

The team works especially hard not to turn away anybody who needs the ARC's support, but at the same time, we have to try and balance the mix of children using the room. We've never wanted the ARC to be a 'sink area'; it's support, not a sanction.

Because of that, we need to avoid situations where one child with anxiety may be sharing the space with numerous others who are there for reasons relating to their behaviour, which can involve working around pupils' timetables. We're also limited to having eight pupils in there at any one



time due to staff numbers.

What we will do, however, is send curriculum teachers to the ARC at allotted times, because we don't want the pupils there to miss out on core areas of the curriculum if we can help it. The small number of students also enables teachers to effectively offer bespoke lessons where needed.

Unusual flexibility

Our school is in a difficult position. We have a great resource in the ARC, but some of these children are extremely vulnerable. Attendance, while

improving in most cases, still isn't quite where we want it to be, with the result that some students who should be in the ARC aren't there.

We've often found with children who cause challenges that there are underlying reasons – perhaps they've missed time in the curriculum, fallen behind in their understanding and started to display challenging behaviours as a result. What the ARC gives us is a degree of flexibility in how we can respond – one that's unusual in mainstream schools of our size in this type of community.

Time to reflect

James Krebs, assistant headteacher alternate pathways, reflects on the experiences of one previous ARC user...

Student A is a Y9 male who has multiple adverse childhood experiences and SLCN. He was admitted to the ARC due to an escalation of behaviours, including confrontation with staff, refusing simple instruction and absconding around school. We sought to better understand student A and focus on his strengths as assets. After making some curriculum changes, we ensured that all teachers who taught him completed a restorative meeting facilitated by a colleague in the ARC.

The impact over six weeks resulted in student A accessing a full mainstream curriculum. There have been two lesson walk-outs (when he came to the ARC using his safe space pass, rather than absconding) and only one removal from a lesson due to behaviour. Parents have also noticed a significant difference in the way he manages emotions at home.

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Tasking schools with preparing students for their careers in later life is far from easy – but by starting career conversations early, tracking trends and exploring different curriculum avenues, students' journeys can at least get off to a positive start...

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Schools shouldn't shy away from talking to Y7s about the possibilities of further education and the tapestry of potential careers that lie ahead of them, argues Matthew Burton...



IN FIGURES:

HOW ROBUST IS THE CAREERS GUIDANCE PROVIDED BY SECONDARY SCHOOLS?

36%

of secondary pupils aren't confident regarding their next steps in education and training

37%

of state school senior leaders report receiving insufficient funding for careers guidance

40%

of classroom teachers in state schools are aware of the careers guidance framework set out in the Gatsby Benchmarks

Source: 'Paving the way' – a 2022 report on careers guidance in secondary schools produced by The Sutton Trust (see bit.ly/ts122-ci1)

3

TEACHWIRE ARTICLES FROM THE ARCHIVES

GIVE STUDENTS THE SKILLS THEY NEED

Jenifer Cameron outlines why traditional thinking around careers guidance ought to give way to a different, more far-reaching approach
bit.ly/122special1

HOW BALANCED IS YOUR PROVISION?

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

bit.ly/122special2

A ROLE FOR EVERYONE

Careers education is a whole-school responsibility, says Liz Painter – so here are some short- and long-term suggestions for ways in which everyone can contribute

bit.ly/122special3



Growth targets

Matthew Everett, principal at Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School, looks back on his experiences of giving students a uniquely practical form of career preparation...

We're based in the northeast of Coventry and serve a very diverse community – in terms of ethnicity, income and social background. Some students are from very affluent families, but the large majority are from families who are really struggling. A number of our students are also exposed to a certain level of risk in the local area, due to high levels of gang activity.

Despite that, we were rated Good in all areas following our last Ofsted inspection, which we were delighted with. That underscored the work we've been doing over the last few years to change the school, our culture and the perceptions of our community.

Seeing the impact

When I was first appointed at the school, the site included a walled garden area and a large expanse of fields at the back that were being underutilised. I'd recently come across the social enterprise Roots to

Fruit, which offers accredited training in horticulture and landscaping, and reached out to its founder, Jonathan Ensell, to see what they might be able to bring to a secondary school.

My view was that we had potentially great facilities, an eclectic group of students that would be good for them to work with – whether it be through a form of onsite alternative provision, or by offering a different kind of learning that some of our students were crying out for.

We have many students who are very practically-minded and therefore see careers for themselves in

wanted a way for students to put their hands towards making something and immediately see the impact of what they were doing.

Johnathan came over to have a look round, and was wowed by the available space. It soon became clear that his ideas for what he wanted to see very much aligned with ours.

Curriculum links

Initially, Roots to Fruit began working with a group of disaffected students who needed quite a lot of support, and taught them aspects of horticulture in ways that linked to their academic studies. The group's

students were now seeing first-hand how that theory applied to the real world, and could better appreciate the sight of those processes happening in front of them.

Our relationship has grown in other ways. We worked with Roots to Fruit on the centrepiece of the Birmingham Peace Garden for last year's Commonwealth Games, for which our students submitted a number of designs which they were later able to witness in person.

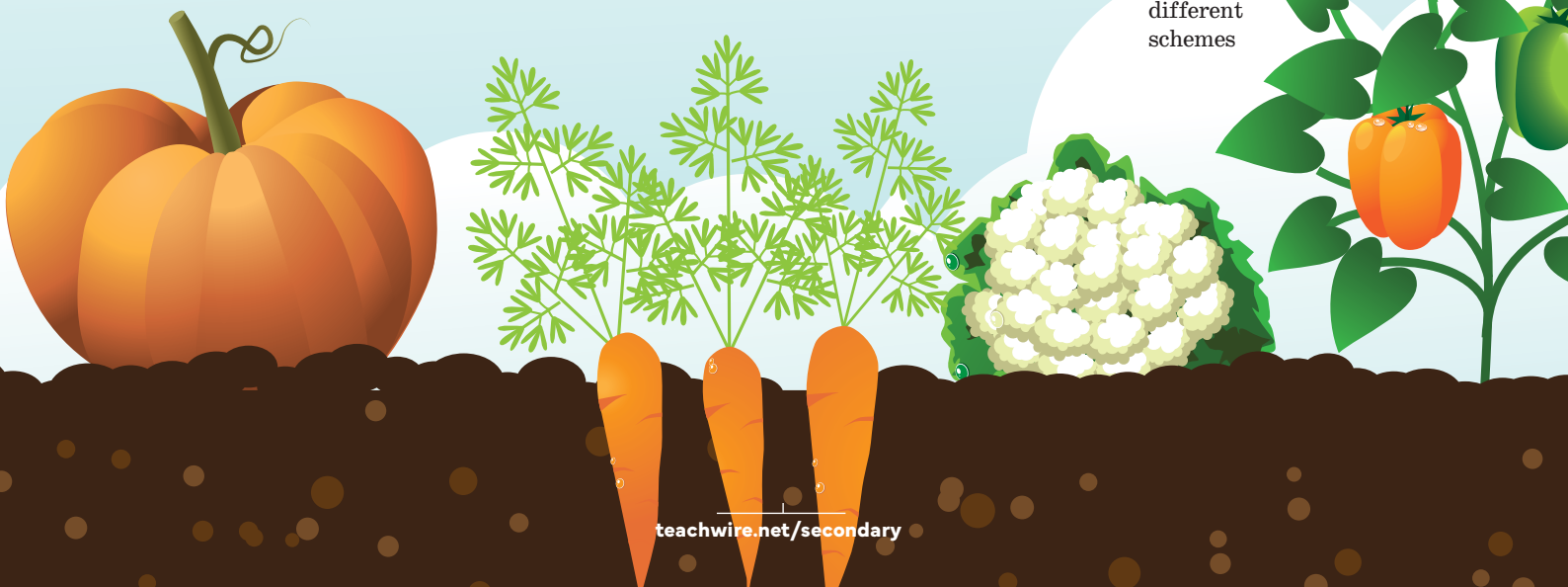
Having proved popular, this provision was subsequently developed and offered to a greater number of students across the school, to the point where some have completed Roots to Fruit's Level 1 Practical Horticulture Skills course, in addition to their standard curriculum work. We're now preparing to offer our Y9s and Y10s the option to gain a Level 2 qualification.

The Practical Horticultural Skills Award itself is nearly a thousand pages long because of the many different schemes

“Students were now seeing first-hand how theory applied to the real world”

more practical, hands-on areas. We wanted to have broad and balanced curriculum options in place that went beyond simply offering a bit of D&T. We

examination of trees and plants was rooted in what they'd learned about photosynthesis during science lessons. The difference was that these



and units that participants can choose to do. In our case, the areas that students study will include planting and maintaining seeds, caring for soil and cultivating advantageous growing conditions.

Thus far, our students have been able to grow a range of vegetables, including kale, beetroot, turnips, potatoes and artichokes. They've been able to see the fruits of their labours in terms of their planting and upkeep of the areas in which their crops are growing.

Far-reaching benefits

They've also studied landscaping skills, looking at the different types of brick patterns used when constructing driveways, pathways between planted areas and the like. The students undertaking the work have engaged with many units, covered lots of ground, and so far, things have worked out really well.

Some of our students have expressed an interest in doing the courses to support their mental health and wellbeing. Being given a creative outlet that's reliant on them being outside has been really helpful. In certain cases, these course activities have helped them stay within mainstream schooling.

We've made time for our student group to work

their course activities during the school day. The group have 1-hour slots they can use in the morning or afternoon which tie in with the lessons they're missing, where possible.

Previously, discussions were held between Roots to Fruit and our science department where they talked about what curriculum areas the students would be studying, how Root to Fruit's offer could enhance that, and what arrangements could be made to ensure students weren't missing out on key curriculum areas. If students do end up missing certain work, we'll make sure they get access to the relevant teachers and resources at a later date.

One effect of timetabling our Roots to Fruit activities during the school day has been an improvement in attendance among some students, who are now more inclined to attend and stay in school.

Changing behaviours

Since we started offering the courses, the communication skills demonstrated by our students have come on in leaps and bounds, alongside

marked improvements in students' mental health according to number of 'before' and 'after' surveys.

In a broader sense, we've also seen some students becoming more tolerant and better able to manage their emotions thanks to the physical dimension of what the courses demand of them. They've had to control the frustration that comes from cutting down tree branches and having things not go quite as planned, or when their plans for adding raised beds haven't come to fruition. They've experienced a way of managing emotions and frustrations that's been a great help to them, as reflected in apparent changes to their behaviour elsewhere in school.

We've even seen increases in some students' writing abilities. While the courses have drawn mainly on their verbal abilities when completing tasks and assessments, they have also been called on to write evaluations and present written plans, leading to some improvements in their written work elsewhere in school.

Viable workarounds

One of the biggest challenges we've faced over the course of this journey came around six months in, when some of the land we'd been working on was earmarked for redesignation by the local Council. That ultimately never came to pass, thankfully – but the brief period we spent researching stand-up greenhouses, garden spaces of the sort used in apartment balconies and other alternative solutions showed us how the project would still be viable even with limited onsite space available.

The key takeaway is that there are always workarounds, through which it's possible for students to see something grow thanks to their efforts – from a packet of seeds to food on a plate, or plans on paper to a finished pathway. With the right knowledge and learning in place, students will be able to involve themselves in real-world projects that everybody can contribute to.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Matthew Everett is the principal of Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School in Coventry



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Skilled operators

Lyndsey Stuttard explains why, when discussing industry-wide shortages of tech skills, more attention should be paid to schools' provision of digital literacy – or lack of it...

For the first time since records began, there are more job vacancies in the UK than unemployed people. Of those unfilled vacancies, it's estimated that there are roughly 2 million within the tech sector – more than any other.

This has been partly fuelled by the changing technology landscape and emergence of new, innovative industries. To operate within such environments successfully, a unique set of employability skills is required – namely applied digital skills, such as email etiquette, database management and analysis, and working independently online, to name a few.

Core skills

Those skills might seem obvious to anyone who's already carved out a tech career, but it's imperative that schools don't overlook their importance – especially given the rapid digitisation of our world in the wake of COVID-19.

All too often, however,

the technology education young people receive (or end up learning for themselves) doesn't prepare them for the workforce. Only by equipping this generation with rounded training in all things technology can we ensure that our young people possess the knowledge, expertise, and understanding needed to operate the digital and technical tools they'll inevitably encounter in their preferred industry or job role.

That's not to say that schools need to teach young people every one of the aforementioned skills – far from it, since there simply isn't

the time or resources needed to track all advances in every industry.

What's important is that schools teach a set of core skills that can be transferred across multiple industries, before more specific skills are then learned once in post.

Key to achieving that is the notion of 'digital literacy'. For instance, not every young person will need knowledge of AI development by the age of 16. It is, however, essential to embed a more general understanding of how AI works, so that the technical specifics can be potentially picked up more easily and quickly in future. Teaching in this way will empower our students to become well-rounded, global citizens with the intelligence to engage with tomorrow's big issues.

The Digital Design Club

Families need to support and invest in these efforts too. At ACS International School Cobham, we've invited parents into school for hands-on iPad sessions and conversations around technical processes and responsible online behaviour.

Our Early Childhood (2-6 years) and Lower School (6-10 years) students are all taught an interactive digital skills session once a week. The learning is formulated around how to use different types of technology

and digital tools, while also covering more advanced subjects such as 3D printing, coding and robotics.

As our students enter Middle School (10-14 years) and High School (14-19 years), they can opt to attend Digital Design Club sessions, where those taking part will use their design skills to create immersive, 3D AR experiences that others can explore and learn from. One recent task encouraged students to think about how certain spaces in the school could be made more accessible, linking to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

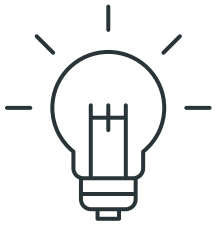
What else can we be doing in future to ensure our young people are prepared for work in the tech sector? Besides devising a strategic plan and increasing investment in schools – for both staff's professional development and resources – we must study the results we're seeing from activities like the Digital Design Club.

Industry trends may be in a constant state of flux, but the need for students to have a foundation in digital literacy remains. Only by staying ahead of the curve, arming ourselves with the latest data and regularly evaluating can we be certain that we're at the forefront of tackling the tech skills shortage.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lyndsey Stuttard is a digital teaching and learning specialist at ACS International School Cobham



THE NEXT BIG THING

TECHNICIANS

Give your KS3/4 cohort a STEM experience to remember at this new, free interactive careers gallery now on show at the Science Museum in London

[THE TREND]

According to Gatsby, 'Every young person needs high-quality career guidance to make informed decisions about their future.' The Gatsby Good Career Guidance benchmarks provide a framework for schools to create provision that supports pupils in understanding their options. The Science Museum in London worked closely with the foundation to create a new, free to enter gallery that showcases a world of careers in one place, now open!

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

A brand new careers experience for young people has opened at the Science Museum in London. This free to enter interactive gallery, called *Technicians: The David Sainsbury Gallery*, recreates STEM workplaces across multiple sectors, including health science, creative arts, manufacturing and renewable energy. Young people can get hands-on with interactive exhibits that simulate a range of technical job-related tasks – from creating visual effects on the set of Marvel's *Black Panther*, to analysing blood samples in a medical laboratory, operating a robot in a manufacturer's workshop and much more besides.

Schools can also book a free 'Meet the Employee' workshop held in the gallery, where pupils get to meet technicians and experience the reality of what it's like to perform their job.

WHAT'S THE IMPACT?

The gallery is built for 11- to 16-year-olds and conceived as an engaging, enjoyable and impactful experience for secondary-aged pupils. It gives educators the opportunity to showcase the breadth of technical careers available, and organise productive conversations for their students in a stimulating environment. The end result will be a positive enrichment experience that encourages young people to explore their own interests and skills throughout their visit via interactive exhibits, videos of technicians sharing their career journeys and real-life encounters with technicians in the bookable school's workshop.



WHAT'S NEXT?

Helping educators provide their pupils with engaging career encounters is important to the Science Museum's mission to inspire futures. A gallery guide is available, which contains useful information for educators on how to best prepare for a visit, as well as a pre-visit video that can be shown to pupils ahead of time to explain more about the gallery and what to expect.

We have also produced accompanying learning resources that highlight the technical career stories shown throughout the museum, to extend the careers experience beyond the gallery and encourage school groups to discover the fascinating career stories behind certain objects on display in other galleries.

SCIENCE MUSEUM

Contact:

033 0058 0058

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sciencemuseum.org.uk/learning

Discover More...

To learn more about the gallery, schools workshop and supporting resources to enhance your visit, go to ScienceMuseum.org.uk/Learning

GET INVOLVED

Plan the ultimate careers experience with a visit to the Science Museum to explore the interactive careers gallery and attend a schools workshop to meet an employee and learn what it's like to do their job.

To book, visit sciencemuseum.org.uk/learning and select 'Book Now' to check the availability of your preferred visit date(s) and use the handy itinerary builder to plan your day – don't forget to add the gallery to your itinerary. The workshops are available on Tuesdays and Thursdays during term time.

Early aspirations

Schools shouldn't shy away from talking to Y7s about the possibilities of further education and the tapestry of potential careers that lie ahead of them, argues **Matthew Burton**...

In whichever phase of learning we work, we need to keep an eye on preparing for the future. We must do what we can so that the big, wide, bounteous and brilliant world out there – which, let's face it, only gets more complex with every passing year – makes sense to the young people we're working with.

As the world continues to evolve, the careers our young people go on to enter will no longer fit the stereotypical boxes they perhaps once did. With technological advances and remote working driving huge, society-wide changes, industries once considered inaccessible for people 20 years ago now hold the potential for genuine career possibilities.

We'll always need doctors, solicitors, teachers, police officers and many other 'traditional' jobs, of course, but there's more. Lots more! And yet, getting those messages out about the amazing opportunities to be had isn't easy.

Here, then, are five pointers to help you ensure that from the very start of secondary school, students can be made aware just how broad and diverse their future career choices really are...

1 Talk about it early

Students might not need to be a pilot or a cheesemaker before reaching the end of Y7, but the language of careers should be in the air. Put aspirational goals at the forefront of conversations with young people, and be aware that



your language concerning the future shouldn't be fearful; it should be full of excitement.

2 Everything's a piece of the jigsaw

Whether it's simply holding a door for someone, saying 'thank you' or greeting school visitors, everything students do in secondary school is a rehearsal of sorts for the 'big wide world'. Regardless of what a student's main career goals are – beautician? Molecular biologist? Treading the boards of London's West End? – young people need to better understand how those important soft skills they're practising away from the classroom may well contribute to achieving that eventual goal.

3 Meet and greet

Speaking to young people about the wonderful world of careers is one thing, but quite another for that messaging to come from employees currently pursuing careers of their own.

Get your students out and visiting various workplaces where they can meet employees – hospitals, universities, retail offices, beauty salons. Failing that, persuade industry representatives to come in and give talks to the next generation.

4 Push them on...

Aspirations among students for high quality careers tend to be accompanied by ambition within a school's careers offer. That's why there's nothing wrong with talking about universities and routes into FE and HE, and why it's important to dispel myths and mysteries around words like 'apprentice', 'degree', 'undergraduate' and 'doctorate'.

Many of the most disadvantaged young people we work with will never have been told what universities and other types of further study are actually like, but they should know that there isn't a ceiling awaiting. If

they want to pursue a career requiring a degree or other specific qualification, talk to them and show them what attaining this might look like.

They might initially think they've taken a wrong turn to Hogwarts as they pull up to the gates of the local university, but those foundational building blocks of what could be a wonderful career will be far stronger when they possess knowledge of the domain they're aiming for.

5 ...but remember that there's no pressure

That being said, let's not overdo it. At KS3 children need to be allowed to be children. For now, many of the skills, knowledge and qualities they'll need in future are incumbent upon them simply being at school – meeting new people, making friends, and getting to grips with their daily routines.

Overburdening them at such a young age with too much can be counterproductive. The next generation need to be knowledgeable, kind, considerate, hard-working and determined – which is precisely what their school should help them become.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Matthew Burton is headteacher at Thornhill Community Academy and a supporter of 4Schools – Channel 4's secondary schools initiative to bring to life the breadth of careers in the creative sector; for more information, visit 4schools.co.uk

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“STEM professionals have a pivotal role”

Ed Walsh explores how you can inspire students to pursue careers in STEM, and the value of integrating career discussions into your teaching



30 SECOND BRIEFING

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Why is it important to start talking about careers at KS3?

As students start to make decisions about KS4 subjects that will affect their future pathways, their attitudes towards different subjects may affect whether they see a future for themselves in it. Why try as hard in something that you think you won't study after the age of 16?

Research has shown that many young people enjoy science and know that it's important in modern life, but don't see a future in it for them, as demonstrated by the ASPIRES project (bit.ly/ts122-c1) and the Science Capital Teaching Approach (bit.ly/ts122-c2).



Why should we encourage students – and particularly girls – to consider STEM careers?

Girls are less likely to choose STEM careers than boys (though this is less true now in some pathways) – and yet when they do, they often do well in them.

Thinking about the challenges facing society over the next few decades, the list likely includes global pandemics, feeding an ever-growing population, climate change, the energy crisis and the effective provision of clean water. STEM professionals will have a pivotal role in helping to solve issues in these areas and more.

Having worked with the Women into Science and

Engineering initiative (wisecampaign.org.uk) on KS3 Science Now, we've made a point of ensuring women are strongly represented among the examples it cites of STEM professionals.

How can I integrate careers discussions into my lessons?

A good approach to adopt would be 'short, varied and often'. Careers discussion needn't dominate lessons, but can add to the focus. Resources you can use might include KS3 Science Now examples and case



ABOUT ED:

Ed Walsh is an experienced freelance consultant specialising in science education and series editor of KS3 Science Now

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education.marketing
harpercollins.co.uk
01484 668 148

studies, WISE online resources and video clips of STEM professionals at work. The careers and interests of your students' parents or carers could be used as examples too.

Outside of lessons, what else can schools do to encourage students to engage with STEM careers?

There are websites set up by commercial STEM organisations that will inform students about what STEM professionals do and the training involved, some of which also feature activities and resources.

You could try organising visits to commercial STEM locations, allowing students to see professionals at work, and talk to them about their early career choices and subsequent outcomes.

Another avenue is entering competitions and challenges that give students extracurricular activities to work towards. Or you could try contacting a STEM Ambassador (bit.ly/ts122-c3), who might be able to support your school's STEM activities in person.

What's the difference?

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Crisis management

Unless schools change their approach to recruiting and developing senior leaders, the declines we've seen in standards and outcomes will only continue, says former Ofsted HMCI, **Sir Michael Wilshaw**...

The disruptions caused by several COVID lockdowns, coupled with rapidly escalating food, energy and staffing costs, has exacerbated many of the problems already affecting our education system well before the pandemic struck.

All students have suffered learning loss to varying degrees, but disadvantaged children and young people – who were already well behind their peers before the pandemic – have fallen much further behind.

The Education Policy Institute recently reported that by the age of 16, disadvantaged pupils are now 18 months behind their peers. In areas where poverty is deeply entrenched, that figure grows to two years. Regional disparities in educational standards, already stark before COVID, are therefore getting worse. The 'rising tide of educational standards' isn't lifting all boats.

Moral imperative

This matters – not just because it's a moral imperative to ensure poor children have the same opportunities as others, but also because there's evidence to indicate that when schools do well by their poorest children, standards are lifted for all students and abilities.

That's why, 20 years ago, the then Labour administration opened the first academies in some of the most disadvantaged communities in England – places with a long legacy of educational failure. The thinking was that developing great schools in poor areas would set an

example and raise local school standards overall.

That certainly happened in Hackney, where I was appointed as one of the first academy principals. At the time, Hackney had for many years been a byword for educational failure; now it's a shining example of high standards in London.

In 2023, however, headteachers in disadvantaged areas are still facing the same accountability measures I did, but are also having to also grapple with staff shortages, low morale and threats of industrial action by the main teaching unions over pay.

Intense pressures

The pressures weighing on heads, particularly those working in more challenging parts of the country, are intense. Headteacher associations are reporting that a growing number are now considering leaving their positions earlier than they anticipated.

This is deeply worrying. There's a real danger that the school improvement momentum we've seen

over the last few years will soon falter – and if that happens, the most vulnerable in the most disadvantaged communities will be the first to suffer. We desperately need a government which understands this issue and has clear strategies for addressing it, rather than a revolving door of Education Secretaries (eight in five years!)

In schools, positive cultures, rich curriculums, good student progress and achievement across the ability range all stem from having good leadership in place at all levels. As HMCI at Ofsted, I would insist that the *quality of leadership* at the schools and other institutions within Ofsted's remit was the first judgement our inspectors made.

Lonely and stressful

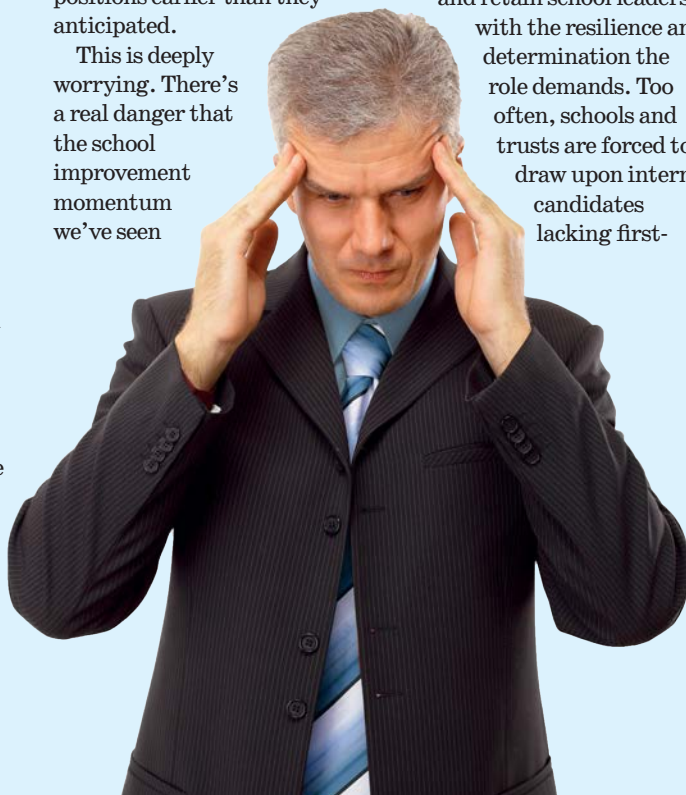
Standards in certain parts of the country are declining because it's difficult to recruit and retain school leaders with the resilience and determination the role demands. Too often, schools and trusts are forced to draw upon internal candidates lacking first-

hand experience of what a good school even looks like – especially in smaller schools or trusts with insufficient economic resources and/or personnel.

Schools and trusts need to adopt a more proactive and creative approach to senior recruitment. External specialists can help to identify potential candidates, while also supporting the difficult process of assessment, interview and selection, and then providing mentoring and professional development to newly-appointed leaders during those crucial first few months.

School leadership can be a lonely and stressful job at the best of times, but even more so for inexperienced leaders assuming the role for the first time. That's why I've joined Academicis – a leadership search and support agency overseen by other recently retired headteachers with successful careers behind them. We want to recruit the next generation of leaders, and support them in one of the best, yet most challenging jobs society has to offer.

Our children and young people deserve to attend good schools that are led well by good leaders who are committed to them and to the communities they serve. The future of our country depends on it.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sir Michael Wilshaw is Associate Director at Academicis and a former Ofsted HMCI



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A helping hand

Offering parents flexibility and support when paying for extracurricular activities will ensure no student has to miss out on often vital learning opportunities, writes **Daniel Harvey**

Educational visits and extracurricular activities provide young people with powerful, motivating and memorable experiences. At good schools, all students will get to experience a wide breadth of opportunities – but for that to be possible, school leaders will need to be very clear as to how students from disadvantaged backgrounds can participate in such activities.

Schools can offer experience days, on which all students within a particular year group take part in a visit. Where trips are an extension of a subject's curriculum, school leaders must ensure that every student who needs to attend can do so.

Subsidised prices

At some schools, precise calculations will be made as to how the budget might be used for the purpose of enabling disadvantaged students to access these opportunities. It may be that leaders can offer a range of payment options by ring-fencing budgets, working directly with parents and exploring the possibility of subsidising prices for disadvantaged families.

It's essential that

these kinds of payment avenues are then communicated to both parents and staff, the latter of whom will be designing and leading the trips, and will therefore need to understand how participation will be supported and aspirations raised.

Many schools have become highly adept at sourcing and accessing funding streams to support valuable education experiences. These might range from using Parliamentary funding to subsidise visits to the House of Commons, to making links with leading universities and promoting their offer to talented students from a diverse set of backgrounds.

Flexibility and time

In my experience, schools can do more to build flexibility into their payment arrangements. Amid the cost of living crisis, many families are now likely to have disrupted and uneven incomes, which can make it difficult to stick to payment plans.

Good, supportive parental engagement can go a long way towards boosting student participation and ensuring payments are ultimately completed. It can often be the case that some families simply need more time.

Overseas visits are typically planned months in advance, and thus easily lend (no pun intended) themselves to payment plans spanning months. As well as easing families' short term financial burdens, long payment plan periods can also allow for more individualised payment arrangements in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

Occasionally, a student many need to pull out of a trip at short notice. If too many opt to do so, it can threaten a trip's financial viability; retaining the option to re-advertise any freed-up places to interested students is a good strategy for preventing places on the trip from becoming more expensive, or even the trip itself from being cancelled outright.

Risks and burdens

It's good practice to ensure consistent and clear communication around whether deposits are non-refundable, details of

payment dates and the consequences of missed payments. Parental expectations need to be managed; you have to ensure trips don't run at a loss.

Make sure parents are also aware of what to do if they encounter financial difficulties and how they can expect to be supported. The payment plan dates for overseas trips are often closely linked to times when a third-party travel company has to pay a significant bill, such as airline tickets or hotel costs. Being able to work with your school business manager on such matters is hugely important.

The financial risk that a trip presents to the school should be assessed by the EV co-ordinator and trip leader so that said risks can be mitigated through effective planning and communication. The EV co-ordinator should monitor the proposed dates and target audiences for trips so that parents aren't lumbered with any unnecessary financial burdens (e.g a history and a geography department both deciding to run education visits to support option choices in Y9).

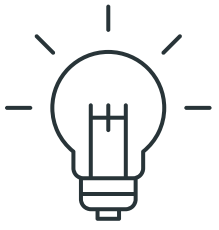
With appropriate planning and support in place, your vision for raising student aspiration and expectations via a diverse programme of activities reflective of your school's values can still be realised.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Daniel Harvey is a GCSE and A Level science teacher and lead on behaviour, pastoral and school culture at an inner city academy





THE NEXT BIG THING

MYVOICE

Giving everyone, everywhere a voice for their safeguarding concerns – open access pupil reporting

[THE TREND]

SAFEGUARDING REPORTING, FOR EVERYONE

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. MyVoice – the latest in a range of award-winning solutions from The Safeguarding Company – is an open access reporting system that will empower anyone associated with your community to report safeguarding concerns. MyVoice is quick to set up, simple to use and gives everyone, everywhere a voice for their safeguarding concerns.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

In 2021, Following historical claims of sexual abuse in schools, the government tasked Ofsted with carrying out a 'rapid review of sexual abuse' in schools and colleges. The report following Ofsted's subsequent review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges recommended that all schools "Provide an anonymous reporting system", with due consideration given to the additional challenges and barriers involved with reporting issues concerning children with SEND.

More recently, the final report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse showed that many institutions lack appropriate policies and procedures. A section of the report, titled 'I kept trying to tell them', details how "Victims and survivors often said that the adults around them failed to notice that they were being sexually abused as a child, despite clear signs." The report also highlighted that 'for some children, incidents are so commonplace that they see no point in reporting them.'

WHAT'S THE IMPACT?

Following the publication of these reports, the need to give everyone – especially children – a voice has never been more urgent. The Ofsted report highlighted that **79% of girls surveyed said they had experienced some form of sexual assault***.

We at The Safeguarding Company were saddened to hear of how these issues are affecting children and young people. It's the duty of every society to take care of all children and adults, wherever they live, learn and work. We therefore hope that the recommendations outlined in both reports will result in positive outcomes, and that with the correct reporting systems in place, children will be able to thrive.

Our bank of free resources can help educate teachers and pupils about what constitutes a safeguarding concern, and how to report them.



WHAT'S NEXT?

In response to these reports' findings and customer demand, we've created MyVoice. This is a bespoke platform that enables anyone to report a concern quickly, easily, and anonymously** (if the establishment so chooses).

We believe that by providing a secure, easily accessible reporting tool, schools can carry out early interventions, embed an open safeguarding culture and provide better support for anyone who needs it.

Schools using MyVoice can set their own mandatory and optional fields within reporting forms to ensure that only specific information is recorded. MyVoice can also be made available to anyone in your community without direct access to MyConcern (our award-winning recording and case management software). MyVoice users can therefore include anyone within your network, such as students, parents, volunteers and contractors.



Contact:
0330 6600 757
info@thesafeguardingcompany.com

Discover More...

Find out more about how MyVoice can help you create the right safeguarding culture in your establishment by visiting thesafeguardingcompany.com/myvoice. You can also join The Safeguarding Community to connect with other safeguarding leads – for more details, visit thesafeguardingcompany.com/the-safeguarding-community

GET INVOLVED

MyVoice is simple to use, and can be integrated within your school's website or intranet facilities within minutes, thus supporting **Ofsted's recommendations for schools to "provide an anonymous reporting system"** that's accessible to all. The option to add custom logos and branding further allows forms to be tailored your organisation or school. See how MyVoice can enhance your pupil recording and safeguarding procedures - thesafeguardingcompany.com/myvoicedemo

*Approximately 900 children aged 13 and above participated in a focus group for the report
**The system's anonymity function can be optionally activated at the customer's behest

TECHNOLOGY + INNOVATION SPECIAL

INSIDE:

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Find out what visitors can expect to see on show at Bett this March, and how the new Connect @ Bett facility will be making the event more productive than ever

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Safeguarding and cybersecurity specialist Mark Bentley shares some advice on what schools should be doing to protect themselves from online attacks and keep their data out of harm's way

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It might seem unlikely, but artificial intelligence may yet prove to be the profession's best means of tackling the teacher retention crisis, says Yvonne Buluma Samba

50 COMPUTERS FOR COLLEAGUES?

ChatGPT has aroused both fascination and fear – but this experimental language model also has some serious admin chops that teachers may find extremely useful, observes Elaine McNally



Event DETAILS

Where?

ExCeL London, Royal Victoria Dock, E16 1XL

When?

The show's opening hours are as follows:

- Wednesday 29th March 2023, 10am to 6pm
- Thursday 30th March 2023, 10am to 8pm
- Friday 31st March 2023, 10am to 5pm

How do I attend?

Entry to Bett is free of charge when registered before March 3rd 2023; find out more at bettshow.com



- Professor Damian Hughes – bestselling author, international speaker and master of high performance culture
- Anne-Marie Imafidon MBE – computer scientist, mathematician and social entrepreneur
- Amol Rajan – Journalist, broadcaster and presenter on BBC Radio 4's *Today*
- Michael Rosen – beloved author and poet

Over the course of each day, visitors will also be free to stop by Bett's large selection of theatres where they can listen to unique content covering a wide range of areas – from policy and digital strategy implementation, to teacher CPD sessions.

The aforementioned Connect @ Bett will meanwhile offer unique opportunities for making new connections right across the education ecosystem, by enabling thousands of education buyers to meet directly with over 500 global solution providers – thus resulting in some 5,000 high-value, 15-minute on-site meetings taking place throughout the event.

Participants will be able to use these sessions for virtual demos, product launches tailored to the requirements of individual users, augmented reality experiences and targeted conversations on specific topics.

Organisers hope that this year's Bett will provide visitors with a forward-thinking, sophisticated networking experience that could well revolutionise how people ultimately engage with edtech to deliver better learning outcomes.

BETT SHOW 2023

If you're interested in finding out where the profession is going over the coming years and the tools that will help it get there, make sure you're among those paying a visit to ExCeL London this March...

Bett UK is the leading global event for educators and students keen to connect and engage with technology providers.

This year's gathering takes place over three days and will see the debut of a new addition – the groundbreaking tech-enabled meetings programme Connect @ Bett, which promises to transform how the different groups and individuals making up the education technology community can connect and collaborate with each other.

Bett 2023 is very much the place to be for anyone wanting to reconnect with the education ecosystem and discover for themselves the enormous imaginative and creative potential of edtech. Via a series of interactive sessions and hands-on show exhibits,

educators and learners alike can find out how the latest advancements in edtech are facilitating entirely new, and ever more exciting ways of enhancing learning – not just at school or college level, but also well into later life.

This year's event will feature over 300 speakers presenting on a huge range of topics related to our six global themes – leadership, futures, inclusion, wellbeing, skills and innovation. Speakers confirmed thus far at the time of writing include:

- Steven Bartlett – the youngest ever 'Dragon' to appear on the show *Dragon's Den* and host of the leading podcast, *Diary of a CEO*

SHAPING THE NARRATIVE

The content presented at Bett 2023 will equip educators from across the globe with the knowledge and skills they'll need to shape today's learners into tomorrow's leaders. These six global themes will serve as the focus for discussions:

1. LEADERSHIP

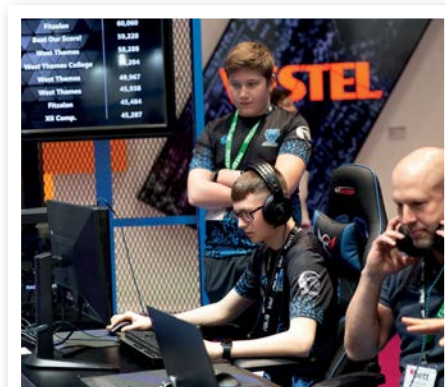
Achieving secure and efficient digital platforms, while fostering reliable partnerships and building an economically viable future for all in education.

2. FUTURES

Championing edtech to steer sustainable development goals through policies, practices and curriculums, in support of key global initiatives.

IN WITH THE NEW

We round up some of the most innovative and sophisticated offerings worth keeping an eye out for in this year's exhibition space...



A highlight of every Bett show is the chance to get up close and hands on with various cutting-edge tools, systems and resources that have the potential to transform educators' lives for the better – and Bett 2023 is shaping up to be no exception.

First up is EDClass (stand SG61, edlounge.co.uk) – a remote teaching platform delivering live tutorials and distance learning through a team of UK-qualified teachers and tutors. As well as featuring a robust set of safeguarding and supervisory functions, it also includes a series of built-in assessment tools that can be used to identify knowledge and skill gaps, and shape learning journeys around each learner's needs.

If you're a member of SLT keen to make more effective use of your school's performance data, you'll want to check out 4Matrix (stand SF60, 4matrix.com), which offers a powerful package of analytics and monitoring tools to support schools and trusts. Visitors will get to see its intuitive dashboards, interactive charts, pupil photo reports and seating plans in action, and quiz company representatives about its unique approach to assessment without levels.

Also there will be the A Star System (stand SE74, astarattendance.com) – the first intelligent attendance monitoring

solution specifically designed for schools, which has thus far received hugely positive feedback from early-adopters.

The system automatically receives attendance data from a school's MIS each night, before generating suggestions and actions for improving pupil attendance in specific cases and increasing parental engagement. All interactions are recorded in 'pupil chronologies' that sit alongside bespoke letters created by the system, thereby reducing schools' administrative burden.

Elsewhere, visitors can have a go on the ISportsWall developed by Amazing Interactives (stand: SM83, amazing-int.com/education). This enables 4m to 6m of wall space to be converted into an exciting interactive learning space, and comes supplied with more than 70 educational modules covering English, science, phonics, history, geography and PE.

Another exhibitor worth catching is Satchel (stand: SG43, teamsatchel.com), which will be guiding visitors through its Satchel One learning platform and new Satchel Pulse wellbeing resource – the latter of which aims to provide school staff with a safe

“A highlight of every Bett are the cutting-edge tools”

environment in which to submit anonymous feedback regarding any concerns with their personal welfare, work-related performance and mental health.

Finally, practitioners grappling with the tricky challenge of putting together engaging PSHE lessons might wish to investigate Your Journey of Life (stand FS4, yourjourneyoflife.co.uk) – a provider of video-led PSHE learning packages.

As well as containing all the student worksheets, teacher guides and statutory coverage you'd expect, Your Journey of Life ventures further into the topics of body image, health and wellbeing, and sex and relationships in ways that will help students map out their adult lives in a more knowledgeable and mature way.

Find the full Bett 2023 exhibitor list at bit.ly/ts122-bett2



3. INCLUSION

Embracing a more equitable approach to education, by providing assistive technologies and fostering an inclusive culture for all students.

4. WELLBEING

Revolutionising approaches to wellbeing and giving consideration to student voice, while reducing teacher workload and increasing staff retention.

5. SKILLS

Helping staff stay empowered and skilled through professional development, at the same time as embracing new and effective approaches consistent with today's technology-driven world.

6. INNOVATION

Collaborating and sparking curiosity, by fostering a love of learning in ever more creative ways – both inside the classroom and beyond.

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Peer power

Harnessing peer marking won't just save you precious time – it can also be great for student outcomes, suggests **David Hillyard**...

A typical classroom practitioner only gets to spend a fraction of their working hours on planning and preparation, with assessment taking up the majority of their time. As more teachers spend their evenings, weekends and holidays working to keep their heads above water, maintaining a healthy work-life balance becomes increasingly difficult.

This, coupled with the constant demand to raise attainment, has made it essential for teachers to find ways of working smarter, not harder; spending less time on evidence collection, and more on preparing great lessons.

Maximum impact

A partial solution can be to engage in peer marking, whereby students mark each other's work. At first, this can seem like an excuse for lazy teaching: 'Surely, students can't mark work accurately...' Actually, they can – providing their teacher carefully considers how, where and why marks are to be awarded, and explicitly shares this information with the class. Peer marking can even improve outcomes by driving home what 'good' looks like.

One of the best exam preparation techniques involves utilising past papers and exam-style questioning. To achieve maximum impact, this style

of revision should be undertaken throughout the course, not just towards the end, so that students can become familiar with the process and expectations of the relevant assessments.

Over time, try setting questions more frequently so that students gain insights into how to improve their answers using mark schemes (while still allowing them to question you where there's doubt).

Awarding MARKS

Many teachers already engage with peer marking, but often via an ad-hoc approach, rather than one embedded in schemes of learning. Peer marking provides a platform for identifying misconceptions, while also allowing students to reflect on their own approach compared to their partner's. Perhaps their handwriting could be clearer, or their answers more succinct.

In his latest 2023 meta-analysis, *Visible Learning: The Sequel*, John

Hattie concludes that peer assessment has a +0.43 effect on learning, meaning students can increase their attainment by almost a whole grade if they engage as much with the marking process as they do in producing work. But marking answers alone won't be enough if students don't understand how they can improve.

When students don't award full marks to their peers, they can indicate feedback using the 'MARKS' letter system: **'M' for maths:** Made a mistake in a calculation **'A' for application:** Didn't apply their answer to the context **'R' for read:** Question wasn't read carefully enough **'K' for knowledge:** Use of incorrect facts **'S' for statements:** Not enough points covered to meet the full marks criteria

Each response can be allocated more than one letter. At the end, the students total up how many of each letter were allocated

and inform their partner where their efforts need to be focused in future. The resulting data can then be collated and used to inform future teaching around exam techniques.

Improved standards

To prevent embarrassment, it can be helpful for peers to mark work anonymously. To do this, substitute

the papers' existing top sheets with a unique number that matches one on the first page of answers, so that they can be matched up later.

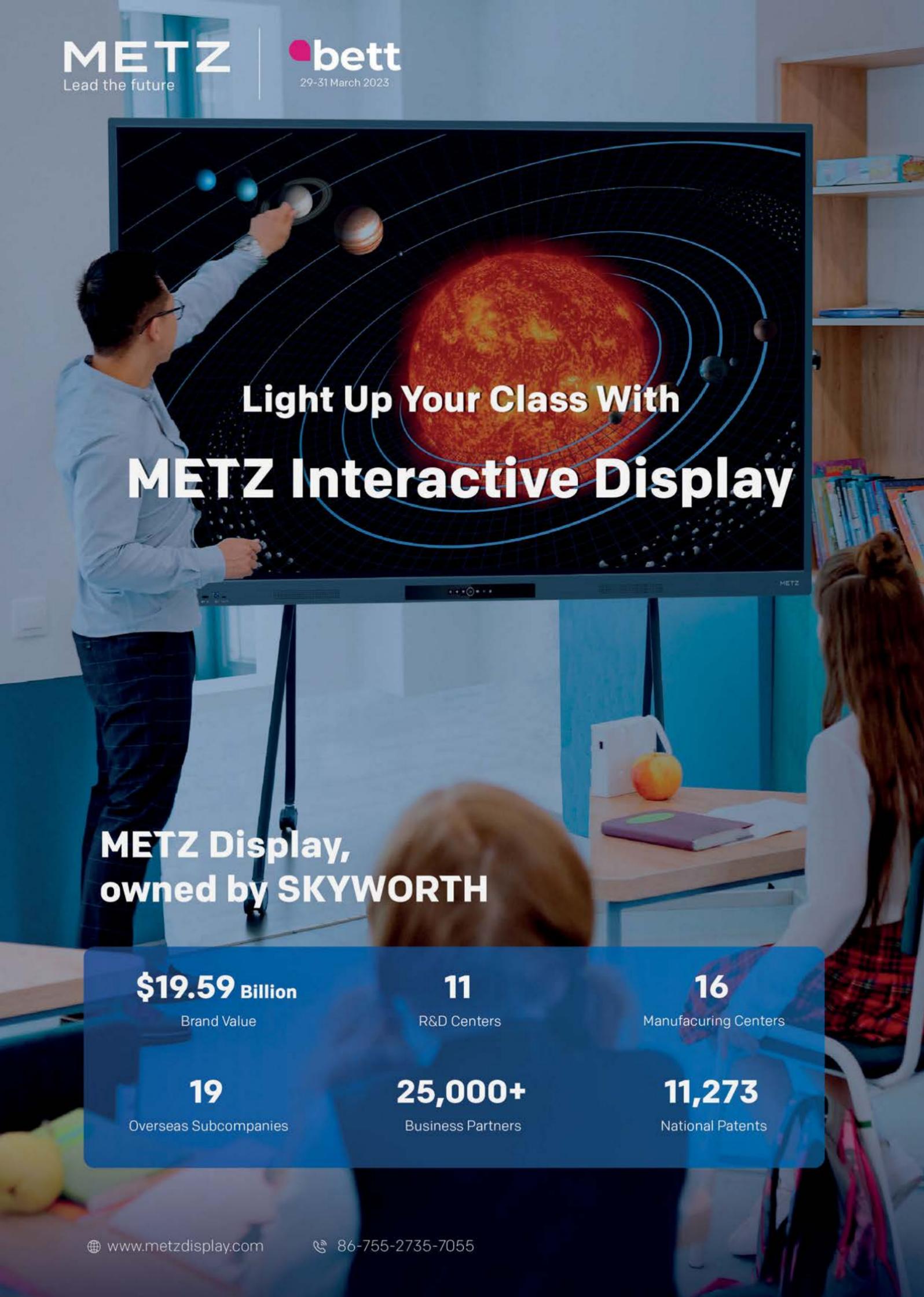
All that remains is to source the questions. Exam boards offer free tools that let teachers quickly create bespoke question papers, and there are many publishers producing practice exam materials in both physical and digital formats. It's in our power to reduce workload and improve education standards – we just need to do it!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Over 25 years, David Hillyard has been a computer science teacher, head of department, assistant headteacher, chair of governors and ITT subject leader at the University of Gloucestershire. As one half of Craig 'n' Dave, he now supports thousands of schools, teachers and students with digital classroom resources – find out more at craigndave.org





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“Connectivity brings complications”

Young people may seem confident in their use of modern technologies, but we should recognise the profound impact that connected devices and online services are having on their development, warns **Robert Wigley**

During childhood and early adulthood, we develop our ‘identity’ as a human. What’s different in the digital age is that children now develop their identity in a world dominated by their internet interactions, rather than just their family, school and locality.

This means a much wider range of information and behaviours than would have affected previous generations will play a part in that development. This wider information will likely reach the child earlier than the physical equivalent would have for previous generations.

And rather than the child driving their own development by experimentation in and outdoors, it is partly being driven by the technology with which they are interacting for so much of the day. The technology may not have a preconceived developmental agenda (other than possibly fostering addiction), but by virtue of what it presents to the child, it will have a significant influence.

The new ‘outdoors’

Understanding this influence is no doubt why Silicon Valley tech stars carefully control their children’s screen time and, as has been well-publicised, often send them to tech-free schools. As long ago as 2011,

200 teachers, psychiatrists, neuroscientists and others wrote to the Daily Telegraph, identifying the drawbacks of digital devices and expressing alarm over what they called ‘the erosion of childhood’.

Susan Greenfield, perhaps the UK’s best-known neuroscientist and author of

campaigner for the rights of children online, describes the danger of ‘missing parents’ when it comes to kids spending time alone online. Talking of boys playing group video games, sometimes with people they don’t know, she says that if you imagine looking through your front window and

“Your boy is sitting in his bedroom. He’s quietly playing his game. He’s at home. He’s safe, right?” Maybe not.

Not developing the same attitude to risk, understanding of the consequences of dangers and awareness that things can go wrong, are among the implications of children spending considerable amounts of time on the internet, rather than playing offline.

A dopamine hit

On the internet, things are often either programmed to ‘work out’, or at least the consequence of them ‘not working out’ is not terminal. Instead, you are tempted to try again. If you get shot or blown up in a computer game, the game ends and you start again with a new life.

“Silicon Valley tech stars carefully control their children’s screen time and often send them to tech-free schools”

Mind Change: How Digital Technologies Are Leaving Their Mark on Our Brains, identifies that in the pre-internet world, children played at home and went ‘outside’ under controlled conditions – in safe places, or with a parent or carer to supervise.

Now children venture onto the internet, the new ‘outdoors’, often completely unsupervised and uncontrolled. She argues that, in relation to the internet, we need to rapidly develop a ‘shared culture of responsibility’. Otherwise, we are allowing our children into the digital equivalent of the ‘great outdoors’ with potentially very harmful consequences.

The ‘predator in the home’ is how Dr Mary Aiken, leading global cyberpsychologist and

seeing your son talking to three men they didn’t know over the garden wall, you would wonder what was going on and probably intervene to find out. Instead, she says, you think

This can lead to children being insufficiently risk-averse or even reckless. It is a dangerous lesson to learn that death (in the game) seemingly has no real-life consequence, and only lasts until you start the next game.

Harvard scientists have demonstrated that sharing personal information about oneself, as promoted on social networking sites, activates the same reward systems that eating and sex stimulate. Greenfield says, "Consequently, the appeal of social networking is rooted in a biological drive of which we are unaware, and which we find difficult to control voluntarily."

We get a dopamine hit every time we post, which excites us, and posting is therefore physiologically

exciting. Greenfield argues that this, together with the new way identity is formed online, is why some have buried the traditional concern for privacy. "If identity is now constructed externally, and is a far more fragile product of the continuous interaction with 'friends', it has uncoupled from the traditional notion of, and need for, privacy."

A weaponised experience

Why are our devices so difficult to put down? Because, as is well documented, they are designed by some of the best neuroscientists in the world to hook us by giving us regular dopamine hits, based on research gathered at huge consumer trials in specialist laboratories.

Adam Alter – who I think first coined the term 'attention crisis' – states, "the problem isn't that people lack willpower" to stay off their devices, but rather "that there are a thousand people on the other side of the screen whose job is to break down the self-regulation you have. As an experience evolves, it becomes an irresistible,

weaponised version of the experience it once was ... In 2004, Facebook was fun; in 2016, it's addictive".

Alter further suggests that in our desire to get more done faster, "We've forgotten to introduce an emergency brake ... or more relevant, the people who produce the engine don't want us to have a brake."

Since 2016, other platforms like Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok have grown rapidly in competition with Facebook, which is now used by the younger generation more for messaging and event planning than for its original purpose.

"Technology companies are trying to get more out of our brains per unit of time," says New York Times journalist, Matt Richtel. "It's as close to a business model as you can imagine. The more engaged you are in what they create, the more successful they are."

In his book *A Deadly Wandering*, he points out that this drives consumers away from what they are intending and trying to focus on, as technology designers aim "to figure out how to engage us as immersively as possible".

Primitive instincts?

Perhaps our devices are so compelling that, however disciplined we might be, we just can't put them down.

According to Richtel, "Increasingly, technology is appealing to and preying on our deep, primitive instincts; parts of us that existed aeons before the phone ... for the power of social connection, the need to stay in touch with friends, family, and business connections."

Richtel observes how the

phone brilliantly combines the effects of Moore's law and Metcalfe's law, with 'Moore' delivering increased personal information ever faster, and 'Metcalfe' making said information as personal as possible to make the gadgets more seductive and addictive.

He concludes that "Fundamentally, the extraordinary pace at which consumers adopt these programs and gadgets is not the product of marketing gimmicks, or their 'cool factor', but because of their extraordinary utility. They serve deep social cravings and needs."

One tangible result of the socially normalised appetite for fame, celebrification and attention has been the revolutionary notion of having to be 'always on'. As MIT professor Sherry Turkle says of adolescents, "They experience their friendships as both sustaining and constraining. Connectivity brings complications ... it can be hard to escape from new group demands. It is common for friends to expect their friends will stay available – a technology-enabled social contract demands continual peer presence. And the tethered self becomes accustomed to its support."



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Robert Wigley is the Chairman of UK Finance, having formerly sat on the UK's Economic Crime Strategic Board, served as EMEA Chairman of Merrill Lynch and as a member of the board of the Bank of England. He is also an adjunct professor at the University of Queensland, a visiting fellow of Oxford University's Saïd Business School and an Honorary Fellow of Cambridge University's Judge Business School

This article is based on an edited extract from his book *Born Digital – The Story of a Distracted Generation* (Whitefox Publishing, £9.99)





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WHY I LOVE...

Karen Morris, curriculum team leader for computing, discusses the impact of Smart Revise in her classroom

ABOUT US:

NAME:

Karen Morris

JOB ROLE:

Curriculum team leader for computing

SCHOOL:

Stroud High School

FAVOURITE FEATURE:

"The peer marking engine has reduced my marking workload."



TALKING ABOUT: SMART REVISE FOR COMPUTER SCIENCE AND BUSINESS

“What challenges did you overcome?”

The two biggest challenges were finding ways to reduce my workload while maintaining high standards in GCSE computer science. Retention of knowledge is so important for exam success. Committing what's learned in class from short- to longer-term memory is best achieved using spaced and interleaved retrieval practice, with students frequently questioned on what they have been taught in the past.

Smart Revise provides students with dynamic, adaptive, personalised sets of questions. Alternatively, I can set up bespoke assessments in less than five minutes with automatic question selection, which also provides an excellent platform for both self-marking and peer marking, thus reducing my workload.

“What has been the impact?”

Students really like the low-stakes, continual assessment Smart Revise provides. It helps them reflect on what they know and where there might be gaps in their knowledge. Automatic reports allow me to diagnose the biggest misconceptions and identify those who need intervention.

Classroom leaderboards have introduced a real competitive spirit to my



CONTACT

smartrevise.co.uk

@craigndave1

See Smart Revise in action at Bett 2023 on stand SP52

classroom, with students eager to beat their peers, enhancing their own knowledge and confidence in the process. Peer marking is a godsend. Not only is it completely managed by the system, it also allows students to gain an understanding of the marking process, helping them to improve their own answers. It's totally anonymous, with marks populating to my markbook. No doubt, Smart Revise has raised attainment and enables us to be a highly performing subject.

“What do the students think?”

Students really like having what is essentially a second teacher to help them. The automatic question selection not only decides which questions they should attempt based on prior performance, but also provides them with revision cards supporting the Leitner system, together with a guided marking system that's well-suited to longer-form questions.

Smart Revise's simple 'yes' or 'no' prompts help students work through the mark schemes, while its assessment outcomes let students see exactly how the mark scheme applies to their answer, instead of just receiving a number of marks. The awards and leaderboards are the biggest boon, encouraging students to use the platform every day.

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Exhibitor picks

As you make your way around this year's exhibition space, be sure to find out how the following providers and experts can help your school become even better...

1



Lapsafe Stand NN51

LapSafe® is the UK's industry leading expert in school charging solutions, including self-service smart lockers, trolleys and cabinets to assist with the deployment of devices in volume.

This year's Bett will see the company showcasing its storage and charging trolley range, as currently used by thousands of schools and colleges across the country. Also on show will be a new range of LapSafe® Smart Lockers

available in a variety of locker bay sizes, as well as live demonstrations of LapSafe®'s own ONARKEN® software – a highly customisable, cloud-based platform that schools can use to centrally manage the contents of any on-site Smart Lockers. The latter promises to cover a range of useful functions, including drop-off and collection, management of IT assets, hot lockers, automated loaning of equipment and more besides.

lapsafe.com



3

METZ Display Stand NM60

Bett 2023 will serve as the launchpad for METZ Display's new H series and Y series interactive displays, both of which have been specifically designed around the needs of education users.

Key features of the 65/75/86/100-inch H series include support for 4K resolutions, 4GB of RAM, 32GB of onboard storage, the option to dual-boot an Android or Windows OS, 20 simultaneous touch points and the ability to screen share from up to four devices at once.

The 65/75/86 Y Series similarly supports 4K and includes the same choice of dual-booting operating systems, but with 2GB of RAM and 16GB of storage in a form factor that's especially well-suited to on-screen handwriting.

metzdisplay.com



4

Smart Revise Stand SP52

Hailing from the computer science resource specialist Craig'n'Dave, Smart Revise is an online course companion for designed for use with GCSE/A Level computer science and GCSE business classes. Its core function is to provide students with sets of personalised and highly adaptable questions to check for understanding and test knowledge retention.

As well as having potential applications for ad-hoc and more formal assessment processes over the course of the academic year, Smart Review can also be used to facilitate peer assessment and even introduce a competitive elements to students' learning, via the inclusion of a leaderboard function.

smartrevise.co.uk

2



Python in Pieces Stand SJ20

Python in Pieces transitions students from block-based coding to Python through guided lessons, open-ended activities, and by providing the ability to translate block-code to Python in both directions. Designed by teachers to improve pupil and teacher confidence in KS3 coding and mapped to the curriculum, its guided lessons allow students to manage their own learning, and teachers to support that learning at every step. Work can be undertaken in class or assigned as homework, accompanied by explainer videos, task lists and/or assistive hints for additional support. To find out more and to request a demo, contact sales@2simple.com.

2simple.com/pythoninpieces



5

The Safeguarding Company Stand: SE62

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 world class customer support and best practice advice. The Safeguarding Company works with schools and MATs to enhance and develop their total safeguarding approach. At BETT, visitors can learn more about the company's holistic approach to safeguarding, and see how their latest solution, MyVoice, has been developed to help schools by facilitating quick, easy, and anonymous reporting of safeguarding concerns across their wider community. To book a consultation for your school, visit thesafeguardingcompany.com/bett

System restore

As the teacher attrition crisis continues to grow, **Yvonne Buluma Samba** looks at how AI could be saviour of admin-burdened educators everywhere...

Teachers often spend up to 25 extra hours a week on marking and administration. For NQTs, that number may be as high as 40 – on top of their standard 40-hour teaching week.

Consequently, teachers are overworked, fed up with time-consuming admin and quitting in droves – which is where AI may have a key role to play. From helping teaching staff reduce their planning and administration to automating question sets, marking and predictive grades, AI has the power to dramatically reduce the marking and admin burden for teachers.

What's the issue?

With most secondary school teachers teaching upwards of 21 hours per week across multiple classes and year groups, and sometimes two or even three different subjects, admin

can build up quickly. From lesson planning to ongoing assessment, marking and feedback, there are typically numerous tasks to fulfil before teachers can actually get on with teaching.

The outdated, manual nature of these tasks only adds to the problem. As Anthony Seldon, deputy chairman of the recent Times Education Commission, remarked last year, “Britain still has a recognisably 19th century school system, facilitated by 20th century technology, which is now unfit for purpose in the 21st century.”

Much of the technology already present in schools will often have been rolled out in a fragmented way, with not enough thought given as to how teachers and students will use it. At a typical school, you can expect to see PowerPoint being used for presentations, Teams employed for staff scheduling, the deployment of subject-specific interactive learning applications such as Cahoot and entirely separate platforms used

to co-ordinate classroom learning – which, if anything, merely adds yet more volume to teachers’ workload.

The solution

The alternative to this is using AI-powered platforms to log and process learning data, thus enabling teachers to automatically assesses, personalise and adapt the learning in lessons while benefitting from immediate intervention and real-time evaluation.

Pre-planned lessons can be tailored to specific classes and even individual students, with in-lesson questioning run through an app or platform that lets teachers automatically check for understanding and adapt lessons accordingly.

This type of real-time evaluation does away with the need for frequent manual marking by capturing data about where students may need more support or have gaps in their knowledge. The same data can then be used to effectively automate and personalise homework assignments and future lesson planning.

As well as reducing teacher admin, the technology can give

teachers the tools, data and time to focus on what they do best – supporting student learning and coaching students, rather than simply examining them.

The benefits of AI extend even further beyond that. Many teachers will have experienced students being reluctant to speak up and ask for help. As a result, teachers can sometimes miss that some students haven’t yet grasped a particular topic, storing up problems for later.

Having conducted pilots with a hundred teachers and a thousand students, we’ve found that AI-enabled technology can provide teachers with precisely the information they need to see which pupils have understood lesson content. Providing an alternative means of communication makes it more likely that less confident students will ask questions and flag moments of misunderstanding, thus improving engagement.

The AI technology space within schools is developing fast. We need to arm our schools with tools fit for the 21st century that can help tackle the administrative burden and finally reduce teacher attrition.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Yvonne Buluma Samba is a former teacher and the CEO of e-spaces – an AI-enabled real time teaching and marking platform. E-spaces is currently running pilot programmes with several schools and would welcome approaches from any schools or teachers interested in participating; to find out more, visit e-spaces.org or follow @e_spaces



The tech talks back

As an accessible, friendly way of harnessing AI, ChatGPT could expand your teaching possibilities at a stroke – but it's not without flaws, notes **Elaine McNally**...

It's late. I'm scowling at an impenetrably complicated scheme of work that I should be turning into lessons. I'm tired and all out of fresh ideas.

But what if there was another way, whereby lesson preparation could be outsourced to the ultimate digital assistant? Well, that's just one of many different possibilities afforded by ChatGPT, which has recently generated a storm of excitement and controversy amongst teachers, astonishing and alarming them in equal measure...

What is ChatGPT?

Put simply, ChatGPT is a large language model trained on a massive (and constantly growing) dataset, presented via a simple-looking online text box into which users can type instructions and questions and receive human-like responses.

Developed and maintained by the AI research laboratory OpenAI it's very young, having only been 'launched' publicly in November 2022.

As well as offering extraordinary, seemingly limitless scope for potential applications, it's also very affable and *chatty*. Oddly, while using it I even find myself often saying 'please' and 'thank you'! If you've yet to experience this powerful technology for yourself, do visit openai.com/blog/chatgpt. Its capabilities will likely amaze you, but also leave you wondering about the possible implications for teachers.

Initial social media responses have ranged from

enthusiasm, to doom-laden predictions concerning the obliteration of our current model of education. Personally, I don't think we're facing an end of days extinction event. We can acknowledge concerns, whilst also recognising that the functions afforded by ChatGPT might create an exciting upheaval in educational practice.

How do you use it?

In short, ChatGPT simply answers any questions that you ask of it by generating a written response to instructions. The user types in one or more directives, following which ChatGPT's response will be rapidly tapped out within seconds.

"ChatGPT will have a dramatic impact on teaching and learning"

It's compelling to watch – it's sometimes taken me longer to type out my instructions than for ChatGPT to write its response!

In terms of the practical benefits for teachers, imagine being able to quickly generate questions, quizzes, problems and other resources. Well, now you can – just make sure you ask it to provide the answers!

Similarly, if you want a lesson plan or even a scheme of work, you just have to ask for one, remembering to request some learning objectives and example activities while you're at it. A cloze task can be a good way of getting started. Asking about possible

misconceptions could also help you see topics from a student's point of view.

What about key vocabulary and definitions presented in a table? Or perhaps an additional list with some words deliberately misspelt, so that students can practice spotting errors? ChatGPT can also be used to simplify information. Present it with an article and then ask it for a summary via bullet points, or in less than 60 words.

How about generating challenge? Ask it for some suggested research topics. Personalised learning? Feed it specific prompts to generate customised content based on your students' needs and interests.

written reports and proposals. ChatGPT could dramatically reduce teacher workload by automating some of most time-consuming aspects of the job.

What's even more remarkable is how ChatGPT can build knowledge *as you add* to its responses, learning from feedback and revising its information over time.



Potential pitfalls

That said, ChatGPT isn't perfect. None of the responses it gave me were 100% ideal; all required an expert teacher to interpret and adapt. They were starting points, rather than replacements.

It's also clear that while ChatGPT can replicate the correct form, tone and register of a plausible response, it will make errors, or even invent things, in entertaining ways. The ChatGPT FAQ resource tells us that ChatGPT will occasionally 'hallucinate' outputs, which sounds funny, but should alert us to just how important human judgement and subject expertise really is.

Some teachers have successfully given ChatGPT work to mark, though others have urged caution. In any case, ChatGPT

users should always carefully review and evaluate the material it generates.

It seems inevitable that ChatGPT will have a dramatic impact on teaching and learning. Schools will have to consider how they engage with it and draw up a set of AI policies based on honest conversations with students, resulting in measures that set clear guidelines for acceptable use.

Is there a risk of ChatGPT leading to superficial subject understanding, an erosion of critical thinking and/or diminished creativity? I doubt it. It may well be helpful in reducing administration, and lightening workloads, but it won't replace the expert teachers helping students to learn and apply their knowledge.

Reality check

In terms of students' writing, there's more incentive now than ever to encourage handwriting and ensure that students are using laptops responsibly. It's possible that we may start to assess writing and set homework differently, perhaps by making greater use of flipped learning.

I know that I'm going to be more vigilant about when and where my students write their assignments, though I'm fairly sure any teacher could spot a ChatGPT-generated essay. Its style is uncannily accurate and human-like, but also very anodyne, lacking any of the idiosyncratic personal style we'll always see among our students.

There are also some important facts to understand if you plan on using ChatGPT with your students. Its creator, OpenAI, collects and reviews all data provided in ChatGPT interactions, with clear implications for any children using the platform.

Indeed, the site's user agreement states, *'Our service is not directed to children under the age of 13' and that 'You must be 18 years or older and able to form a binding contract with OpenAI to use the Services.'*

ChatGPT is incredible, but let's not be too dazzled by its capabilities or embrace it uncritically. Aside from anything else, at the time of writing the site frequently exceeds capacity, so I'll probably end up writing those lesson plans myself.

(Though I might wait to see what it thinks about the draft ChatGPT school policy I have on my to-do list...)

HOW TO SPEAK CHATGPT

If you want ChatGPT to create content for you, be aware that clear, precise input will result in better bespoke output.

Basic:

Write 6 sentences on holidays, in French, as an example for students.

Better:

Write in French. Write 6 sentences on holidays for a Year 8 French class in the first person. Use the perfect tense for the first 3 sentences and the present tense for the last 3. Write the sentences again using a different pronoun

Basic:

Explain how different coastal landforms are created by erosion.

Better:

Explain how different coastal landforms are created by erosion for a Year 9 geography student. Use bullet points. Then write 8 multiple choice questions about the information. Then turn the information into a gap fill exercise. List the missing words at the end.

Basic:

Plan a lesson on nature poetry

Better:

Plan a lesson on nature poetry for year 8. Include learning objectives about analysing poetry. The lesson should include a hook to get students interested. Give a suggestion for a key poem to discuss and 5 questions about this poem. Include



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elaine McNally (@mrsmacteach33) is an English head of department; for more information, visit her blog at mrsmacteach33.wordpress.com



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Maximise your funding

With Pupil Premium rates due to rise in April, the Education Endowment Foundation looks at what schools can do to ensure their funding goes as far as it can...

With the spring term now well underway, many school leaders' thoughts will be focused on budgeting for the next financial year. This is likely to be especially difficult for many SLTs this year, due to significant pressures relating to the cost-of-living crisis.

Now more than ever, schools need assurances that the teaching and learning approaches they're investing in will have the desired effect on pupil progress. It's also crucial that they cater for the needs of pupils from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds – who we know fared worse during the pandemic, and are more likely to be struggling in these turbulent times.

Effective Pupil Premium (PP) spending is key to achieving this. As such, the

DfE's recent announcement that PP rates will increase by 5% from April this year is both welcome and much needed. But how can schools ensure they make the most of it?

1. High quality teaching

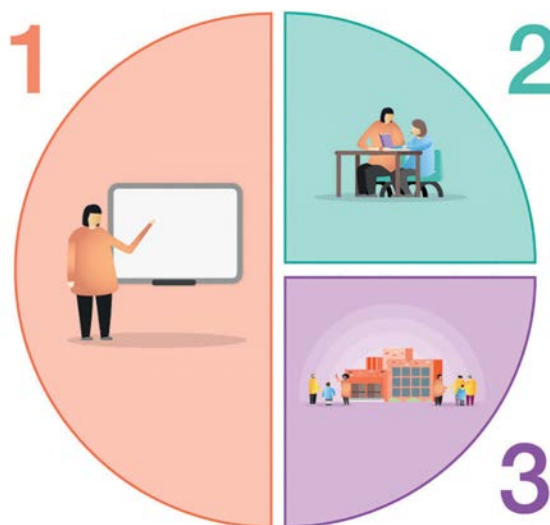
Research shows that ensuring all pupils have access to high quality teaching is the most effective approach to closing the gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils

and their classmates. Making necessary improvements to teaching and learning should therefore be the top priority for school leaders looking to drive meaningful change in their settings.

2. Targeted academic support

There may be pupils requiring

extra support above and beyond what high quality teaching alone can provide. Schools may want to explore interventions that complement high quality whole class teaching in order to make sure struggling learners progress.



Areas for reflection

Our tiered approach to PP, as illustrated by this circular and segmented diagram, is designed to help school leaders identify their school's particular area(s) for development, by inviting them to reflect on where best to focus their investment.



WE USE PP FOR... ATTENDANCE ISSUES

Ben Normington,
Principal, Hill View
Academy, Huddersfield

With 52% of pupils in receipt of PP, we face key barriers that relate to attendance and social and emotional learning.

We've used PP funding to implement specific strategies to support attendance, including targeted interventions for emotional self-regulation and positive peer interactions.

3. Wider strategies

The evidence tells us that investing in removing non-academic barriers to attainment can also have a significant impact on pupil attainment. Our PP guide offers a range of strategies that schools might choose to adopt, in line with each of these three areas of focus.

Closing the attainment gap isn't the responsibility of schools alone. We have a collective duty to ensure that children succeed, regardless of their socioeconomic background. However, making purposeful use of crucial supports like PP can make an important, positive difference for those pupils who need it most.



WE USE PP FOR ... INTERVENTIONS

Stef Habershon – Headteacher, Chorlton Park Primary School, Manchester

We have 28.2% of pupils in receipt of PP funding. Our funding is put towards timetabled targeted academic interventions, including early language interventions, writing conferencing and 1:1 reading interventions.

We also employ a learning mentor to work with identified children, including those with disadvantage, on bespoke nurture programs.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Professor Becky Francis CBE is CEO of the Education Endowment Foundation; for more information, visit educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk

Don't be afraid

There's fear in the air ahead of this year's English literature exams which we need to dispel, writes **Jennifer Hampton**...

We'll often discuss fear in English literature classes – but as students across the country embark on the first full set of English literature papers since 2019, before COVID transformed the landscape, that fear has escaped the texts and burrowed into the minds of teachers and young people alike.

Depending on the exam board, teachers may have not recently taught either poetry, the modern text or the 19th century novel. For their part, students may have learning gaps, or be less resilient readers, having experienced learning in lockdown during Y8 and Y9.

This year, both literature papers are to be sat a week apart in May. An Ofqual statement made in September 2022, announcing the return of pre-pandemic grading, has additionally sent shivers down the spines of teachers and leaders (though students will be 'protected', if grades are lower than normal, by senior examiners acting on prior attainment data and grades achieved by previous cohorts).

Our task is to therefore try and eradicate those pre-exam fears plaguing our students, our colleagues and ourselves – but how should we do that?

Little wins

If a certain type of exam response has become a threatening behemoth, break it down. Learn a set of quotations in class around a specific theme or

character, perhaps with the aid of mini whiteboards, pair talk, timed conditions and/or buckets of praise.

A set of short quotations firmly lodged in students' heads equals a win, and with every win we feel more successful, more empowered and less afraid.

We practise a similar approach when it comes to verbs that explain effect ('emphasises', 'highlights', 'reinforces', 'creates' etc.) and phrases relating to social and historical context. We can do it with adjectives that describe character, or indeed many aspects of the complex responses our students will be required to give in the exam.

Active revision modelling

Beware those pretty notebooks and flashcards that haven't yet become grubby through continual handling and flipping. It's worth reflecting on how many of our students see their studies and exam preparation as a solitary, inactive and ultimately passive activity.

I myself now know that the hours I spent studying for both GCSE and A Level exams could have been utilised so much more productively had I known just how ineffective my 1am note copying sessions really were.

As Pie Corbett – the brilliant teacher, trainer and poet behind Talk For Writing – says, 'If you can't say it, you can't write it'. That's certainly something I need to consider more in my own practice.

Emphasise to your students that their beautifully neat notes are next to useless unless they're also kept securely in their heads.

Immersion and joy

All of us will have different opinions on the texts we teach, the selections we've made and the factors governing those choices. We need to recognise that at some point, we have to acknowledge the value and worth offered by even our most loathed set texts.

Select the best chapter, best act or best online poetry reading of the texts in question, and then just read and/or listen to them – potentially for the duration of a whole lesson. Invite your students to identify their own favourite lines, or pick out a work's most humorous moments or haunting sentences.

Try to recapture that moment when your fresh-faced Y10 students were first presented with a text's then-new words, long before assessments, mocks and feedback began to eat away at its appeal. Relax, immerse and do your best to help everyone enjoy those well-written texts as if PETER paragraphs had never been invented.

Pair writing

How can we turn the demands of assessment objectives on responses inside out? One way is to outline what these actually are, and ask students to co-write a single response. Two brains, one paragraph/essay.

By doing this, we're not

only facilitating the exposure of different writing styles and different interpretations, but also *different sets of notes*.

Needless to say, this is an activity in which students will need to be matched carefully, and for which ground rules will need to be laid down. Both students must physically contribute to the actual writing. Both sets of notes/resources will need to be accessible, and both should actually understand what it is they're writing.

Once the activity is complete, invite your students to look back over their responses and take the best phrases and ideas from both. Yes, it can take practice and monitoring to get this right, but even the



inevitable minor disagreements between partners will help to develop their knowledge and expression.

Tentative language
'Could', 'maybe', 'possibly', 'perhaps'; such tentative

language (often heavily demanded at undergraduate and Master's level) can give nervous students a renewed sense of confidence, especially when faced with previously unseen texts.

Model sentences that contain these words. Encourage their use in verbal responses during class discussion. Explain how they're frequently employed in academic writing, and emphasise how they can raise the intellectual bar of our writing while also, fabulously, giving us an insurance policy if we're perhaps a little bit off....

Comprehension and the basics

As evidence mounts that students'

MAKING REVISION EFFECTIVE

- Take time in lessons to demonstrate self-testing (even the old 'look, say, cover, write, check').
- Show students how to map a theme or character via colourful mind-maps, or by using images accompanied by text.
- Remind students that they can use their omnipresent phones to record verbal notes after watching online revision videos, or themselves talking through an essay before writing it.
- Encourage students to test each other, or have a family member step in. It doesn't matter if nan doesn't know the novel – give her a list of points on paper, and ask her to make sure you've said them all.

"Recapture that moment when your Y10 students were first presented with a text's then-new words"

comprehension skills often aren't as developed as we think, it's worth checking to see if they really get it –

notably Shakespeare – do students know what's happening in any given scene and that scene's purpose? Sequencing and summarising exercises, quizzes, and 'true or false' questioning will help reveal misunderstanding.

I hate the phrase, 'We've got this', but in this case, I really think we do, and that our students should be told. Perhaps not in the booming personal trainer voice those words evoke in my head, but in myriad little ways; in every lesson, with every small win, and alongside every positive change in habit and chunk of confidence gained.

It's not like we haven't made the hitherto unfamiliar known, and therefore not threatening to our students before – remote live learning, TAGS, the list goes on.

We don't need to be afraid.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jenny Hampton (@brightonteacher) is an English teacher, literacy lead and former SLE (literacy)

especially when it comes to unseen poetry. How often have

you watched students spot a simile prior to reading the whole poem? Most of us will also have seen the detrimental effects of not truly understanding a text when devising language responses. I sometimes wonder if we've successfully trained students in identifying language to the detriment of comprehending texts in their entirety, and what they're actually about.

Equally, when it comes to other studied texts –

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– Sir Matthew Bourne OBE, director and choreographer

DEVELOP CREATIVITY

"Cultural education gives children and young people the opportunity to develop their individual and collective creativity. That's why our goal is for every child and young person to have the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts."

– Darren Henley, Chief Executive, Arts Council England

FOCUS PLANNING

"Artsmark has given me a clearer focus for what I aspire the creative arts to deliver to our students and how I would like to move forward. This includes training, and involving teachers who may not be from an arts background to use the arts more actively as a tool."

– Ryan McClelland, senior art teacher at the Bridge School (Artsmark Platinum)

RECEIVE SUPPORT

"Artsmark provides a nationally recognised award for arts practice in schools and other educational settings. It allows leaders to review, plan and improve their arts offer to young people with support from a range of cultural organisations."

– Pauline Tambling CBE, arts professional and trustee for Roundhouse

Get parents involved

Justin Robbins and **Karen Dempster** set out four steps that could transform your school's parental engagement for the better within a year

The effect of parental engagement in a student's learning over their school career is equivalent to adding two or three years to their education. That's a claim made by John Hattie in his 2008 book *Visible Learning* and borne out by decades of research. Involved parents make a significant positive contribution to children's personal development and academic success.

Weighed against that, however, is an Education Endowment Foundation review carried across 150 schools, which found that more than 35 different approaches to parental engagement were being pursued. Based on that evidence, it seems many schools are unclear as to what effective parental engagement actually looks like.

We believe there's an effective way of getting parental engagement working in the short term that will deliver long-term benefits – by having schools focus on the four pillars of 'knowledge', 'environment', 'culture' and 'communication'.

1. Knowledge

Do parents understand the impact they can have by actively engaging with school? The starting point for any intervention is knowledge, which means understanding why parental engagement is important, what 'good' looks like, and when, where and how it happens.

Start by helping parents understand that when they're actively involved with their child's education, their



child is more likely to enjoy school and achieve better outcomes. Be clear as to your minimum standards and the actions parents must take to ensure those standards are met.

2. Environment

Is your school 'parent friendly'? By that, we don't just mean the school building environment but also the range and extent of support offered to parents, which should ideally help families develop good educational habits at home.

Create a safe and inclusive environment at school so that parents can be encouraged to share their experiences with you and the parents of other students. This could take the form of regular surveys, formal focus groups or more informal drop-in coffee sessions based around specific topics.

3. Culture

Is your school culture carefully planned or more typically left to happen?

Developing trusted relationships with parents – by, for example, demonstrating transparency and empathy in all parent/school interactions – will contribute to the kind of positive culture that supports better parental engagement.

It's a two-way process that extends to shows of appreciation for the job parents do too. It means taking time to say 'Thank you' to parents on an ongoing basis – not just during parents' evenings.

4. Communication

An unplanned parental communications strategy will result in people being bombarded with uncoordinated emails, multiple text messages and app notifications, which nobody wants. Instead, start by listening, and asking for parents' suggestions on how your communications with them can be improved.

Create a calendar of

planned communications in a simple spreadsheet and share this across the school team. Avoid sending more than one message to the same people on the same day, and avoid potentially confusing school jargon where possible.

Perhaps your less confident colleagues could benefit from some communication training? Parents could in turn be issued with an 'after-school communication checklist' to help them have engaging discussions with their child about the school day and identify any additional support needed.

What next?

You can see how your school is faring with its parental engagement with a simple self-check resource (available via bit.ly/ts122-parents1).

If you can address the four pillars with immediate actions, you'll likely enjoy short-term improvements that include improved attendance, a belief by pupils that school matters, supportive parents and pupils who in turn feel supported.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Justin Robbins and Karen Dempster are co-founders of the communication consultancy Fit2Communicate; further information and templates can be found at fit2communicate.com

Their new book, *The Four Pillars of Parental Engagement: Empowering schools to connect better with parents* and pupils is available now (£16.99, Independent Thinking Press)

Everything's connected

Implementing the Prevent duty can seem like an onerous task – which is why adopting a whole school approach is the best way of getting the job done, advises **Mubina Asaria...**

Implementing the Prevent duty effectively requires consistency, transparency and above all, a whole school approach. All of this is necessary to ensure that appropriate support is available at all times for individuals who may demonstrate vulnerabilities to radicalisation.

Seen from a certain perspective, this is merely an extension of safeguarding procedures that schools will have been following for many years to protect young people from child sexual exploitation, drugs and assorted other forms of harm.

There are, however, certain issues and compliance considerations unique to Prevent and the areas it's intended to tackle. So what can schools do to help manage those challenges in an effective, practical and ultimately sustainable way?

1 Sufficient planning

The key to formulating a successful Prevent strategy is to first carry out detailed planning that involves all members of the school community.

Schools can begin this process by nominating an individual staff member as their Prevent lead, and then establishing a Prevent working group tasked with setting out a clear, shared vision. This group could potentially include members of SLT, your DSL, the school's PSHE/RSHE lead, any staff charged with leading on CPD and a member of the governing body.

Of course, assuming you're able to pull together the staff

you have in mind, it may not be practical for everyone to attend all sessions. The most important consideration, however, is that the working group is able to communicate effectively – chiefly by

around Prevent, this is a good time for undertaking a risk assessment – informed by engagement with your LA's Prevent team – of potential harms present within your locality.

Learning – has partnered with the DfE to develop a Prevent Self-Assessment Tool specifically for schools (see '7 requirements'), the purpose of which is to provide a practical overview of all Prevent areas to consider throughout the course of the academic year.

“Ofsted inspectors now actively look for evidence of how British values permeate throughout schools”

ensuring all stakeholders are regularly updated on any developments, and given opportunities to share their progress.

A good starting point for your Prevent working group's activities could be to carry out a baseline survey to identify immediate Prevent priorities – such as building staff confidence around current vulnerabilities, or promoting a consistent understanding of what's meant by 'British values'.

This needn't be a Prevent-specific exercise – indeed, it could potentially be incorporated into your wider local risk assessment processes. That said, implementing the Prevent duty is far from a 'tick-box' exercise. To that end, LGfL – The National Grid for

3 Promoting British Values

Ofsted inspectors now actively look for evidence of how British values permeate throughout schools. Many settings have already undertaken some work in this area by reviewing their offerings in PSHE, RE and citizenship among other

2 Policy and practice

The working group's initial findings and discussions should then be carefully assessed, and used to embed an overarching Prevent strategy into the wider school culture. As well as reviewing your school's policy and practices



subjects, and combining these with extracurricular initiatives via assemblies, circle time, school councils and debating clubs to promote student voice and opportunities to discuss topical issues in a safe space.

Adopting a contextual approach to safeguarding is also helpful for embedding the foundational knowledge and skills that are essential for managing risk. Examples of this in action might entail conversations with young people in which they're invited to reflect on their own personal context and any risk factors they could experience as a result – whether that be online, or via association with peers or adults.

These could then be combined with cross-curricular opportunities for building on key safeguarding themes. Teachers can make use of free resources to help facilitate discussion, build resilience to extremism and teach about fundamental

British values, including LGfL's own 'Going

Too Far' – an interactive resource for primary and secondary schools designed to help students better understand extremism and promote critical thinking with the aid of videos, case studies and various scenario-based activities.

Schools could also consider mapping their British values both across and beyond the curriculum to provide a snapshot of where students are, and identify any potential gaps.

4 Practice online safety

The latest Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales (see bit.ly/ts122-P1) includes the requirement for schools to “ensure children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school, including by establishing appropriate levels of filtering”.

It's important to remember that no online content filtering solution is foolproof. Schools should therefore consider adopting a holistic approach to practising online safety – for instance, by ensuring policies and user agreements are kept updated and signed off for approval;

ARE YOU PREVENT COMPLIANT?

The Prevent duty requires schools to meet a set of requirements under the following seven key areas:

1. Leadership and management
2. Risk assessment
3. Working in partnership
4. Training
5. Online safety
6. Safeguarding school premises
7. Building children's resilience to radicalisation

The Prevent Duty Self-Assessment Tool for Schools produced by LGfL and the DfE can be downloaded via bit.ly/ts121-LL2

monitoring all online activity by pupils and staff; embedding age-appropriate curriculums; and promoting parental engagement in your broader safeguarding and Prevent-related efforts.

An annual online safety audit can be helpful for highlighting and clarifying the often fluid nature of technological change.

5 Communicate, review and monitor

Only through clear communication and consistent messaging will you be able to sustain awareness of your strategy across the school community.

That said, it's also

important to also ensure that all staff have received relevant training (which is subsequently logged) and that regular updates are provided at staff briefings. It's worth encouraging governors to attend safeguarding sessions and any relevant staff training or assemblies, if possible, alongside the scrutiny they should already be undertaking of your Prevent policy and practice.

You could additionally invite parents to attend a session aimed at raising awareness of wider safeguarding issues. Include some discussion of Prevent within the context of online safety concerns, and emphasise the part that parents can play in supporting your school's policies at home.

Finally, be sure to factor in time for reviewing, monitoring and evaluating your strategy via regular meetings with your Prevent or safeguarding team.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mubina Asaria is a safeguarding consultant at the edtech charity LGfL – The National Grid for Learning; for more information, visit lgfl.net or follow @LGfL

Learning at a DISTANCE

Virtual CPD can perform a valuable role in schools' training offer, says **Adam Riches** – so long as leaders recognise its distinct strengths and weaknesses compared to in-person sessions...

There's no escaping the fact that COVID was a hugely difficult experience for everyone in education. Across the teaching sector, as with many professions, educators were forced to adapt their working practices to fit the new normal.

Of course, this 'normal' didn't bed in for some time – but having since begun to regain some semblance of normality, we can now reflect on what, as a profession, we've been able

realised. So what can teachers and leaders do to ensure they make the most of it?

Session content

With CPD, it's sometimes a good idea to start with your end goal and work backwards. If you're looking at delivering sessions in-house, decide first if a virtual CPD solution is really your best option, or if the content would be better delivered face-to-face.

Subject-specific CPD tends to be more suited to in-person delivery due to the

previously, virtual CPD may be a good option. This type of content is typically more suited to being delivered in chunks, allowing shorter sessions to be accessed remotely and giving staff the option to access internal CPD sessions in their classrooms or offices, if preferred.

Online interactions

The swift adoption of virtual teaching during COVID meant that teachers and educators had to rapidly upskill themselves in the use of online platforms for content delivery. A by-product of this, coupled with the speedy development of new online teaching tools, is that virtual teaching is now widely considered as much more viable and effective than in years gone by.

Virtual teaching for CPD purposes can now include engaging interactive elements via the functions offered by some learning platforms, with quizzes and breakout rooms really adding to the session experience. Facilitators will need to know what they're doing, though. The advantages presented by virtual CPD will only be effective if the facilitator has specifically designed the session with online delivery in mind. It's no good taking content originally intended for

in-person delivery and expecting it to be equally as effective when delivered via screens without due planning and preparation.

Of course, it's no secret that online CPD sessions can't help but lose that 'human factor', however well run they are. It's difficult to capture the sense of natural networking that comes from being in the physical presence of other teachers, and the unique form of engagement that comes from having participants gathered together in same room.

That said, a huge advantage of online CPD is the sheer breadth and scale of the networking and discussion it can enable.

“With CPD, it's sometimes good to start with your end goal and work backwards”

to learn from working at a distance.

One key feature of the post-COVID landscape is the now common offer of virtual CPD for teachers. This has provided teachers with vastly more accessible and convenient avenues for specialist training, while also allowing schools to significantly reduce their CPD costs in terms of time and money.

However, given the wider pool of potential providers and (with relatively little vetting in place), virtual CPD has to be managed effectively if its positives are to be

intricacies involved, and because it typically requires a fair amount of reactivity on the part of the person delivering the course.

Online CPD is a better fit for content delivered in short, sharp bursts. It's no secret that people's concentration levels tend to be somewhat shorter when they're online rather than in the same room, so keep that in mind when deploying virtual CPD as part of your teacher development program.

If your intention is to build on key skills, knowledge or understanding introduced

Your professional development efforts needn't be limited to participants from within your school or local area, but can now just as easily involve participants and experts from different regions, or even different countries.

Format considerations

Something we all learnt during lockdown is that increased reliance on digital devices can and will result in screen fatigue. If your virtual CPD session will be a long one, emphasise the format of the session from the start and factor in regular breaks so that your attendees stay engaged.

“Quizzes and breakout rooms really add to the session experience”

It's almost more important to ensure that tasks are completed and chunked clearly when delivering remotely than in person, since you don't want people wandering off for a cuppa or a snack. You need everyone to remain involved in the session.

In many ways, the format of virtual CPD offers more intensity in short, sharp bursts than may be possible in a face-to-face session.

Cognitive load

Something else that's always at the forefront of our minds as teachers when delivering content to children is cognitive load. When

sitting in CPD sessions, I'm often astounded by how often presenters seem to forget that adults have limited working memories too! Whether delivering face-to-face or at a distance, CPD facilitators must ensure they keep the extraneous load low.

Virtual CPD offers a different set of challenges in this area compared to traditional CPD. Teachers are less likely to be distracted by other professionals when learning virtually, but the temptation to slyly catch up on some work, or the distractions presented by, for example, family members will be far higher. Shrewd use of interactive elements will ensure that virtual CPD participation and engagement levels remain high.

Another point to consider with respect to cognitive load is that many will be undertaking an online course after finishing work for the day, or during the school day itself. We all know the fatigue that can follow a full day of teaching – and also the way in which colleagues will pop their head round the door at any given moment.

Virtual delivery that utilises well-chunked resources will let you better guide the process. Remember that visuals are hugely important, and don't overwhelm your participants with presentation slides that are dense with text. If you need to show them detailed information, circulate this as an accompanying resource document so that it's easier for them to maintain concentration.

Participant feedback

Of all the trade-offs that come with virtual CPD, one of the hardest for facilitators is the loss of human feedback immediately after a session's conclusion. While it's not quite the same, you can still give online participants a chance to leave feedback after sessions, allowing you to

5 STEPS FOR VIRTUAL CPD SUCCESS

- Ensure that your topic and course contents are appropriate for virtual delivery
- Keep sessions engaging by using interactive platform tools
- Chunk up content
- Keep your visual stimulus clear and uncluttered
- Listen to what staff tell you about the online courses they attend

make adjustments to future sessions. A simple anonymous feedback questionnaire can help you quickly glean information about how a session went and rethink things, if necessary.

Similarly, if staff are attending externally-hosted sessions, asking them about their experience and how effective they thought the sessions were can help you safeguard future investments of time and money.

Virtual CPD is ultimately a valuable and hugely flexible resource to have as part of your development offering, whether delivered internally or externally. It is, however, important to choose the right type of CPD delivery for the right topic.

Take time to consider which types of content might be best suited to online sessions, and be sure to carefully examine how your virtual CPD is being facilitated, to ensure the time is being utilised in the best possible way.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Adam Riches is a senior leader for teaching and learning; follow him at @teachmrriches

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The hit squad myth

Adrian Lyons ponders the accusations that Ofsted are dispatching ‘hit squads’ to rob schools of their hard-earned Outstanding rating...

In December last year, there was much discussion in the press regarding so called ‘hit squads’ being deployed by Ofsted to downgrade previously Outstanding schools. Yet in my experience, schools that enjoy exemption from routine inspection for many years often fail to stay up to date with Ofsted requirements.

Having led many inspections, I soon became familiar with the danger signs – a big one being school leaders’ evident lack of familiarity with the Inspection Handbook. I’ve sat in on meetings where a member of staff had to lend their copy of the Handbook to the school leader in order to explain the evaluation criteria.

Two measures

The current inspection framework is built on the Chief Inspector’s assertion that schools have two accountability measures – one being academic outcomes and the other being Ofsted inspection. She (sensibly) sees no point in Ofsted basing its ratings solely around the first measure, since in her view, some schools have become highly adept at training pupils to gain high grades in exams, without them actually learning enough about the subjects in question.

As the Chief Inspector noted when introducing the latest inspection framework, “If their entire school experience has been designed to push them through mark-scheme hoops, rather

than developing a deep body of knowledge, they will struggle in later study.”

In many ways, school inspection is far from being a level playing field, but at least with regards to Ofsted’s expectations of curriculum planning, it now is. Whether outcomes are very high or merely average, inspectors expect to see a curriculum for each subject that builds up knowledge in a clear sequence, and which helps pupils remember knowledge by building on previous learning and repetition.

This focus on curriculum isn’t exactly new, but Ofsted’s balancing of outcomes against how those outcomes are arrived at marks a significant change. I’d argue that a failure to understand this in relation to Ofsted’s ‘quality of education’ judgement is what’s led to those complaints of ‘hit squads’ downgrading schools.

Huge flaw

‘Quality of education’ might be the limiting judgement in assessing a school’s overall effectiveness, but Ofsted also

judges other areas where expectations are now higher – chiefly safeguarding and the related area of ‘personal development’.

Almost two years ago, one of the country’s highest performing schools in terms of academic outcomes – one that had been sitting on an Outstanding grade for many years – received an emergency inspection.

According to the subsequent report, “A significant number of pupils feel uncomfortable or unsafe in school and report being the subject of insulting and damaging comments regarding their gender, appearance, race or sexual orientation. Pupils are too often reluctant to pass their concerns on to staff. Systems for dealing with safeguarding matters do not work properly. Consequently, leaders are largely unaware of the difficulties some pupils face.”

Soon after, a parent of a student at the school asked me how Ofsted could rate the school as Inadequate when it gained such strong results. I asked if he’d read the report. He hadn’t.

I countered that if he did, he’d see how said results were acknowledged in the school’s ‘Good’ grade for ‘quality of education’ but that this didn’t make it a good, or even safe school to attend. This was always the huge flaw in Michael Gove’s exemption from inspection for ‘Outstanding’ schools.

Unnecessary arguments

When the current Chief Inspector was appointed, there was hope amongst many HMI that the four-grade scale would be abolished altogether. The Outstanding grade was widely seen as the cause of numerous unnecessary arguments with school leaders, particularly over the awarding of Good, rather than Outstanding ratings.

The grading remained, but HMCI concluded that far too many Outstandings were being awarded. In the current framework, Good judgements are therefore a ‘best fit’, but before Outstanding can even be considered, every point in the Good criteria must be met securely. This has significantly raised the bar – and not before time.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Adrian Lyons was one of Her Majesty’s Inspectors between 2005 and 2021 and now works with MATs, teacher training providers and LAs to support education; find out more at adrianlyonsconsulting.com

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FOCUS ON: PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Competition, motivation, inclusion – this issue, we look how all three are key ingredients for quality PE provision, and how practitioners can ensure students are getting as much as possible out of their lessons

What can PE teachers do to encourage positive attitudes in their lessons and ensure no students are left out?

THE AGENDA:

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PE is for EVERYONE

In many respects, PE lessons are far more inclusive than they used to be, but there's still room for improvement, observes **Zeph Bennett**...

Firstly, I'd like to put it on record what a fantastic job PE teachers do in SEND schools to provide opportunities for students to engage in physical activity. Working in a mainstream secondary school, I know that I'm worlds away from the challenges my counterparts face on a daily basis in specialist settings.

That said, let's be clear from the outset – schools, and PE departments in particular, have a responsibility under the 2010 Equality Act to prevent discriminatory participation. Schools must also ensure that students with SEND have access to the same adapted curriculum as other students, and that the same opportunities for learning and development are promoted to all students equally.

Long gone are the days when one would see SEND students standing on the sidelines officiating, or acting as equipment monitors during lessons. Nowadays, students are bound by ever-expanding curriculum options to demonstrate progress through participation.

Battling misconceptions

Before we look at the PE curriculum itself, it's worth

noting how schools must battle several misconceptions before the planning and implementation of a new curriculum can even begin.

One challenge in recent years has been disengagement among students and parents due to the belief that a child's motor cognitive skills aren't

appropriate for traditional PE lessons. This form of disengagement is usually supported by parents, and will often lead to alternative provision that ensures the student will rarely, if ever, experience physical activity within a school setting.

Thankfully, however, following the introduction of the Statutory Inclusion Statement in 2003 (since replaced by Education, Health and Care plans) this kind of arrangement would raise significant red flags during a school's inspection. Curriculums must now be modified to accommodate all students, and any potential barriers to participation removed as part of the curriculum planning process.

As such, the main problem in this area in 2023 is ensuring that parents are on board with schools' efforts to increase physical activity opportunities for their children, and helping parents overcome the unconscious bias of their own PE experiences decades before.

– think catching, throwing and jumping – rather than focusing primarily on their progress in traditional 'invasion' games like hockey, football and rugby.

The importance now placed on strength and conditioning in elite sports has trickled down into PE curriculums, with a growing number of schools having on-site gym rooms, thus broadening the range of physical activities students can choose from.

Yet for all that, we can't pretend that SEND provision in PE is good enough. One statutory requirement is for students with SEND who require TA support to have this in PE lessons. As a PE practitioner for 27 years, I can confirm that this is sadly often not the case, and that students with severe motor coordination difficulties aren't always accompanied in lessons.

One can lay the blame for this at the school, but if you dig a little deeper, the problem invariably leads back to central funding cuts, and the necessity to ensure that classrooms are supported by an ever decreasing pool of available TAs.

The TA problem

When I recently ran a Twitter poll asking PE practitioners about

“Gone are the days when one would see SEND students standing on the sidelines officiating”

Curriculum depth

Admittedly, PE does still involve a certain degree of competition-based learning compared to other subjects, with students in mixed ability sets regularly playing games against each other during lessons.

This isn't the PE that some may remember from the 1980s, though. The subject's curriculum depth and variety has since increased significantly, with many schools now opting for a choice-driven approach to curriculums at KS4 where students can participate in gym classes, trampolining, table tennis and volleyball, among other activities.

At KS3 there's now much more emphasis on developing students' basic motor skills

the support they saw being provided, only 44% of respondents stated having specific SEND support in place during their PE lessons. PE departments have increasingly had to adapt to teaching students with SEND without the aid of specialist TAs.

At first glance, this would seem like an impossible situation – but what we've actually seen is a remarkable evolution of curriculum intent. Curriculums designed around the progress of individual needs with physical activities (such as specific sports) is often now a secondary consideration. Those PE departments that make inclusive education work will thread adapted activities into their curriculum seamlessly,

allowing all students to experience physical activity on some level.

One PE department currently on this journey of evolution can be found at Carlton Bolling school in Bradford. Head of PE Paul Brennan initially arrived to find a department where 'inclusion' amounted to SEND students acting as assistants to the teacher, rather than learners within the class.

This being far from what Paul wanted, he promptly rewrote the department's curriculum intent to ensure that all students could take

part in warm-ups, and fully participate in adapted drills and games within a mixed ability setting. Paul has since

carefully crafted a second curriculum that runs in parallel with the main curriculum, which enables students to get involved at different points along a specific unit of work. This adapted curriculum employs the STEP model, whereby 'Space', 'Task', 'Equipment' and 'People' considerations are mapped out so that

student participation is maximised.

Key to its success is giving SEND students a role within every drill or game – whether it be taking kick off, or taking free hits in a small game of hockey. The department's adapted curriculum is still in its early stages, but based around a model that's increasingly being seen as the norm in many PE departments across the country.

After-school issues

And yet, despite the gradual diminishing of barriers to lesson participation, access to extracurricular activities remains a hot topic. Most schools offer an extensive programme of after-school sporting and physical activities, but uptake among SEND students remains low.

This can primarily be down to after-school options being weighted in favour of competitive fixtures and team practice – and with even less availability of support staff, the activities on offer will hence be less varied compared to PE lessons.

After a second Twitter poll canvassing people's thoughts on extracurricular PE activities specifically for SEND students, I found that an overwhelming 81% of respondents were based at schools that didn't provide any.

Over time, we've learnt that curriculums have to be adapted if they're to be inclusive. It follows that if we fail to do the same when it comes to extracurricular provision, we simply won't attract students with SEND to those sessions. For our part, we run a SEND trampolining club once a week – a regular session that initially started with five students, and which now frequently attracts 25+.

Ever evolving

The PE curriculum continues to evolve at pace, with departments broadening their offerings and developing dual purpose curriculums. Specific support for SEND students is proving to be an ongoing issue, however, in the face of educational cutbacks and the spreading of limited TA capacity across multiple subjects.

As a result, departments are becoming ever more ingenious in their efforts to improve student participation, amid a proliferation of new sports and hybrid activities designed to be non-invasive and non-competitive that strike a chord with students and teachers alike.

Competitive Boccia festivals are now organised by a number of local authorities which successfully draw in most schools – but with these typically only taking place annually, the next step must be to integrate more extracurricular opportunities for SEND students throughout the year.

Finally, it's worth noting that the vast majority of SEND students participate in PE without any need for an adaptive curriculum, thriving and progressing like any other student. This serves to show how a successful curriculum pathway for SEND students can be both progressive and supportive, depending on the individual needs of the students in question.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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“Yes, coach...”

It takes a certain set of skills and habits to coach, coax and cajole a school sports team into giving it their all on the pitch or court, writes **Tom Corker**...

One of the great delights in being a teacher is the opportunity to get involved in clubs and teams outside of ‘normal’ lessons. Given the wide array of sports that students enjoy – be it badminton, football, rugby, netball, cricket, basketball, hockey or many others – providing them with opportunities to compete against other students is a responsibility that needn’t be the sole preserve of PE staff.

It’s an excellent chance for teachers to involve themselves in something they’re passionate about while building a unique rapport with students – but at the end of an exhausting day for teachers and students alike, team sessions can be quite the challenge. So how can you get the best out of your team? As a sports coach both inside and outside of school, I have a few thoughts to offer...

1. Set routines

Routines are everything. If you collectively decide that the team should meet at 3.30pm on Wednesdays, stick to it. I’ve seen countless teams lose momentum and players lose interest after staff members have had to cancel or rearrange sessions. If you suspect that you can’t always commit, enlist a colleague who can cover in your absence.

2. Stay focused

Most weeks will involve training sessions rather than matches, so keep everything you do focused on the sport. Ensure that students are *doing* straight away and practising elements of gameplay. Avoid any lining up, standing and watching – going straight in to active gameplay will see to it that everyone is getting active from the get-go.

3. Practise decision-making

In every team sport, one thing that participants will constantly be doing is *making decisions*. To what extent does your training encourage effective decision-making, such as

where to pass the ball, where to shoot or where to run?

4. Keep things small

The smaller the group, the better. I recently calculated that if I have 15 footballers with me for an hour and we only play with one ball, each player will get four minutes on the ball at best, which won’t be enough to develop each player. If we adjust that to three balls amongst 15 players, now everyone has 12 minutes on the ball. Change it again to five balls, and now everyone has 20 minutes on the ball.

5. Seek marginal gains

I’ve recently started using the ‘10% better’ strategy with the children. I know they work hard, but could they make their gameplay that little bit better? Outside of training, I’ll share with them an anecdote to try and encourage marginal gains in matches. For example, there’s a great 20-second video analysis of Japan competing in a World Cup which shows how closing the players down led to mistakes and eventually a goal. I’ve also shown them reports of how ex-England goalkeeper David James would allegedly make mistakes due to his video gaming addiction. Before their next match, the players all told me they hadn’t touched technology that day!

Praise and critique

To develop players’ confidence, I’ll ensure

there are multiple opportunities for success in training before building to more challenging situations. The team and I will praise individual members for every good thing they do, whilst quietly pointing out something else they could do to make things that little bit better. Reinforce this by sending positive messages home and you’ll soon have a player who can walk out onto the pitch feeling six feet tall.

6. Assign roles and rewards

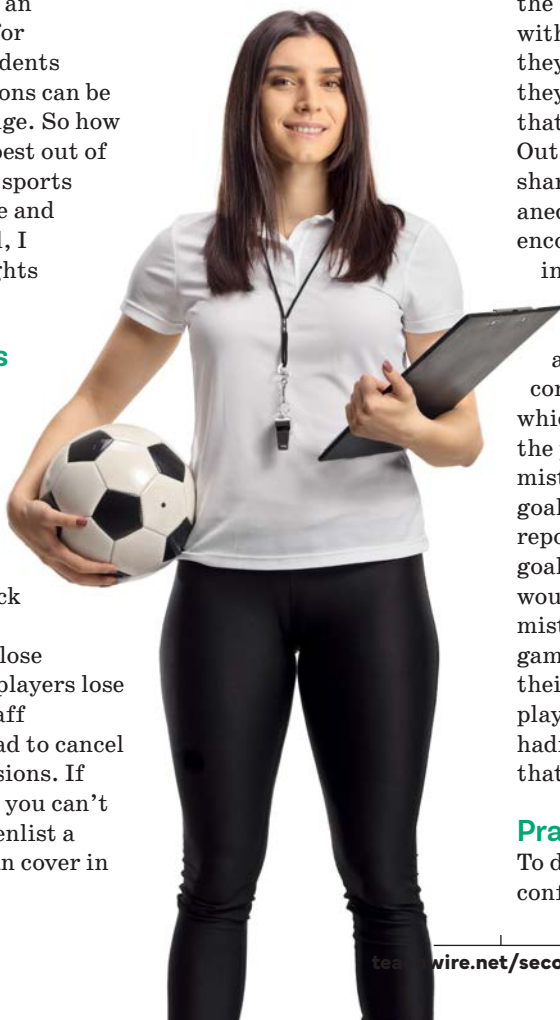
Every player has their role. Substitutes support their team mates and collect the ball when it goes out. Some will assume leadership duties, helping with warm-ups and collecting equipment. After each fixture I’ll then reward the ‘Men of the match’, since acknowledging two players rather than one lets me emphasise the team ethic, whilst also praising some of the more unknown players.

Coaching isn’t easy, but a few simple tricks can help ensure things run smoothly while getting the best out of your players, so that you can hopefully secure some great memories for all of you in the long-run.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tom Corker (@tom_corker) is a D&T teacher and consultant, technology trust lead and junior football coach



Competitive SPIRITS

PE is unique for how it can encourage students to fiercely compete and succeed, observes **Adam Douglas** – which is why teachers should carefully harness this impulse towards positive ends...

What's great about PE, is that it allows young people

to grow in different ways. Not just physically, but also by developing vital life skills.

Over the past few years, there's been a renewed look at the competitive elements of PE, both within formal PE lessons and in extracurricular opportunities. Competition in itself, however, isn't inherently good or bad. What matters is how that competitive element is fostered and delivered, and how young people are supported through their experiences of it.

We're seeing a move away from the notion that competition is only 'for' certain young people who are traditionally competent and want to play sport outside of school, and towards the view that competition can be effectively delivered to a whole range of young people – so long as an understanding of their motivations and reasons for wanting to participate are at the heart of that delivery.

Creating the culture

In the broadest sense, competition can take place between one person and another, but also within yourself, in the form of achieving your own set of targets and goals. Within the same PE lesson, you might therefore have very different layers of competition taking place simultaneously – some of

which may be better suited to certain individuals than others.

Some sports incorporate this really well, such as Ultimate Frisbee and its value scoring of opponents. Players don't just compete against the other team by scoring points in a traditional sense, but also by

with those emotions, and will need clarity as to the types of behaviours we want to see from them.

Emotional regulation

With the best will in the world, however, PE teachers can't be expected to pre-empt

“There will always be moments when young people struggle to control their emotions”

awarding them a score based on values they demonstrate during the game, be it teamwork, resilience and so forth. Crucially, those scores contribute to overall competition rankings, so they're not just a token, but fundamental to what the event is about.

PE teachers are ultimately responsible for creating the atmosphere, culture and environment students will be competing in. If you focus on rewarding certain types of behaviour, don't be surprised when that's the type of behaviour students end up exhibiting.

That's why it's necessary to understand young people more deeply, and learn how to manage their emotions effectively, rather than simply hoping that the 'right' kind of emotions present themselves. Young people in turn need to develop knowledge and understanding on how to deal

everything. There will always be moments when young people struggle to control their emotions – sometimes because of experiences within the lesson itself, a previous encounter elsewhere in school or something at home that's affecting them. The trigger could come from anywhere.

There are number of things teachers can do to prevent this from giving rise to negative behaviours. They can reinforce the types of behaviours they wish to see in lessons, and set clear expectations from the very start. When designing lessons, they can try to avoid the high pressure situation of having everything hinge on a final all-important match or competition at the end.

Sometimes, the desire to challenge someone else, be better and win can easily spill over into more negative impulses. Instead, teachers can be smarter in

how they harness the spirit of competition in their lessons. Rather than tracking the score of a single climactic match, split that match up into halves or quarters so that there are regular opportunities to recognise success in people at different stages.

Role models

For all that young people can struggle to control their emotions, adults can find this difficult too. The lens through which young people see the wider world is now shaped more and more by social media and other outlets that present them with certain role models. Who those role models are, the people they're listening to and where they're getting their advice from is hugely important.

That's why I believe professional sport has a part to play in demonstrating and celebrating great sporting behaviours, but also in calling out poor behaviours.



GOOD SPORTS

- It's important for teachers to understand their students' motivations, and recognise and allow for the different levels of physical literacy, knowledge and confidence each individual student will have regarding general fitness or the activity at hand
- Teachers can use preparation time ahead of competitive fixtures – or even the bus journey – to focus students' attention on the behaviours they wish to see, and the success criteria they'll be looking for
- Adopting a success criteria that extends no further than simply scoring more points or goals and winning will establish expectations for students to succeed against factors entirely out of their control, such as skilled opposing sides or unfamiliar environments.
- If, instead, this measure of success is based on effective demonstrations of teamwork, particular styles of play or positive approaches to the game, good habits and attitudes will be reinforced over time.



There's always going to be a wider context when we see displays of aggressive behaviour in elite level sport, but ultimately, if young people are adopting certain players and competitors with problematic behavioural histories as role models, the relevant sporting bodies and authorities have a responsibility to manage and effectively promote the more positive values they want their sport to be associated with.

That won't necessarily stop young people from continuing to follow their favourite role models via TV and the internet, but there will ultimately be no more important role models in their lives than the people raising them at home, the friends they play with and the teachers who are teaching them.

The right way to act

Ideally, there ought to be a diverse group of role models who our young people feel they can engage with and learn from. Whatever you're into and whoever you are, you should be able to see someone who looks like you, or thinks like you, or

who you can relate to.

Conversations should take place between teachers and young people in which the latter are encouraged to share sport-related behavioural incidents they've seen on TV and elsewhere and talk about them. Together, they can then start to unpack whether it's the type of behaviour the students want to exhibit.

Part of what a PE teacher does is build conversations around the types of role models that young people are seeing and thinking about. If nothing else, it's a great learning moment to include within a PE lesson.

The more teachers can talk to young people, support them in respecting themselves and help them understand the aims and purpose of their lessons, the more likely it is that positive behaviours and a better spirit of competition will become reinforced over time.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Adam Douglas is development officer – sport programmes at the Youth Sport Trust; for more information, visit youthsporttrust.org or follow @youthsporttrust

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ASK THE EXPERT

“Building rapport is vital for adventure”

How developing understanding with young people can help them achieve more than they ever thought possible

What fears do you encounter in young people these days?

Aside from the usual fear of heights, or making your bed in the morning, what we often see at Outward Bound are young people that are anxious about their futures. Whether it's pressure from their parents or employers, passing exams, getting the right grades or going to uni... There can be a real frustration that we 'adults' don't always understand where they're coming from. That's why we work especially hard in the mountains and out on the water to build rapport with them

Did you face similar fears when you were growing up?

When I grew up, one of my fears was being judged as not good enough or failing to live up to others' expectations, and I can see that in many young people today. What changed that for me was discovering what I was good at – which just so happened to be hiking with the Scouts. That then turned into climbing and, sure enough, I discovered I had talents, which enabled me to grow personally and overcome those fears.

You mentioned rapport earlier, what role does that play?

To me, rapport is all about being interested, curious and understanding someone with a view to building a positive relationship. At Outward Bound we might ask a young person all about where they live, what they enjoy or what school and home life is like. And then, as we get to know their hopes, fears and aspirations, we can begin to make them feel comfortable enough to express themselves freely, face their fears and thrive.



EXPERT PROFILE

NAME:
Martin Cooper

JOB TITLE:
Director of Learning and Adventure

AREA OF EXPERTISE:
Enabling young people to balance risk, reward and responsibility

BEST PART OF MY JOB:
Seeing young people thrive in new environments, in ways they may find difficult in traditional classrooms

How does this work in practice?

When we succeed, we notice that young people suddenly feel really empowered and act differently to how they would in a normal classroom environment. A child that struggles with maths but can read a map; the shy one who finds their voice, or the loud one who learns to listen. For some, this experience is so profound that we've seen young people not want to return home, because Outward Bound has given them such a sense of belonging, that they feel at home in the mountains.

What's your advice for a young person today?

When I was younger, I was told that I'd never be a mountaineering instructor. It was a write-off. That was really difficult for me to hear, and yet here I am, with a whole career in that scene. But Outward Bound isn't about making future instructors – it's about discovering your potential. So, my advice would be to follow positive roots in your life, as they can lead to real achievement. Try not to internalise negative feedback. Instead, seek out what you enjoy or have a flare for, and challenge yourself to do more of that and get better at it.

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Beyond belief

If we show students how much we believe in them and their abilities, they'll typically rise to the occasion, asserts **Matt MacGuire**...

I first heard about the 'Pygmalion effect' about 10 years ago while teaching at a successful school. I love a bit of Greek mythology, so it's an idea that was always going to stick with me.

Sculptor-king Pygmalion sculpts his ideal version of womanhood from ivory. He falls in love with his statue, and prays to the goddess Venus to bring the statue to life. Venus obliges.

In the field of psychology, the term 'Pygmalion effect' describes a phenomenon whereby people (or in our case, students) perform better when we have higher expectations of them. Our expectations are the ivory statue; students' subsequent performance is the beautiful statue brought to life.

Recognition of the Pygmalion effect in relation to teaching and learning was embedded in the ethos of my old school. Throughout everything we did ran the belief that the children could, and would be successful, resulting in something of a virtuous cycle.

We already had fantastic exam success year on year, so it was easy for teachers to believe that the students would be successful. This genuine belief led teachers to proceed as if success were inevitable, which in turn inspired confidence among the students – who then succeeded.

While there were many factors at play, I firmly believe that this self-fulfilling prophecy aided by the Pygmalion effect was an important one.

Pygmalion positivity

Looking back, I see now how this 'Pygmalion positivity' was manifested in three key ways: *high expectations of conduct, high expectations of effort and positive predictions.*

The phrase 'high expectations' needs some unpacking. This wasn't characterised by a zero tolerance approach to behaviour (though that does have its place, and has proven to be effective in recent years at a number of academy schools). Rather, it was characterised by an approach that effectively said to the students, *'I'm on your side, and I know you can and will do this'*.

Perhaps 'genuine belief' is a better way of putting it than

came to like and respect their teachers. After all, it's lovely when people smile at you, isn't it? Doesn't it make it easier to believe that those doing the smiling are on your side? That they believe in you?

I think Fitzgerald's description of Gatsby's smile says it best: "It was one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it, that you may come across four or five times in life ... It understood you just so far as you wanted to be understood, believed in you as you would like to believe in yourself, and assured you that it had precisely the impression of you that, at your best, you hoped to convey."

Lift your students up with a smile like Gatsby's.

effect involves maintaining a similar belief that students will do the right thing in their behaviour. At my current school, we've recently focused on tackling apathy and inactivity in lessons – students who 'fail to launch' when lessons get underway, or who put their heads on their desk.

We seek to proactively prevent apathy through near-constant teacher circulation when students are working (not during teacher explanations). This communicates to students that we care about the work they're producing, and that they can't hide their passivity from the teacher.

If necessary, we'll intervene using a 'warm-strict' approach. The teacher makes it clear that the work has to be completed, with

"Perhaps 'genuine belief' is a better way of putting it than 'high expectations'"

'high expectations'. After all, it was Pygmalion's belief that brought his beautiful Galatea to life – not his behaviour management.

Teachers *believed* that students could behave like respectful citizens of our school. One way of indicating this was through the simple act of smiling, after our headteacher told us to smile at students in the corridors. This seemed a little odd at first, particularly to those of us who didn't have a naturally 'smiley' disposition, but the effect of this little routine was profound.

Students smiled back, but more importantly, students

The 'warm-strict' approach

Alongside this 'positively friendly' approach, we maintained a gentle, yet emphatic approach to sanctioning behaviour. In the corridors, for example, I'd say "Your shirt has come untucked," rather than "Tuck your shirt in now". The aim was to show how we believed students wanted to do the right thing. I'd then record the sanction, but it wouldn't lead to a consequence unless the same student's shirt was found untucked three times that day.

In the classroom, harnessing the Pygmalion

no compromise – but that they'll do everything they can to jump-start the struggling student. This might involve an alternative explanation, a sentence starter or additional resources.

My favourite way of getting

passive students started is to write an opening sentence for them, before drawing a line further down the page. I'll then say, "*I bet you can get down to here in five minutes*", which usually works. The student lives up to my belief in them, often thanks to those useful words, '*I bet you can.*'

Rewind, reteach

When teachers believe that students *can*, students themselves tend to pick up on this and believe they can. But let's be clear about something – I don't believe in magic.

There's no way a student can do something simply because they believe they can. All a Pygmalion approach can ultimately do is afford students the confidence to apply their existing skills and

knowledge. As their teacher, you can't do a poor job of preparing them for a particular task and then simply cross your fingers and believe in them.

If you genuinely believe that students can't do a task you've planned for them, then stop. You've messed up. Don't put them through 60 minutes of failure for no reason. Rewind. Reteach. Prepare them for success.

Instead, gauge the difficulty level of your content carefully, provide the right level of scaffolding and plan for supported practice that achieves a high level of success. You need your students to believe they can, so don't set them a test that will prove they can't.

Also, don't allow any students to struggle and fail throughout an extended assessment task, even if the rest of the class are doing well. If that one student can't do something, then they need your help. So intervene and support them.

Don't allow students to internalise a sense of failure, even if they've brought the situation upon

themselves through inattention, lack of preparation and effort. You don't want them to reproduce this in the exam hall, so show them they can do it. Believe in them when they don't believe in themselves.

The Golem effect

Finally – and perhaps contentiously – I believe we should err on the 'Pygmalion' side when allocating target grades, issuing predictions and even when reporting on attainment. That's because the Pygmalion Effect has an evil inverse known as the 'Golem effect' – the idea that students will similarly perform in line with lower expectations.

If we set targets that are too low, or give out attainment grades that are too harsh, we dampen hopes and aspirations for higher grades. We leave our students feeling their potential in a subject is lower than they thought. Duly deflated, they then lose enthusiasm, expend less effort and ultimately make less progress.

We have to be responsible, particularly when predicting GCSE grades. We must be careful not to build unrealistic hopes, but – and I appreciate this is anecdotal – in 15 years of teaching, I've yet to see my slightly positive, optimistic predictions do any harm. I have, however, seen students deflated and discouraged by the Golem effect.

It feels good to be Pygmalion. Believe in your students and bring them to life.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Matt MacGuire (@MacGrammar) is an assistant headteacher; this article is based on a post originally published at his blog, Ten Rules for Teaching (tenrulesforteaching.com)

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- The memorable STEM lessons you can teach through school trips
- How to craft a blended learning approach that works for you
- Discover the hidden features and functions of the edtech you already use

Apples and oranges

Graded inspections for previously Outstanding schools may have been long overdue, but let's not pretend that Ofsted are comparing like with like, argues **Paul Buckland**

As the head of an Outstanding school that had been exempt from routine inspection since 2009, I welcomed the decision in 2020 to treat my school the same as any other under the new Education Inspection Framework (EIF).

Those 10 years without inspection represented a long span of time, which had seen numerous changes at the school including my appointment. I was proud of the school, and felt confident that we would again be recognised as Outstanding.

Frustrated and bewildered

Amanda Spielman's recent pronouncements about the impact of the EIF on schools like mine makes me very glad that I retired in 2022, before the call came. Yet her words also left me frustrated and bewildered.

Confronted with her clumsy contortion of the relevant facts and data, I was reminded of Mark Twain's comments around "Lies, damned lies, and statistics." For any readers who missed what she said, Spielman's comments appeared in a November 2022 release by Ofsted, entitled 'A return to inspection: the story (so far) of previously exempt outstanding schools.'

The 'story' it told was that over 80% (308) of schools previously rated Outstanding hadn't retained said rating when given a graded inspection within the past year, with the majority

instead judged to be good. 17% were rated Requires Improvement, and 4% Inadequate.

Now, is it just me, or is that 'so far' in the report's title rather ominous?

All or nothing

Based on this data, Spielman's verdict was that, "The exemption was a policy founded on the hope that high standards, once achieved, would never drop, and that freedom from inspection might drive them even higher. These outcomes show that removing a school from scrutiny does not make it better."

Sounds reasonable? It would be if the same criteria had been used. Under the older School Inspection Framework (SIF), Ofsted used a 'best fit' methodology to draw its conclusions, while inspectors used their professional judgement to reach grades.

Under the newer EIF, that's been replaced with an 'all or nothing' approach to the Outstanding judgement. School must now first meet all the criteria for a Good judgement, and then fulfil a

further set of specific 'Outstanding' requirements to be recognised as such.

HMCI's comments remind me of the old adage about comparing apples and oranges. There will inevitably be a high likelihood of different outcomes for schools being judged years later under very different criteria. This doesn't necessarily make them any 'better' or 'worse' – just rated differently under a wholly separate assessment system.

Cheap shot

I would argue that it's time for someone else to take over as HMCI and run Ofsted as an organisation that actually lives up to its professed aims: *"To bring about improvement in education provision [so that] providers can learn intelligently from the judgements made."*

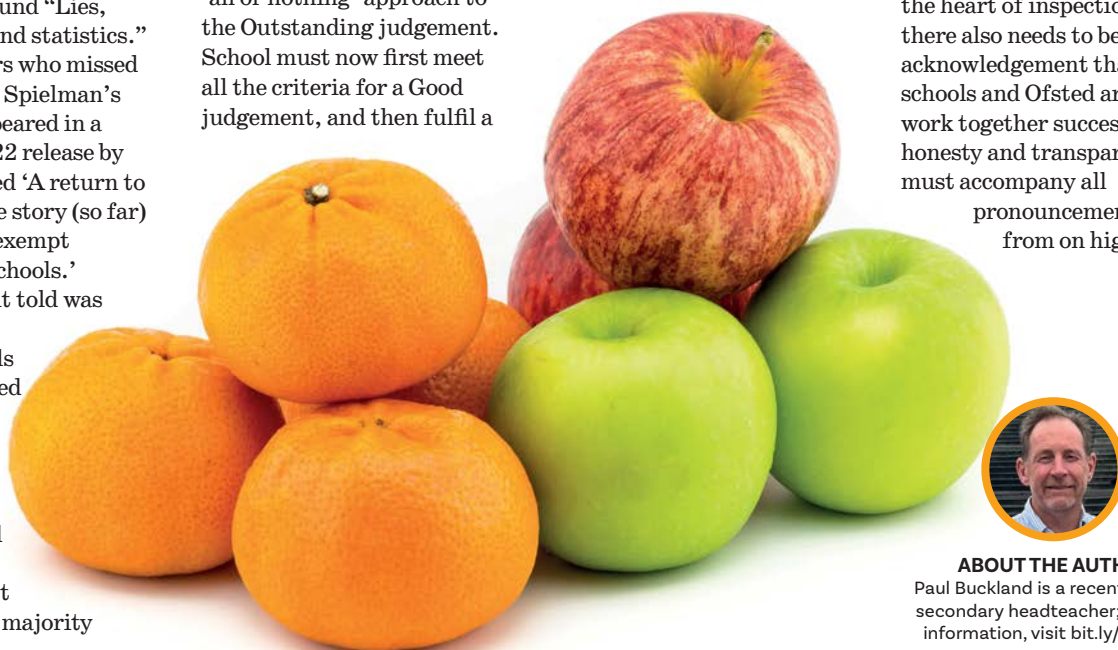
The resulting reputational damage to those schools that have been downgraded, and the implied criticism of those yet to be visited, isn't

acceptable. While I can accept that some schools may have lost ground over time, the sweeping generalisation is a cheap shot. Moreover, how can 'providers learn intelligently' from such methodology?

HMCI also omits to mention that the 'immunity from inspection' policy was largely conceived as a cost-saving exercise, rather than one driven by high-minded optimism that Outstanding schools would improve without inspection. An acknowledgment of this mistake made 10 years ago, and some recognition of the changed context around inspection would perhaps have been more conducive to 'providers learning from a force for improvement'.

Whoever eventually succeeds Ms Spielman as HMCI must approach the role with a better understanding of how Ofsted's judgements impact upon leaders, staff and other stakeholders. Of course, the best interests of children ought to remain at the heart of inspection – but there also needs to be an acknowledgement that if schools and Ofsted are to work together successfully, honesty and transparency must accompany all

pronouncements from on high.



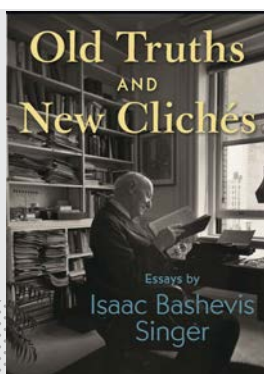
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Buckland is a recently retired secondary headteacher; for more information, visit bit.ly/ts117-PB



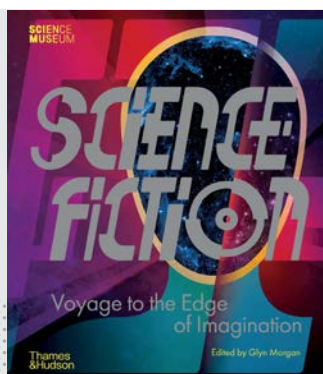
Off the Shelves

Brilliant titles for you and your students to explore



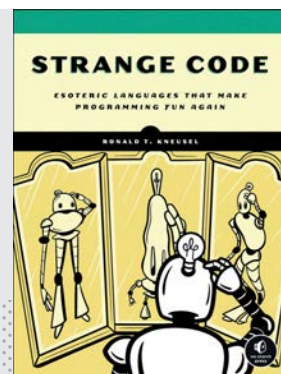
Old Truths and New Clichés:
Essays by Isaac Bashevis Singer
(Edited by David Stromberg, Princeton University Press, £20)

Isaac Bashevis Singer was an acclaimed Nobel Prize-winning writer best known for his fiction. In this collection of previously unpublished essays we discover that despite passing away nearly 30 years ago, his ruminations on censorship in literature, the use of profanity and roles of writer and journalist still have a compelling relevance to our own time. He even touches on the development of computers that will one day write literature for us. There's also extensive discussion of Singer's Judaism and his thoughts on the place of Yiddish, having largely written in his books in Yiddish prior to them being translated into English. His unique perspective spans an impressive range of issues, and there's much here that English and RE teachers could discuss with their students. Even if you disagree with his views, Singer's writing is enjoyable in itself.
Reviewed by Terry Freedman



Science Fiction: Voyage to the Edge of Imagination
(Edited by Glyn Morgan, Thames and Hudson, £25)

The genre of science fiction involves much more than stories of alien invasions and flying saucers. It's inspired numerous modern miracles – not least the world wide web and everything that came after – and even its arguable progenitor, Mary Shelley's 1818 novel *Frankenstein*, continues to inform our thoughts around artificial limbs and the like. This sumptuous work features interviews with prominent thinkers, wonderful artwork, and a gallop through sci-fi's key works of literature, films and inventions. While originally intended to accompany an exhibition, it works rather well as a standalone volume and a ready source of ideas for firing the imaginations of students in science, English, and even PSHE classes. A timely reminder of how the genre still has the power to provoke and prompt thought in the age of climate change and artificial intelligence, it's a great reference for dipping into.
Reviewed by Terry Freedman



Strange Code: Esoteric Languages That Make Programming Fun Again
(Ronald T. Kneusel, No Starch Press, £47.99)

Given how much there already is to cover in the computing curriculum, why spend time exploring programming languages that are, so to speak, way off the beaten track? Some of the languages Kneusel describes are certainly odd to say the least, but he's not merely concerned with the weird and wonderful for its own sake. After explaining in plain language what programming is and how it evolved – drawing on comparisons with palaeontology – he carefully outlines the distinctions, strengths and limitations of different programming languages very clearly, giving us a grounding in the basics of concepts like Turing Completeness without leaving readers to fend for themselves in a forest of dense computer science arcana. As a reference and source for teachers, *Strange Code* has much to commend it.
Reviewed by Terry Freedman

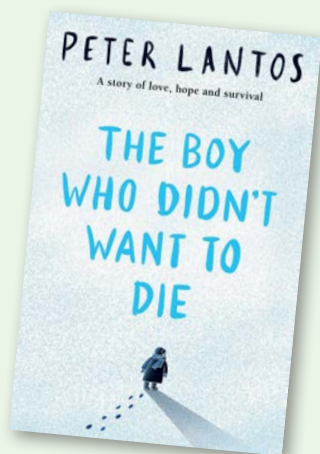
ON THE RADAR

A Holocaust survivor presents a child's eye view of one of the darkest episodes in human history

The Boy Who Didn't Want to Die
(Peter Lantos, Scholastic, £7.99)

Peter Lantos spent his adult life in the UK, pursuing a highly successful career as a medical researcher specialising in neuroscience, in which he made numerous pioneering contributions to the field of neurodegenerative diseases. He was also a Holocaust survivor, having been deported with his parents from the Hungarian town of Makó at the age of five and sent to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

Lantos first documented his experiences during this period in a 2006 memoir titled *Parallel Lines*. This book is a companion piece of sorts, explicitly aimed at younger readers and written from a child's perspective. Lantos' matter-of-fact prose ably captures the puzzlement, imaginative leaps and growing anxieties felt by a young mind when confronted with unimaginable horrors – perhaps seen most acutely in the devastating scenes that recount his father's death from starvation while the family were interned. Aside from brief authorial interjections to add historical context, we never leave the headspace of Lantos' childhood self. For adults, *The Boy...* makes for a poignant read. For its intended audience, it provides an honest, yet accessible and therefore hugely valuable depiction of humanity at its worst.



Meet the author

PETER LANTOS



What was your motivation for writing *The Boy Who Didn't Want to Die*?

My generation is the last group of Holocaust survivors. I'm now in my early 80s; I was 5 when we were deported. In a few years' time, no one will be around to give evidence of what happened. Once we have died, it will just be a fact of history which can be negated.

I felt that telling the story now, for children, leaves an account of what took place. I've previously visited schools and colleges to give talks, but with that no longer possible, there will instead be the book.

Was it difficult for you to settle on the book's narrative voice and sustain it?

It was quite difficult, but once I found the voice, I think it remained reasonably consistent. It's only when I wanted to point to something – particularly at the beginning and the very end – that I wrote as 'the writer' of now, and not 'the boy' of then.

I can't say that writing the book was a happy experience, but it was a satisfactory one. I set out to tell the story as I saw it at the time, as a boy of six. Instead of reflecting on, say, good and evil, I wanted to capture the boy's sense of surprise and curiosity, and inability to digest the things that he encounters.

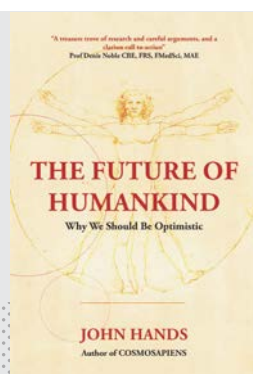
How did you personally come to be involved in Holocaust Education?

It started with the publishing of *Parallel Lines*, which made public an element of my past that even my very close friends of 20 years or more never knew about me. It was around then that I was first approached by schools to give talks, but I was rather reluctant. I don't like to talk about myself, but I soon realised I had a moral obligation to do so.

Years from now, how would you like to see the history of the Holocaust taught to subsequent generations?

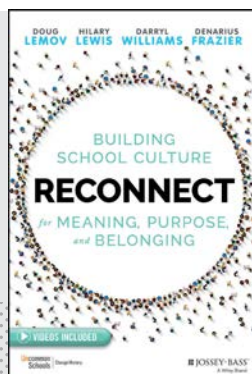
I sometimes feel that the Holocaust is presented as a single isolated event. Instead, it should be embedded in recent history, with students shown how it evolved out of intolerance, discrimination and eventually hate. I'd like to think that people will continue to learn from it – because the more recent examples we've seen of other genocides would indicate that those lessons haven't been learned yet.

For more information, visit peter-lantos.com



The Future of Humankind
(John Hands, Castleton, £12.99)

For anyone feeling pessimistic at the general direction of human progress in recent years, *The Future of Humankind* may serve as a compelling and thought-provoking corrective. Hands sets himself the task of examining three predicted futures for the human race – extinction via natural or man-made disasters; survival via space colonisation or medical advances; or transformation through the 'uploading' of consciousness to computers. Taking each in turn, the book proceeds to clearly explain and weigh up an impressive volume of scientific evidence on how plausible that future is. The ensuing tour of mind-expanding scientific discoveries and theories might veer a little too close to sci-fi for some – like the suggestion that space-based laser systems might one day protect Earth from comet strikes – but will certainly give science teachers a go-to source of ideas for showing students just how bold and forward-thinking humans can be.



Reconnect
(Doug Lemov, Hilary Lewis, Darryl Williams and Denarius Frazier, Jossey-Bass, £20.99)

At first glance, this book comes across as the latest addition to the growing field of post-COVID literature, showing how grave the impact of the pandemic has been on young people's learning, before suggesting practical ways of mitigating said impact. *Reconnect's* authors go further, however, by highlighting the risks posed to teenagers' mental health by mobile technologies and social media, as well as a worrying loss of faith in educational institutions. Rather than outlining temporary measures, they propose bold solutions that involve permanently 'rewiring' the purpose and practice of schools so that, for example, more is done to foster community and belonging within classrooms, and to restrict smartphone use on school premises. Though written with US educators in mind, UK readers will find much to relate to in the book's diagnoses, and an array of useful suggestions and possible strategies in its latter portions.

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Ready to read?

If you want your reading interventions to make a difference, narrow the scope of what you're trying to achieve and stay focused, advises **Elaine McNally**...

In your classroom, there may be students who can read out loud with reasonable confidence. They will mostly observe punctuation, adhere to the syntax of the author and occasionally add expression. They largely recognise and successfully decode tier 2 words, but questioning might reveal that these students are, in fact, struggling with their comprehension.

You might then conclude, after considering the data, that these students would benefit from explicit comprehension strategy training, vocabulary teaching and group discussions of a certain book or text.

Most valuable phrase

The essential elements of such a session might include reading the text and activating background knowledge. You can then ask questions that encourage the students to predict, summarise, interpret, clarify, infer and build connections between ideas, along with explicit vocabulary instruction.

One way of narrowing the potential scope would be to build intervention planning around two strategies – one based on comprehension, and another on vocabulary teaching.

The early literacy expert Carolyn Strom has previously written about a brilliant strategy with huge potential in reading interventions, since it compels students to think hard about a specific



aspect of a text (see bit.ly/ts121-SR1).

Strom calls this strategy 'most valuable phrase' or MVP. Students are taught to identify, and then justify their choice of the 'most valuable phrase' in the text. In doing so, they extend their thinking by engaging in purposeful talk that combines many comprehension sub-skills. Through reasoning, drawing connections and summarising, MVP both extends students' understanding and directs them towards what might be important.

Enjoyable routine

Strom sets out the following criteria for what qualifies as the 'most valuable phrase':

M – it has to relate to the **Main** idea

V – **Vivid** and memorable language, or compelling **Vocabulary**

P – A '**Phrase** that stays' because it adds to knowledge and builds

understanding of the text as a whole

MVP is most effective when implemented via an explicitly named, repetitive, routine-driven approach. Students like defending their choices of phrase and disputing those of other students. It also helps them see that the meaning of texts aren't stable, and can change depending on the reader.

It's a simple, yet extraordinarily effective strategy that combines opportunities for oracy with building comprehension, and works equally well with both fiction and non-fiction texts.

That said, students can find it hard to review and scan texts before settling on a final choice of MVP. I've tried to tackle this by modelling how MVPs can be identified during initial reading, by placing a sticky note with an arrow beside lines that might work.

Word games

Explicit teaching of high utility vocabulary shows

students how words are connected through morphology and etymology but it also provides a way of incorporating enjoyable literacy activities that involve an element of play.

Word games are a fantastic strategy for making students more word conscious and word curious. I've found that using *Word Ladders for Fluency* by T. Rasinski can make a significant difference to discussions around words. Word ladders

feel like a game, but develop students' literacy skills, and broaden their thinking around letter patterns and combinations.

It's easy for students to get enthusiastic and competitive when these are used in class, and it's easy for teachers to modify and extend such activities as needed.

Any reading intervention strategy you design will be based around assessment data. Incorporating the MVP and word ladders can make interventions more focused by ensuring that students pay attention to the relationship between texts and words, develop their comprehension skills and vocabulary, and ultimately move towards finding greater satisfaction in reading.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elaine McNally (@mrsmaetach33) is an English head of department; for more information, visit her blog at mrsmaetach33.wordpress.com

What's New?

Our pick of the latest solutions and innovations for secondary education

1

Diversify your play teaching

Are you teaching *An Inspector Calls* to your students? Want to try something different? Then take a look at Bloomsbury's 'Lit in Colour: A Spotlight on plays and drama' campaign.

Bloomsbury's Lit in Colour campaign, in association with Penguin Books UK and the Runnymede Trust, is introducing new plays to the English literature and drama curricula, offering students access to more diverse, representative and inclusive work. The campaign's findings and recommendations can be found in a research report, alongside a range of teacher resources that include author Q&As and classroom discussion guides, hosted at a dedicated Lit in Colour website.

Start your Lit in Colour journey with Bloomsbury this year by visiting bloomsbury.com/LitInColour



2

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Build a strong revision programme and lay the foundations for success with Hodder Education's suite of revision resources. Spanning GCSEs and A Levels across a wide range of subjects, the resources include revision guides, workbooks, revision webinars and more – enabling you

and your students to build a tailor-made revision programme that works for you.

Teachers can also receive a 20% discount on all paperback revision books during Hodder's big revision sale by quoting the code WN0003425, and save up to a third on webinars. Buy one webinar and get the second half price with code WH0009571, or buy two webinars and get the third free with code WD0007404.

For more details and T&Cs, visit hoddereducation.co.uk/2023-revision-sale

3

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Kingswood has been providing award-winning residential trips for 40 years. Mid-week breaks at its 11 UK locations start from just £86 per person, with guests able to curate their own programmes by choosing from a wide range of activities.

Delivering outcomes that can include increased confidence, resilience and improved life skills, the positive impacts of a residential trip on young people will persist long after the trip itself has ended. Kingswood's free and unique 'confidence tracker' tool will even help you evidence those very benefits to colleagues, parents and carers upon your return to school.

To find out more, contact 0800 655 6564, email sales@kingswood.co.uk or visit kingswood.co.uk



4

New routes to success

By delivering a mixture of academic and technical/ vocational qualifications, you can build an engaging, full curriculum that meets the needs of every pupil. Through V Certs, educators can enable pupils to experience different forms of education and develop a solid base from which to understand their own strengths, skills and talents, before going on to make the right choices about which path to follow.

V Certs are vocational equivalents to GCSEs and count towards the Open Group of your Progress 8 measures. Developed in collaboration with employers, NCFE V Certs are designed to fit seamlessly into a school's KS4 curriculum and will see students work towards one internally-assessed project and one external exam, giving them the chance to achieve on the basis of both their knowledge and practical skills. To find out more, visit ncfe.org.uk/v-certs

5

Get outdoors

There's never been a better time for an outdoor residential. An Outward Bound experience immerses young people in nature on wild adventures, empowering them with the most important lesson they could ever learn – to believe in themselves.

During a 5-day Outward Bound residential, young people will explore some of the wildest corners and tallest mountains the British Isles has to offer. Taking a break from exam stress, screen time and Snapchat, they'll be able to focus on raising their confidence, developing resilience and building connections outside the classroom.

Relationships developed on a residential will help strengthen the bond they feel with school, and build a culture of support and cooperation in the classroom and with their peers. Dive in by visiting outwardbound.org.uk/schools



6 Pitch perfect

Educational groups are invited to explore the hallowed grounds of Twickenham Stadium with a rugby expert, journey through history in the World Rugby Museum and experience hands-on learning in a free education session. Take a seat in the England Changing Room, absorb the atmosphere from the best seats in the Royal Box and try out your skills in the Play Rugby Zone.



The World Rugby Museum offers a diverse education programme that can accommodate all groups and is linked to the National Curriculum. A free education session is available as part of the stadium tour package, starting from just £15 per pupil. Inspire learning at Twickenham Stadium by getting in touch with our friendly team today. Find out more at worldrugbymuseum.com/education



7 Show of support

The Schools & Academies Show is the UK's leading education policy event, bringing together thousands of school leaders to connect, spark new ideas and discuss the biggest challenges currently facing the education community.

With some of the sector's most decorated and influential speakers in attendance and sharing their knowledge and expertise, our goal will be to ensure that we support schools, academies and MATs in overcoming some of the most pressing challenges facing the sector, and continue to provide practical resources to ensure efficiency is at the forefront of each operation. Find out more at hubs.la/Q01zKJZQ0

9 Hiring made simple

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8



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Through curriculum tours (travelbound.co.uk), sports tours (edwindoran.com and masterclasstours.co.uk), ski trips (skibound.co.uk), expeditions (weareworldchallenge.com), and UK activity centres (jca-adventure.co.uk), the group comprises trusted experts in tailored experiences for UK schools.

Collectively, these companies can provide stringent health and safety policies, financial protection and accreditations (ABTA, ATOL, School Travel Forum, Council for Learning Outside the Classroom). Individually, their educational travel specialists will work to understand your objectives and group requirements. For more details, visit experienceeducation.com



Arts for all

Every young person should have the opportunity to be creative, and to experience and participate in arts and culture. That's why we at Arts Council England created Artsmark – to support education settings in bringing learning to life through arts, culture, and creativity.

The Artsmark Award is the only creative quality standard for schools and education settings accredited by Arts Council England. Our flexible framework helps embed arts, culture and creativity to support a broad and ambitious curriculum, strengthen pupils' voice and support personal progression. Embed creativity across your whole curriculum and address school improvement priorities by finding out more at artsmark.org.uk

Everything's connected

Dawn Jotham looks at how schools can build a robust RSHE offer that's able to withstand everything from staff shortages to awkward classroom exchanges...

The statutory guidance for teaching relationships and sex education (RSHE) has now been in place for just over two years. You would think that the subject's delivery would be easy, and for some staff that's true. For other staff members, however, the idea of teaching an RSHE lesson fills them with dread.

Consider the following scenario. You ask a newly qualified member of staff to teach consent to a Y10 class. You haven't asked what training they've had in delivery of the subject, but you desperately need cover. What could go wrong?

If you've yet to receive the right training and don't feel comfortable with delivery, then it barely matters what stage of your career you happen to be at; it's a lesson that has the potential to go horribly awry.

Why is RSHE important?

High quality, evidence-based, age-appropriate teaching of RSHE supports the development and growth of our children and young people, helping them to build the skills and confidence they'll need to make informed decisions as adults.

According to the PSHE Association, students who feel positively about their experiences in RSHE lessons are more likely to develop mutually beneficial relationships and experience a sense of belonging while at school. So as educators, what can we do to ensure that happens?

First, it's necessary to know your school and encourage engagement wherever possible. That includes getting to know not just your students, but also their parents/carers as well as the other groups that make up your local community.

It's vitally important that schools get parents and carers on board when it comes to their RSHE provision, though this can be difficult for some topics – especially those around sex and relationships.

Schools should aim to work closely with parents over the course of their RSHE planning and delivery. Invite parents in and give them the chance to ask questions; that way, you'll be able to reinforce and further develop the

relationships you have with your local community.

Knowing what your community values and the issues it considers to be important will help you when prioritising topics, adapting materials or enlisting the help of outside experts. For instance, if the Police highlight an increase in local incidents of knife crime, a co-ordinated response involving your school and several other external agencies may be required.

Second, map out your RSHE curriculum for the full academic year. By doing so, you can quickly identify trigger points or events that might affect when certain topics should be delivered. Integrate awareness of physical health and mental wellbeing throughout your wider curriculum in various ways, so that your students can receive support for feelings of exam stress and build their resilience over time.



"You haven't asked what training they've had in delivery of the subject, but you desperately need cover. What could go wrong?"

Finally, make sure you haven't missed any key areas when reviewing whether your curriculum meets all statutory guidance and laws. In the case of RSHE, these would include the DfE's statutory guidance on 'Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education', The Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice.

Staff preparations

Needless to say, all staff expected to teach RSHE will require appropriate training. Any gaps in knowledge should be identified as early as

possible, with subsequent training targeted at filling said gaps delivered well ahead of time (see 'What training do we need?')

This training can be provided from internal sources, such as

qualified and experienced staff, or from external organisations such as Brook, the NSPCC or the PSHE Association. Certain tools and systems aimed at school users, such as the Tes Safeguarding platform, will also include access to courses that can teach staff what they need to know.

Given the extensive range of areas and topics that fall under RSHE, it's possible that staff will hold various beliefs and values that may have some influence on their teaching of the subject. As such, they should be given ample opportunity during the planning stages to express and discuss any concerns they might have with the curriculum and material they will be expected to cover.

In some cases, certain topics may even cause some staff or students distress, owing to past or recent experiences they might have had. Another area to build into the planning stage is differentiation for students with additional needs.

Knowing your staff and

WHAT TRAINING DO WE NEED?

You can gauge your training requirements via either face-to-face interviews or an all-staff survey, with questions that might include the following:

- How comfortable do you feel in delivering...?
- Have you had any training within the last two years in delivery of...?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident do you feel in delivering...?

students well and actively building trust will help you to build a curriculum that's sensitive to everyone's needs. At the same time, be aware of your own unconscious bias and prior experiences.

Implementation and delivery

Once the preparation stage is complete, the first responsibility of your teachers will be to establish the level of understanding of the topics to be delivered, and how each topic links up with other subjects.

Delivery of RSHE content should be factual and non-biased, with students encouraged to take part in open discussion. This is always going to be difficult for some, however, so it's important that this is adequately planned for. Fostering an environment in which children's opinions are respected and listened to is paramount.

Classes can be split into smaller groups, or students can be given the option to ask questions anonymously at the end of the class. Consider peer mentoring sessions with older students who are trained and feel comfortable in supporting younger children.

Don't shy away from using the correct terminology. This will help with understanding and limit the delivery of misinformation. If you don't know the answer

to a question, be honest and tell the pupils that you'll get back to them.

Y10 revisited

Now reconsider the following scenario. You've asked a newly qualified member of staff to teach consent to a Y10 class. You've not asked what training they have in subject delivery, but you desperately need the cover. What happens next?

Well, a series of plans have been put in place over the last few months, coinciding with an extensive programme of RSHE-related staff training – to the point that RSHE is now firmly embedded within the curriculum.

All members of staff have had opportunities to share their thoughts and ideas with regards to the subject's teaching and learning demands, and parents have been consulted about the delivery.

By following the advice given, your school has been able to deliver good quality, honest and reliable RSHE.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dawn Jotham is the safeguarding and pastoral care lead at Tes, having previously worked extensively within schools in the areas of pastoral care and safeguarding



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LEARN MORE

How do we stop teachers quitting?

Without professional development, strict behaviour standards and sensitivity to colleagues' needs, don't be surprised if your colleagues soon depart their posts, says **Matthew Godfrey**...

In a recent poll of 1,800 teachers conducted by the NEU, around half of all respondents said they planned to quit within the next five years.

The most frequently cited reason for wanting to leave the profession was 'workload'. Even more worryingly, a quarter of those teachers to have qualified within the past 10 years have themselves now left the profession. What exactly is the problem here, and can it be resolved?

My first teaching post was back in 2000, when I joined a London comprehensive as a newly qualified teacher of English. It was an extremely challenging school for a range of reasons – weak leadership, large class sizes and pupil behaviour that was, at times, appalling. Despite the school having a core of talented and committed teachers, it was unusual for anyone to stay in post there for more than a few years.

After a mere 18 months in the job, I was then promoted to head of English. Much as I'd love to believe the decision was based purely on talent, the truth is that the school would have struggled to find anyone else suitable for the role. The main reason for staff departures ultimately came down to SLT's failure to get a grip on the pupils' increasingly bad behaviour. With teachers spending most of their days firefighting, they couldn't teach. Understandably, they soon became exhausted and demotivated.

Empowered to teach

Conversely, if teachers feel positively empowered to teach, and are valued and well-supported in other ways, they're much more likely to remain in post for many years.

I've seen evidence for this myself, via two positions I've assumed in recent years. The first is in my capacity as governor at a comprehensive school in Wembley, which serves an economically deprived area. Many pupils come from challenging backgrounds, and enter the school from underperforming primaries.

The school's latest Progress 8 score for maths placed it at the top of all schools in England, and their overall Progress 8 score fifth nationally. 82% of its 2022 sixth form leavers secured places at Russell Group universities, including Oxbridge, LSE and Imperial. It's a school that has little difficulty retaining staff. Virtually none of its budget is spent on supply, since staff absence rates are negligible.

According to the school's headteacher, those teachers remain committed to the school because they

feel valued, empowered and motivated by a strong set of values and a strict behaviour policy that's consistently upheld and enforced at all levels of management.

Celebration and recognition

I've seen further evidence of what works in my current role as deputy head at a girl's boarding school. I'm able to say that the majority of my colleagues have remained in their posts for decades, and that it's rare for anyone to leave within five years. The school is privileged to enjoy some excellent facilities and a beautiful campus, but in my view, there are three key factors as to why people stay, which I'm confident could be implemented at most schools across the country.

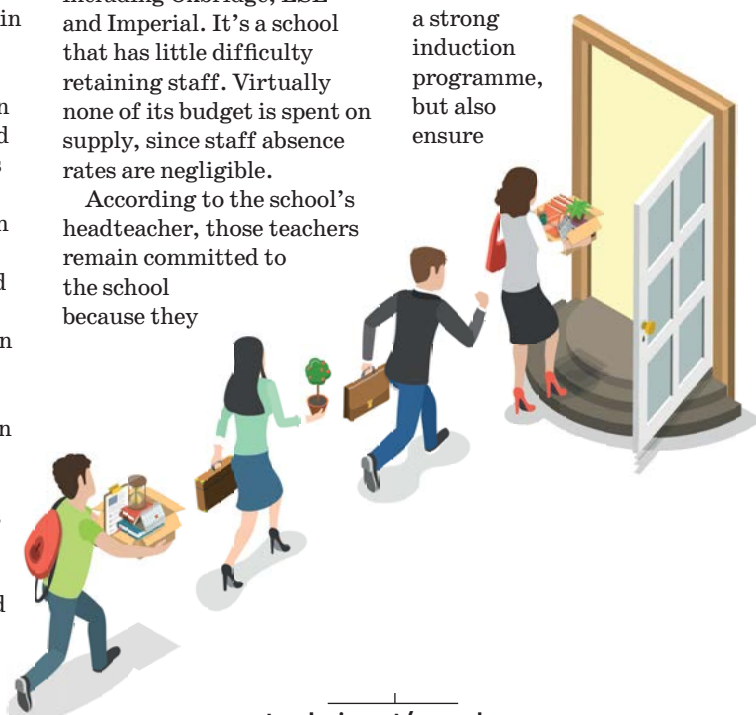
First, there's an emphasis on professional development. Schools should offer a strong induction programme, but also ensure

opportunities are provided each week for all teachers to share best practice and engage in educational research or development.

Second, our pupils are a joy to teach. Young people need to feel happy, valued and nurtured in their learning environment. From their very first day, students should be expected to engage as fully as possible in their learning. Their progress should be monitored closely, and they should be rewarded at every opportunity.

Third, the school's leadership prioritises staff wellbeing. Professional standards are of utmost importance, of course, but leaders also have to be attentive to matters of workload, and any other pressures or difficulties experienced by colleagues. Every teacher is unique; it's the job of an SLT to celebrate and recognise the successes and efforts of their staff.

Regardless of academic or demographic profile, every school would do well to review and improve its strategies for recruiting and retaining great teachers – now more than ever.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Matthew Godfrey is deputy head at Downe House School, Berkshire – an independent boarding schools for girls aged 11 to 18; for more information, visit downehouse.net



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Easing the anxiety

Rachel Bostwick looks at how three focused strategies helped one school turn a corner when it came to resolving some seemingly intractable issues relating to students' mental health...

Students struggling with anxiety and unhealthy coping mechanisms. Disordered eating. Self-harm. Students exhibiting problems interacting socially.

All of these were observed by staff at St Michael's Church of England High School in the West Midlands in the aftermath of the pandemic, so naturally, they wanted to help students navigate their emotions. Yet as the school engagement development manager and senior mental health lead, Kerry Whitehouse, explains, "Even though we had good mental health support systems in place, we felt we were swimming against the tide."

The school responded by putting in place three key strategies, which have since proved critical in identifying and addressing issues with student anxiety, and done much to improve wellbeing across the board.

1 Understand the issues

Students were invited to attend a series of focus groups hosted by pastoral staff, in which they could share their experiences and talk about how they were feeling. This immediately gave staff a clearer picture of the specific issues students were struggling with.

The informal format of the sessions enabled staff to uncover key triggers for student anxiety, which included maintaining friendships, readjusting to being in social situations, and exam pressure – knowledge that went on to inform decisions on what actions were needed.

At the same time, 'wellbeing checks' were introduced to give students opportunities to informally chat with staff about anxiety and any other wellbeing concerns, and find out about support strategies and coping mechanisms where necessary.

"Regular face-to-face contact between staff and students was essential to breaking down taboos and normalising communication around anxiety," recalls Kerry.

The dates and outcomes of all such meetings are recorded centrally, so as to prevent any student from falling through the net and ensure they get the help they need. Kerry continues: "The measures we've put in place have flagged issues that might otherwise have remained hidden, helping us to quickly provide additional support, such as bespoke interventions, or referrals to local mental health services, where appropriate."

2 Take action

The school's pastoral team worked closely with SLT to design a COVID recovery PSHE curriculum focused on student wellbeing and emotional resilience. One key change was to introduce lessons on wellbeing and

emotional resilience sooner, at the start of Y7 rather than Y8, so that students could develop the emotional literacy they needed to communicate how they were feeling at an earlier stage.

Students at the school run some lessons, assemblies and even dedicated

events themselves, in which they will share effective strategies for managing anxiety and other wellbeing issues with peers. Teams of young people at the school have additionally received training from local mental health professionals before being appointed as Wellbeing Champions.

3 Upskill staff

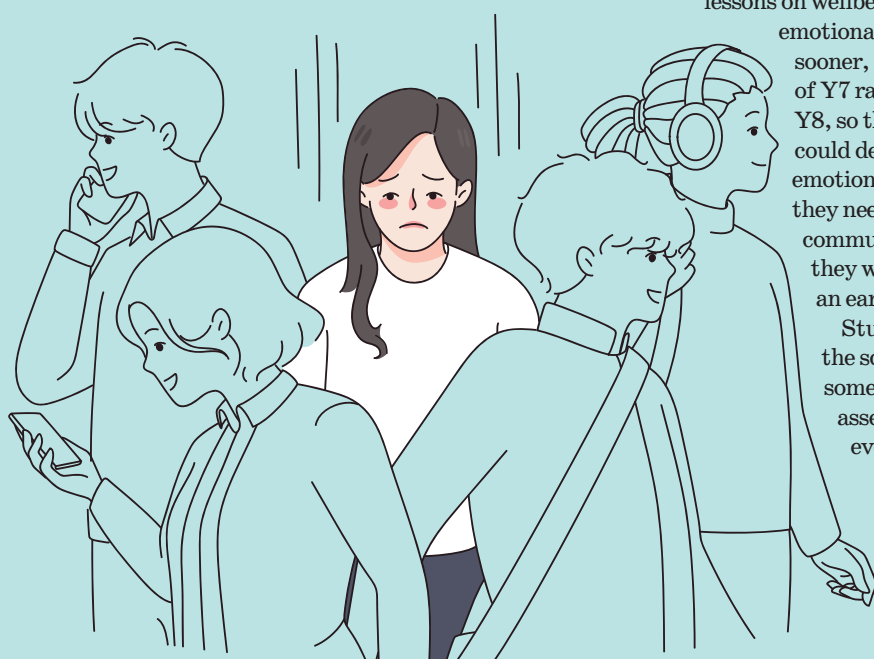
Key to creating a culture of positive mental health at St Michael's was appropriate staff training. Kerry herself attended an advanced mental health lead training course provided by the Carnegie School of Education at Leeds Beckett University from November 2021 to March 2022. This gave Kerry the skills and confidence to work alongside colleagues in shaping, changing and implementing the school's wellbeing efforts.

"The knowledge and skills I gained from the training was so relevant to what we wanted to achieve," Kerry says. "It's helped to refine and expand what we're doing as a school, to the point where I now attend strategic meetings at LA level to discuss and share examples of best practice in supporting student wellbeing."



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rachel Bostwick is a consultant at the Carnegie School of Education, Leeds Beckett University, and co-author with Jonathan Glazzard of *Positive Mental Health – A Whole School Approach* (£15.99, Critical Publishing)



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LEARNING LAB

IN THIS ISSUE

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- + Why schools need lessons in mindfulness
- + The justification for banning all classroom chatter, always
- + What Sonali Shah learnt at school
- + Could 'strict' voices be worse at motivating learners than 'supportive' ones?
- + The benefits to be had from sharing words widely and generously
- + ASCL calls for a major shake-up to school inspections
- + 5 practical ways in which teachers can take care of their wellbeing

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Thinking about ...

REPRESENTATION

Looking back on my own school days, two teachers immediately come to mind – Ms Powell and Ms Sule. Both were black women, and the first teachers to treat me with unreserved love and kindness during my time at school. It was my first experience of what happens when people who look like you are in positions of power and authority.

The significance of my race didn't intrude upon me until I left that school and entered institutions where I was deemed a 'minority' – a term which, until then, I was unfamiliar with. It seemed my father was right all along, in that I had to work harder than everyone else just to be seen as equal.

My first placement school was an eye-opener. The school was predominantly white and male, and left me feeling as though I was the sole representative of my race. My second was at an all-girls school that was majority black and faith-based, where I hoped I could be myself. However, the students were studying *Jane Eyre* – a text I'd never read before, which meant lesson preparation entailed spending hours Googling the meaning and pronunciation of each word.

I spent the next year attempting to prove myself worthy of the label 'teacher'. I worked harder than colleagues in similar roles, but the weight of trying to convince those

around me that I belonged in education kept me on the ground when I should have been flying.

Years later, I no longer feel like an imposter. I'm now a department head on a mission to have teachers create a curriculum which represents the students it serves.

Decolonisation was, and remains my intent. The rich, diverse curriculum now in place at my current school speaks to the necessity of representation and diversity we clearly need.

Teachers – think about who you choose to answer questions in your classroom, and which students are selected to attend trips reserved for the 'gifted and talented'. Who is reprimanded most in your class? What do your 'problem students' look like?

The kindness extended to me by those two black women all those years ago validated my presence in the classroom. They looked like me, loved me and saw me in ways I'd not experienced prior.

Representation allows the 'change' we so often talk about to become actualised. It enables new questions to be asked, new voices to be heard and new people to be seen. It helps young people who are habitually forgotten to become leaders and thinkers in spaces to which they might otherwise have not been invited.

Please, think about representation.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joy Mbwake is head of English and assistant headteacher at Lilian Baylis Technology College; to read further insights from teachers on diversity and inclusion in education, visit go.pearson.com/PearsonSR22

THE MINDFUL TEACHER



Have you ever considered that how you are – your mood, associated behaviours and responses – is a huge influencing factor on the atmosphere of the classroom?

Often, you're not fully conscious of your moods, and yet they have an effect on others. By becoming mindful of your internal weather, you can make a difference between being a calm breeze or whipping up a storm in the classroom.

Studies show that your thoughts aren't separate from your emotions. Emotions, how you are feeling, tend to colour your thoughts, views, judgement of people, things and events. But sometimes it's hard to know how you're feeling, especially in a busy environment like a school where it can feel like you're being bombarded from the moment you walk in until the moment you walk out. But emotions, *your mood*,

can affect your lessons, interactions, relationships and how well your day goes.

Having some awareness of what your internal weather is and giving it some space to settle will have an effect on staff and students around you. It will send a signal to their nervous systems that they can begin to calm down and settle too.*

Research shows that emotional regulation is the aspect of mindfulness practice that staff find most helpful.** We're not talking in-depth counselling, but becoming aware of your mood and internal weather, can help you make choices that result in your day going more smoothly.

Try spending a few minutes just tuning in to how you're doing. This can be done sitting in your car before leaving or arriving for work.

- Close your eyes, or have a soft gaze, and ask yourself, 'What's my internal weather right now?'

- An image might come to you, like a rain cloud or a hazy sky. Or you might have some sense of mood – sunny, stormy, bright or dull. Be patient, as you might not get an immediate response.

- Whatever you find, don't judge this state. Acknowledging it gives you information, from where you can decide what would be helpful today. In this way, you can start to make choices about your day.

- Gently open your eyes if they've been closed, or refocus, to the broader environment around you.

- Whatever you've discovered, try not to fix this mood, or think that's how it always is or always will be.

KAMALAGITA HUGHES IS A QUALIFIED TEACHER AND LECTURER, AND HAS BEEN PRACTISING MINDFULNESS FOR 25 YEARS; THIS ITEM IS BASED ON AN EXTRACT FROM HER BOOK, *THE MINDFUL TEACHER'S HANDBOOK*, AVAILABLE NOW (£16.99, CROWN HOUSE PUBLISHING)

DO THIS

NO CHATTING

EXERCISE BETTER CLASS CONTROL WITH THESE TIPS FROM ROBIN LAUNDER...

I'm often asked how much chatting is acceptable in class. The answer is simple – none.

Work-related talking is another matter, since that's an explicitly sanctioned learning approach used for certain activities, but don't allow casual chats. Why? Because 'No chatting' is a legitimate boundary. It's a clear boundary, and an enforceable boundary.

You are in the classroom to teach. *Your students* are in the classroom to learn. Chatting gets in the way of both, so not allowing it is a legitimate boundary – and it quickly becomes clear when that boundary has been broken.

If you're a teacher who believes a little bit of chatting is okay, ask yourself – when does 'a little' chatting become too much? Where's the line, and how will students know when they've crossed it?

If that boundary is left vague, students will likely get away with chatting until the teacher's had enough – at which point, the teacher shushes them.

Thanks to that vague boundary, though, the silence won't last long – resulting in further chatter, more shushing, and repeat. It's a tedious pattern that's easily avoided if the classroom expectation is that of 'no chatting'.

Robin Launder is a behaviour management consultant and speaker; find more tips in his weekly Better Behaviour online course – for more details, visit behaviourbuddy.co.uk

52%

The proportion of students who don't feel confident speaking in the classroom at KS4 (compared to 29% at KS1)

Source: Poll of 40,000 students for Voice 21's 'Insights and Impact report 2021/22'

The National Foundation for Educational Research has produced a report that casts doubt on a previously announced government ambition for all schools to belong to 'strong' MATs by 2030.

According to the NFER report, "Transitioning to a multi-academy trust led system: what does the evidence tell us?" having all schools in England belong to MATs with at least 10 schools each won't be possible without 'unprecedented system change', given that only 47% of all mainstream schools are presently academised.

The report instead recommends embarking on a slower transition process that addresses ongoing academisation challenges, such as building MAT capacity, and giving due consideration to issues affecting particular schools, such as faith schools, and the likelihood of small rural primaries finding it difficult to join a suitable MAT.

The report also highlights the findings of a survey carried out among directors of children's services regarding government proposals to let LAs to establish new MATs. While two thirds of respondents welcomed the idea, only 39% said they were likely to begin establishing their own MAT within the next three years. Four-fifths meanwhile expressed concern that certain schools in their area risked being abandoned by MATs reluctant to take them on.

The full report can be downloaded via bit.ly/ts122-LL1

WHAT I LEARNT AT SCHOOL

SONALI SHAH

Sonali Shah is a broadcaster and ambassador for Oxford University Press' 'Raise a Reader' campaign

What was primary school like for you?

In my day, it was called First and Middle school. I have very fond memories of it – my dad dropped me off on his way into work, and I always enjoyed that special time with him. Sometimes we were able to visit the newsagent beforehand to buy 1p sweets, which I then sold for 2p to kids in the playground. The school wasn't happy with my side hustle, but dad was very proud of my entrepreneurial skills!

How did you feel about reading as a child?

Books were everything to me growing up, because they allowed me to have friends when I didn't have the language skills to make them. I didn't speak English when I started nursery at the age of 3, as we only spoke my mother-tongue Gujarati at home. It led to me being the first child in nursery to learn how to read. I went on to read a book a day sometimes, and my mum eventually gave up

on telling me off for reading at the dinner table.

How did you handle the move from primary to secondary?

I was ready for the move up to secondary school and not long after I started, my mum found some land nearby on which to build a family house which I managed to incorporate into school projects – especially Design and Technology.

After we moved house, I enjoyed the freedom of being able to walk to school with my friends, without my parents having to be my taxi drivers.

What kind of student were you?

Similar to how I am now – a bit of a social butterfly, though I didn't have one main group of friends and was equally happy in my own company. I was lucky in that I enjoyed most of my classes. I was a total fact nerd, and still am.

Are there any teachers you look back on with special fondness?

My teachers were all brilliant, but a special shout-out to my maths teacher who, when I received an A at GCSE, asked me why I hadn't got an A*...



22%

of teachers and headteachers believe the impact of the cost of living crisis will be the biggest challenge facing their pupils over the coming year

Source: Survey carried out by Renaissance

Need to know

A psychological study carried out by professors at the University of Essex and the University of Reading has found that 'strict-sounding teachers' proved worse at inspiring learners between the ages of 10 and 16 in the classroom compared to their 'kind colleagues'.

The study involved playing pre-recorded teachers' voices to 250 children, who were then asked to rate the voices' likely impact on their competence, emotions, trust and intention to cooperate.

The results showed that strict-sounding voices prompted responses that indicated a higher likelihood of rebelling, diminished wellbeing and a reluctance to reveal personal problems, such as experiences of bullying.

Conversely, supportive-sounding voices appeared to elicit a closer sense of connection and a heightened willingness to cooperate.

According to Professor Silke Paulmann at the University of Essex, "We often think about what teachers say to their students, but we rarely talk about how they say it. But the tone of voice teachers use really matters, and the way we modulate our voice can have profound effects on listeners."



ACTIVITY SPOTLIGHT

THE GIFT OF WORDS

Educators have the great privilege of being able to pass on many gifts to the young people in our care – a key one being language. We've seen an increased focus on vocabulary in recent years, but just as vital is knowledge of how we actually use words, whether it's to communicate, express ourselves or connect with others.

As an English teacher, I became increasingly aware of the benefits to be had from exploring words' morphology (how they're formed) and etymology (their origin and subsequent development of meaning), and how understanding these could help students in other subjects. The prefixes and roots of scientific terms, for example, can help students access the science curriculum much more easily and read with more fluency.

Exploring the history of our language also reveals how English is a beautiful mixing pot which has been influenced by many other languages and cultures. It was wonderful to see this movement of words between languages through the Oxford University Press Gift of Words campaign over Christmas 2022. It celebrated the power and diversity of language by asking people to 'gift' a word from one language to another – thus highlighting the benefits that embracing language in all its diversity brings to us all.

To pass on the gift of words to young people, we should encourage them to read widely. Often, this will mean reading aloud to them – even during later secondary education. Listening comprehension is typically more advanced than reading comprehension, which is

why I can read and discuss *Paddington Bear* with my three-year-old, but she can't read it herself.

As young people become more able to read independently, we can often overlook the value of sharing texts and reading aloud. Yet it's only through modelling fluency and equipping students with vocabulary knowledge that they'll be able to explore texts with greater complexity and depth themselves.

We should teach words explicitly and consistently. Different subject departments could map out words that are vital for certain units. If exposed to new words via texts read as a class, alongside explicit introductions of specific terms and concepts, students will naturally become curious as to what those might mean, and slip them into their own writing. The gift of words can further extend to the teaching of life skills, such as the differences between 'debit' and 'credit'.

One of my favourite poets, Robert Frost, once said that '*Half the world is composed of people who have something to say and can't.*' Let's ensure that our students, with important voices and contributions of their own, are fully able to express themselves.

Shorny Malcolmson is a former English teacher and subject leader, now head of curriculum at PiXL for secondary and post-16 (pixonl.org.uk); For more information on the Gift of Words campaign, visit bit.ly/3Xljlgi



On the radar

ASCL: “End overall graded judgements”

The Association of School and College Leaders has published a discussion paper, ‘The Future of Inspection’, that calls for major changes to the current schools and colleges inspection system.

Its proposals include removing overall graded judgements; informing schools and colleges in advance of the academic year in which they will be inspected; and publishing Ofsted inspector training and associated materials.

The paper also suggests reviewing the role of pupil voice during inspection, and updating the inspection

handbook to better reflect the involvement of trusts in school effectiveness.

The paper’s key long-term proposal – following appropriate piloting and impact analyses – is to remove of all graded judgements and replace these with narrative descriptions of a school or college’s strengths and weaknesses in different areas.

As ASCL general secretary, Geoff Barton, explains, “Graded judgements are a woefully blunt tool with which to measure performance, failing to account for the different circumstances under which

schools operate. Negative judgements come with huge stigma attached, and create a vicious circle that makes improvement more difficult. We know from speaking to members that the punitive inspection system is contributing to the recruitment and retention crisis in education by adding to the pressure school leaders are under, and by making it more difficult to recruit high-quality staff in the schools which are in most need of them.”

The full discussion paper can be read via bit.ly/ts122-LL2

TRENDING

Our pick of the recent resources and launches teachers might find useful...

THE RED CARD HUB

Show Racism the Red Card, in partnership with Sainsbury’s, has launched an online Education Hub intended support the teaching of anti-racist education.

Once registered, visitors will gain access to guidance notes for teachers, presentation slides, suggested video content and detailed curriculum links, along with other downloadable resources.

theredcardhub.org

MATHEMATICAL METEOROLOGY

The Royal Meteorological Society has produced a set of resources designed to show how maths knowledge can be applied to the study of climate science and meteorology. Covering Core Maths and KS3, the materials on offer include session notes, presentations and printable worksheets.

metlink.org/mei

TEACHER WALKTHROUGH

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

5 PRACTICAL WAYS IN WHICH TEACHERS CAN LOOK AFTER THEIR MENTAL WELLBEING

1



GIFT

Social interaction can help improve happiness and reduce feelings of anxiety. Try demonstrating at least one specific act of kindness once a week over a period of six weeks – such as bringing in snacks to share with staff, or showing gratitude to a colleague.

2



LEARN

Our ability to learn through life enhances our prospects of improved self-esteem and developing confidence in our abilities. Learn something new about your colleagues; try starting up a staff club, or researching a topic you’ve always been intrigued by.

3



TAKE NOTICE

Reminding yourself to look up and take notice can strengthen awareness of what we have and our working environment. Decluttering your workspace, taking notice of colleagues’ feelings and actions and varying your daily routines can all help with this.

4



BE ACTIVE

Regular physical exercise is proven to help reduce anxiety and depression and improve mental wellbeing. Try taking short walks during non-contact time, or getting involved in regular sporting activities alongside colleagues, such as football or badminton.

5



CONNECT

Feeling close and valued at work is a fundamental human need, but nurturing connections at work takes time. Try talking to colleagues rather than emailing them; listening more closely to others; and putting aside five minutes to find out how someone really is.

INFORMATION BASED ON GUIDANCE ISSUED BY MIND; ZEPH BENNETT IS A TEACHER AND ILLUSTRATOR WORKING AS AN ACHIEVEMENT LEAD AT WERNETH HIGH SCHOOL, STOCKPORT; YOU CAN FIND MORE OF HIS EDUCATIONAL ILLUSTRATIONS BY FOLLOWING @PEGEEKSCORNER

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ENGLISH LITERATURE

A Streetcar Named Desire – Methuen Drama Student Edition

A bruising, yet essential text of American theatre, now accompanied by suitably heavyweight commentary

AT A GLANCE

- **Commentary and notes by a respected theatre theorist, historian, and practitioner**
- **Discussion of the social, political, cultural and economic context in which the play was originally conceived**
- **Helpful overview of its subsequent performance history**
- **Examination and observations of the play's major themes and issues**
- **Bibliography comprising recommended primary and secondary materials for further study**

REVIEW BY JOHN DABELL

If there's one play that's sure to leave your head and heart in shreds, it's *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams. Premiered in New York in 1947, its themes still remain hugely resonant today.

It's a Pulitzer Prize-winning work, packed with explosive, conflict-driven dialogue and iconic lines. Dark, gritty and sometimes disturbing in its portrayals of domestic abuse and mental illness, the play is full of characters and garrulous grotesques – each with their own complexities, contradictions and doubts.

The commentary and explanatory notes in this Methuen Drama Student Edition present a sensitive and considered appraisal of the play's treatment of rape, vulnerable people, mental institutions, sexuality and sexual desire.

Readers are also given a clear, chronological timeline of Tennessee Williams' life, with brief insights into his own trials and tribulations, and how he sought to push against and stretch the very limits of the dramatic form.

An introduction by Bess Rowen – assistant professor of theatre at Villanova University – meanwhile examines the cultural context that Williams was embedded in, drawing attention to how his work exhibited an abiding concern with time and place, and their effects upon men and women. We're invited to see Williams as a rebel who boldly broke with the then rigid conventions of drama in his efforts to explore new territory.

Sitting alongside this is a fascinating analysis of Williams' writing process, and his unique

approaches to portraying realism, naturalism and expressionism, as well as a consideration of Method Acting, the play's production history and subsequent screen adaptations.

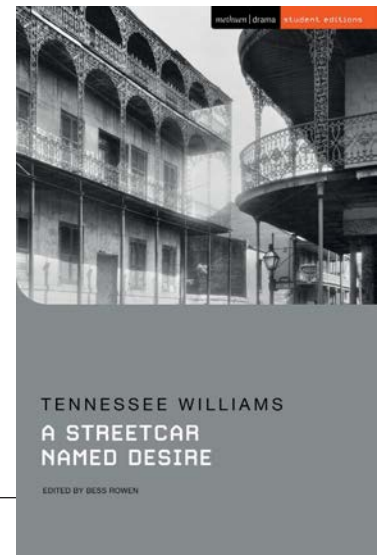
Taken together, the notes help students consider the play at a deeper level, especially its treatment of loneliness, suicide, death, the American South, power and conflict, alcoholism, violence and the exploitation of women.

The complete text of the play then follows in all its vital glory, as it would have appeared to audiences at its initial London production in 1949 – once memorably described as 'Not a play for the squeamish.'

A Streetcar Named Desire depicts a catastrophic confrontation between fantasy and reality. The copious notes that accompany the text of this edition ably expand, elaborate on and explain the play's finer details, fleshing out individual elements and giving students a welcome helping hand.

It's ideal for addressing the range of questions and perspectives the play throws up, will encourage close reading for class discussion and further analysis, and help build confidence in students' understanding of the play ahead of exams.

As a resource, it could also serve as a solid foundation for students' further explorations of the play's wider context, their own research into Williams' biography, and the social, historical, cultural and literary milieu of the 1950s.



teach SECONDARY

VERDICT

- ✓ **A classic play revisited with great insight and professional commentary**
- ✓ **Its intense, heavyweight themes are expertly and sensitively analysed**
- ✓ **Helps students develop a more nuanced understanding of the characters' motivations**
- ✓ **Presents insights into Williams' craft and lasting impact on American theatre and beyond**
- ✓ **Provides a fascinating window into a complex literary legend**

PICK UP IF...

You're looking for a comprehensive student edition of Williams' landmark tragedy, so that it can be studied as a realist masterpiece and exceptional example of expressionistic drama.

For more information visit bit.ly/ts122-streetcar

SAFEGUARDING



MyConcern

Stay on top of your safeguarding obligations and ensure concerns are promptly addressed with this user-friendly reporting system

AT A GLANCE

- Bespoke safeguarding software for creating customised reports
- Automated chronologies for identifying trends
- Allows for easier inter-agency information sharing
- Up-to-date advice and guidance resources, including templates

REVIEW BY JOHN DABELL



Child protection is a key priority for all schools but one that's become increasingly complicated to manage, as the safeguarding risks children are potentially vulnerable to have grown over time.

Children spend around 7,800 hours in the care of teachers and other staff. The scale of this responsibility is enormous, and its challenges are complex. Staff are regularly informed that if they see something, they say should say something and report it – but how? Schools need to ensure they have robust data and reporting mechanisms in place, so that effective action can be initiated in accordance with existing policies and staff can ensure procedures are being followed, while enabling different agencies to work together.

That's why I unreservedly recommend MyConcern – a Queen's Award-winning secure digital platform created by former police officers, designed to enable staff to easily record, report and manage all safeguarding, wellbeing and pastoral concerns.

The software is brilliantly configured to provide all the expertise school staff will need in one place. As soon as a concern is raised, it's assigned its own unique reference number and a Designated Safeguarding Lead is alerted, thus kick-starting the process of triaging.

Concerns can be grouped under different categories and case owners easily assigned. Users then have the option to view an automated chronology, complete with filtering, redaction and export functions. Separate files can be easily attached to

concerns, with all documents securely stored. A main 'Concerns' dashboard will clearly display any filed, open and new concerns, while a 'Pupil Profiles' function can be made to show aggregated information across all concerns, including body maps, flags and level of need.

MyConcern can provide DSLs with the confidence that they're meeting all statutory, legal and moral obligations. Its reporting tools are second to none, giving you detailed data analysis of the highest order, and the option to present all this data via easy to digest summaries, to help identify trends and deploy resources more effectively.

Crucially, MyConcern will help schools build effective, well-informed safeguarding teams that can respond rapidly when a child appears to be at risk. Accountability processes are baked in, with the platform keeping a thorough audit trail of who, when and what has been

involved in any given concern.

Information sharing with external partners is therefore made more accurate, reliable and better able to withstand later scrutiny, allowing you to minimise your own risks and ensure compliance. Even better, any concerns you have can be securely recorded and case managed on any internet-enabled device, either through a web browser or via the dedicated MyConcern mobile app.

The welfare and wellbeing of children is everyone's business. MyConcern can be a powerful ally to you in helping record and manage essential evidence as part of your whole-school safeguarding procedures.

"Its reporting tools are second to none"

**teach
SECONDARY**

VERDICT

- ✓ An ultra-secure platform for recording and addressing safeguarding concerns
- ✓ Robust and sophisticated reporting tools
- ✓ Smartly designed, with an intuitive and easy-to-use interface accessible via multiple devices
- ✓ Excellent value for money
- ✓ An innovative and outstanding piece of safeguarding infrastructure

UPGRADE IF...

You are looking to easily record and manage any safeguarding concerns, while saving time and facilitating early intervention. This is a powerful system that can materially improve your safeguarding provision.

For more information, visit thesafeguardingcompany.com/myconcerndemo



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Lawson is a former secondary teacher, now serving as a foundation governor while running a tutoring service, and author of the book *The Successful (Less Stressful) Student* (Outskirts Press, £11.95); find out more at prep4successnow.wordpress.com or follow @johninpompano



THE LAST WORD

'Yours sincerely...'



The Secretary of State oversees a fine profession, so they should do their best to nurture, rather than antagonise it, urges John Lawson...

Dear Education Secretary,

Forgive me for not addressing you by name, but by the time this piece appears, will you still be in situ? These are turbulent times, after all. Still, that at least means that the directness of what follows isn't directed at you personally. My intention is always to help, not harm...

However your political stature might have been publicly measured up to now, be aware that you've entered a minefield about which you likely know very little, so tread carefully and with humility.

Our political system has granted you immense power, yet the authority you need to genuinely succeed can only be acquired from the learned educators you serve.

Skilled teachers know how to manage children, classrooms, schools and curricula. What they require from you is the authorisation to deliver programmes that will enrich the lives of the families they serve. Remind yourself daily that these remarkable people have forgotten more about education than you'll ever know. If you don't listen to them, you'll have no advantage over those who can't hear.

Hard facts

Teachers need a 'defender of the faith' rather than a critic. Sadly, however, we all saw how just a few weeks into the job, your immediate predecessor lambasted education leaders for '*Hanging on to mediocrity*,' telling them that they needed '*Constant monitoring and pressurising to drive education forward*.'

This polemic was unsubstantiated, disingenuous, and above all, alienating. A Minister of the Crown should appreciate that niceness trumps nastiness every time. Teachers know perfectly well and accept that they're public servants – as indeed are you – but they refuse to be treated as doltish slaves, subject to 'whip cracking' ministerial edicts. Respect is a two-way street.

Remember, it wasn't just the NHS that helped the nation weather the pandemic; teachers are frontline workers too. Educators worked hard to keep youngsters' learning unbroken and their spirits intact when schools were closed to most, and continued to do so after a clumsy algorithm was ineptly brought in to assess their academic worth.

As the Japanese proverb puts it, a day spent with a great teacher is worth a thousand hours of diligent

study. Your primary task is to form teams of first-class teachers who will tell you stark educational truths, regardless of what non-teaching advisors might say.

We can refuse to face hard facts, but they won't go away – they'll only become harder to deal with the longer we leave them. We all achieve more when we work as a team.

Best selves

The best way you have of contributing positively to the nation's education is to ignore any impulses to re-invent wheels. Instead, prioritise tweaks and steady progression. Radical changes might generate headlines, but too often they merely deliver illusions of real progress.

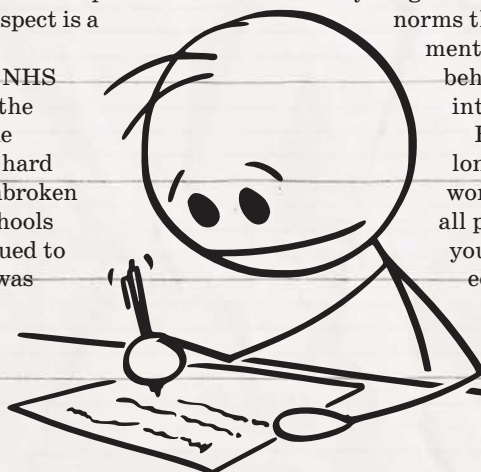
Also, look beyond the superficial soundbites and slogans, such as '*Inclusion, not exclusion*.' I've yet to meet the teacher who delights in excluding children from their classrooms, but it's admittedly impossible to include and educate children unless they adhere to an acceptable code of conduct.

Look into any child's eyes, and you can see 50+ years of labour ahead of them. I've always done everything in my power to help students learn, develop character and embark on careers befitting their talents, and the same goes for my colleagues. Please – help us to help students find their best selves.

At the same time, support those teachers who refuse to accept abusive behaviour from students or their families. Teachers already have solutions to hand for eradicating unacceptable behaviour, but the power to implement humane solutions is one that seems to be rarely granted.

Consequently, we've seen too many 'unteachable' teens leave our schools as broken and unemployable young adults, unwilling to accept the behavioural norms that accompany adult life. As one of my wisest mentors would regularly insist, 'Get classroom behaviour right, and everything else will fall into place.'


Finally, we need to secure a sensible, long-term pay structure for teachers. What works for MPs' salaries should similarly apply to all public sector workers. Today's young teachers will have paid over £36k for their education, yet their pay in real terms is currently less than mine was in 1993. If that doesn't change, it's difficult to see where the next generation of teachers will come from – particularly if such selfless dedication results in them having to use food banks to survive.



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